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Developing Global Awareness Of Ecotourism In Uzbekistan Through English: Integrating Ecotourism Culture Into English Language

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Annotation. This article examines how English language education can promote ecotourism awareness in Uzbekistan. It highlights the role of English lessons in fostering ecological values, improving communication skills, and supporting national sustainable tourism goals, while offering CLIL-based methodological recommendations

Key words: ecotourism, environmental awareness, English language teaching, CLIL, sustainable development, global challenges, "Green Development" strategy, natural reserves, sustainable travel.

INGLIZ TILI ORQALI O‘ZBEKISTONDAGI EKOTURIZM HAQIDA GLOBAL OGOHLIKNI OSHIRISH: ECOTOURISM MADANIYATINI INGLIZ TILI O‘QITISHGA INTEGRATSIYA QILISH

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola O‘zbekistonda ingliz tili ta‘limi orqali ekoturizm bo‘yicha xabardorlikni oshirish imkoniyatlarini ko‘rib chiqadi. Unda ingliz tili darslarining ekologik qadriyatlarni shakllantirish, kommunikativ ko‘nikmalarni rivojlantirish va milliy barqaror turizm maqsadlarini qo‘llab-



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quvvatlashdagi roli yoritiladi hamda CLIL asosidagi metodik tavsiyalar taklif etiladi.

Kalit soʻzlar: ekoturizm, ekologik ong, ingliz tili oʻqitish, CLIL, barqaror rivojlanish, global muammolar, “Yashil rivojlanish” strategiyasi, tabiiy qoʻriqxonalar, barqaror sayohat, tabiatni muhofaza qilish.

РАЗВИТИЕ ГЛОБАЛЬНОЙ ОСВЕДОМЛЁННОСТИ ОБ ЭКОТУРИЗМЕ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ ЧЕРЕЗ АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК: ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ КУЛЬТУРЫ ЭКОТУРИЗМА В ПРЕПОДАВАНИЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются возможности повышения осведомлённости об экотуризме в Узбекистане через преподавание английского языка. Подчёркивается роль уроков английского языка в формировании экологических ценностей, развитии коммуникативных навыков и поддержке национальных целей устойчивого туризма, а также предлагаются методические рекомендации на основе CLIL.

Ключевые слова: экотуризм, экологическое сознание, преподавание английского языка, CLIL, устойчивое развитие, глобальные вызовы, стратегия «Зелёное развитие», природные заповедники, устойчивые путешествия.

Introduction. Around the world, ecotourism has been hailed as a panacea: a way to fund conservation and scientific research, protect fragile and pristine ecosystems, benefit rural communities, promote development in poor countries, enhance ecological and cultural sensitivity, instill environmental awareness and a social conscience in the travel industry, satisfy and educate the discriminating tourist, and, some claim, build world peace[1]. Honey, 1999, p. 4 In recent decades, Uzbekistan has also placed increasing emphasis on environmental sustainability and tourism development as vital pillars of its national modernization strategy. By committing to significant investments in green energy, environmental protection, and social welfare, Uzbekistan is positioning itself as a leader in sustainable development and regional stability in Central Asia



[2](Uzbekistan - 2030 strategy a step towards a green future.) Ecotourism, recognized globally as a core component of sustainable tourism, not only contributes to the preservation of biodiversity and natural resources in the country but also reinforces the interconnection between environmental education and cultural heritage promotion. In recent years, the country has implemented extensive reforms aimed at driving sustainable, long-term economic growth. These reforms address diverse areas such as governance, legal systems, economic structures, social development, and security. They also reflect a more open foreign policy approach, underscoring Uzbekistan's commitment to globalization.

Sustainable education relies on teaching and learning methods that actively engage students, fostering their sense of responsibility and promoting behavior changes that support sustainable development, thereby enhancing lifelong learning[3]. Environmental education plays a central role in this process by encouraging individuals to adopt responsible environmental practices and sustainable lifestyles. In this context, the English language serves as a powerful medium for fostering ecological literacy and global citizenship. As the language of international communication, diplomacy, and academia, English enables learners to access global environmental discourse, participate in cross-cultural exchanges, and contribute meaningfully to international tourism and sustainability initiatives. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2023), the advancement of sustainable tourism depends not only on infrastructure and policy but also on education that promotes eco-conscious behavior and intercultural competence.

Despite growing national and institutional interest in ecotourism development, the integration of ecological themes into English language teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan remains limited. Embedding ecotourism-related topics into language education can play a transformative role: it allows learners to acquire ecological terminology, develop environmental responsibility, and engage critically with global sustainability challenges. This pedagogical direction is fully aligned with Uzbekistan's "Green Development Strategy" (2023–2030), which emphasizes the need to promote sustainable lifestyles, environmental protection, and youth engagement in ecological initiatives. Moreover, it supports the United



Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 13 (Climate Action), and Goal 15 (Life on Land) by integrating sustainability principles into education. Thus, the convergence of English language education and ecotourism awareness represents not merely a linguistic innovation but a strategic pathway toward cultivating globally minded, environmentally conscious citizens capable of contributing to Uzbekistan's sustainable future[4].

Literature review. In this section of the research, several international and national sources were selected to gather data on the importance of ecotourism, not only for the development of individual countries but also from an international perspective. The beginning of the new century is a good time to take stock of the activities and topics that have been studied under the guise of 'ecotourism'. Over the past two decades, for just over a decade. research on the integration of environmental topics into language education has increased significantly. Scholars such as Coyle, Hood, and Marsh have highlighted that the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach enables learners to acquire both disciplinary knowledge and linguistic competence in a mutually reinforcing manner. When applied to ecotourism education, CLIL creates meaningful contexts in which students not only develop language proficiency but also cultivate ecological literacy and critical awareness of sustainability issues [5].

Another source is the "*Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*", which provides comprehensive information on the introduction of the concept of ecotourism into academic discourse, as well as its significance in various aspects of life, including its educational, developmental, and scientific foundations[6]. Jacobs and Goatly criticized the absence of environment-related activities in randomly selected 17 coursebooks [7].

In the context of Uzbekistan, ecotourism has been identified as one of the priority sectors within the country's "Green Development Strategy 2030" [8] and the National Tourism Development Concept (2022–2026). These strategic documents highlight the importance of preserving the nation's unique ecosystems including the Nuratau Mountains, Zaamin National Park, and the Aral Sea region while promoting responsible and educational tourism. However, despite these



policy advances, English language education in Uzbekistan has not yet been fully leveraged as a tool for promoting environmental awareness[9].

Existing English curricula tend to focus primarily on linguistic accuracy and exam preparation, leaving limited space for sustainability themes or ecotourism-related content.

Therefore, there is a need for an integrated pedagogical model that links language learning with environmental education. Incorporating ecotourism-related topics into English lessons through CLIL-based units, project-based learning, and communicative approaches could significantly enhance students' ecological awareness while improving their linguistic and intercultural competence. Such an approach aligns with both global sustainability goals and Uzbekistan's educational modernization agenda.

Research Methodology. This study adopts a qualitative research approach aimed at exploring how English language education can serve as an effective tool for fostering ecotourism awareness in Uzbekistan. The research design combines document analysis, teacher surveys, semi-structured interviews, and pedagogical experimentation, enabling a comprehensive understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of the topic.

The initial phase involves a systematic analysis of English language curricula, textbooks, and lesson plans currently implemented in secondary and higher education institutions across Uzbekistan. This stage focuses on identifying the presence and treatment of ecological, cultural, and sustainability-related themes within educational materials. Special attention is given to how concepts such as nature conservation, sustainable travel, and cultural heritage preservation are represented linguistically and pedagogically. To complement the document analysis, surveys and semi-structured interviews were conducted among English language teachers. The purpose of these instruments was to examine teachers' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward integrating ecotourism-related topics into their teaching practice. The collected data provide valuable insights into the current challenges, opportunities, and readiness of educators to implement environmentally oriented English lessons. Furthermore, experimental lesson plans were developed and piloted based on the Content and Language Integrated Learning



(CLIL) framework. These lessons have a special purpose to merge ecological knowledge with linguistic competence through interactive tasks, discussions, and project-based learning activities. The integration of ecotourism themes in this experimental stage helped assess students' activeness, motivation, and acquisition of both ecological concepts and English language skills.

Analysis and results. The gathered information from different qualitative data was analyzed thematically to identify patterns and relationships between language education and ecological awareness. The findings from curriculum analysis, teacher input, and lesson implementation collectively contribute to the development of a pedagogical model that supports sustainable education goals through English language instruction. Although teachers are aware of the importance of environmental issues and ecotourism in general, the coursebooks available in Uzbekistan do not contain enough topics and activities related to ecotourism or sustainability.

1. Curriculum and Textbook Analysis :Research identified Grade 9 exhibits the strongest integration, featuring three units focused on environmental change and wildlife. Grade 8 includes two nature-oriented units, whereas Grades 6 and 11 contain only one relevant unit each. No ecology-related units were identified in Grades 7 and 10. Overall, only **seven units across six grade levels** explicitly address ecological or environmental themes, indicating that environmental education is integrated inconsistently and remains limited within the English language curriculum[10]. These include a shortage of specialized teaching materials, limited methodological support, and insufficient professional training in sustainability-oriented pedagogy. Nevertheless, the study demonstrates that the systematic inclusion of ecotourism-related content in English lessons yields significant pedagogical benefits, enhancing both instructional quality and student engagement. Despite these limitations, the research demonstrated that incorporating ecotourism-related content into English lessons had a notably positive impact on both teaching effectiveness and student engagement.

-The observed improvements can be categorized into three key areas:

Lexical Development:

-Students significantly expanded their vocabulary related to ecology, tourism, and sustainability. They were able to use specialized terms such as



biodiversity, renewable resources, and eco-friendly practices accurately in communicative contexts.

-Critical Thinking and Communication Skills: learners demonstrated enhanced ability to discuss real-world environmental problems, express opinions, and propose practical solutions in English.

-Students showed increased awareness and appreciation of Uzbekistan's rich natural and cultural heritage such as the Nurata Mountains, Zaamin National Park, and the Aral Sea region and understood their significance within the broader context of sustainable tourism.

The implementation of project-based learning and CLIL-based instructional strategies proved particularly effective. Activities such as designing eco-tour brochures, preparing presentations on endangered species, and planning "green trips" encouraged students to apply both linguistic and ecological knowledge creatively. These methods not only developed their communicative skills but also nurtured a sense of environmental responsibility and global citizenship [7].

Overall, the results confirm that English language education can serve as a powerful vehicle for promoting sustainability values and ecotourism awareness. By integrating language acquisition with environmental learning, educators can cultivate learners who are both linguistically proficient and ecologically conscious classroom practice with Uzbekistan's "Green Development" goals and the UN Sustainable Development Agenda.

Conclusion/ Recommendations. As English continues to function as a global language of communication, science, and cultural exchange, its integration with ecological and sustainability themes can contribute meaningfully to the nation's broader "Green Development" agenda. Embedding environmental and cultural content within English lessons allows students not only to acquire literacy and intercultural understanding. Through communicative and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approaches, learners can engage with authentic environmental topics, analyze global and local sustainability challenges, and cultivate the values of responsible citizenship and environmental stewardship.



The research findings emphasize that ecotourism-oriented English teaching can rise students' motivation, expands their vocabulary related to nature around us, and strengthens critical thinking skills. However, to maximize these outcomes, a systematic and institutionally supported approach is essential.

Recommendations. Curricular Integration: Ecotourism and sustainability topics should be systematically incorporated into national English language curricula and textbook content at all educational levels. This would ensure consistent exposure to ecological themes and align language education with national sustainability goals.

Pre-service and in-service teacher education programs should include methodological modules on integrating environmental and tourism-related content into English lessons. This will empower educators with the skills and confidence to deliver ecologically informed instruction [11].

Institutional Collaboration:

Stronger partnerships between educational institutions, environmental organizations, and the tourism sector are necessary to develop authentic teaching materials, field-based projects, and experiential learning opportunities that connect classroom theory with real-world practice.

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