THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING PRACTICE IN BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN ENGLISH

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Annotatsiya: *Og‘zaki muloqot ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida samarali qo‘llashda markaziy o‘rin tutadi. Ko‘plab o‘rganuvchilar yetarli darajada grammatik bilim va lug‘at boyligiga ega bo‘lishiga qaramay, psixologik to‘siqlar sababli ingliz tilida ishonch bilan gapirishda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladilar. Ushbu maqolada ingliz tili o‘rganuvchilarda ishonchni shakllantirishda tizimli speaking mashqlarining o‘rni o‘rganiladi. Tadqiqot speaking ko‘nikmasini lingvistik va psixologik nuqtayi nazardan tahlil qiladi hamda sinf ichidagi muloqot, kommunikativ topshiriqlar va qo‘llab-quvvatlovchi o‘qitish uslublarining ishonchni rivojlantirishdagi ahamiyatini yoritadi. Tadqiqot natijalari muntazam speaking mashqlari tashvish darajasini sezilarli kamaytirishi, ravonlikni oshirishi va o‘rganuvchilarning akademik hamda real hayotdagi muloqot samaradorligini kuchaytirishini ko‘rsatadi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *speaking mashqlari, o‘rganuvchi ishonchi, og‘zaki muloqot, EFL, speaking tashvishi.*

Аннотация: *Устная коммуникация является ключевым элементом эффективного использования английского языка как иностранного. Несмотря на наличие достаточных грамматических знаний и словарного запаса, многие изучающие язык испытывают трудности в уверенной устной речи из-за психологических барьеров. В данной статье рассматривается роль систематической речевой практики в формировании уверенности у изучающих английский язык. Исследование*

анализирует говорение с лингвистической и психологической точек зрения, а также рассматривает вклад аудиторного взаимодействия, коммуникативных заданий и поддерживающих педагогических подходов в развитие уверенности. Результаты показывают, что регулярная практика устной речи значительно снижает уровень тревожности, повышает беглость речи и улучшает способность обучающихся эффективно общаться в академической и реальной среде.

Ключевые слова: *практика говорения, уверенность обучающихся, устная коммуникация, EFL, речевая тревожность.*

Abstract: *Oral communication is a central element of effective language use in English as a foreign language. Although many learners possess sufficient grammatical knowledge and vocabulary, they often struggle to speak confidently due to psychological barriers. This article investigates the role of systematic speaking practice in developing confidence among English language learners. The study examines speaking from linguistic and psychological perspectives and discusses how classroom interaction, communicative tasks, and supportive teaching practices contribute to confidence building. The findings suggest that regular speaking practice significantly reduces anxiety, improves fluency, and enhances learners' ability to communicate effectively in academic and real-life contexts.*

Keywords: *speaking practice, learner confidence, oral communication, EFL, speaking anxiety.*

Introduction

In contemporary language education, the ability to communicate effectively has become a primary objective. English functions as an international language in education, business, and global interaction, making spoken competence especially important. However, for many learners of

English as a foreign language, speaking remains the most difficult skill to master.

Despite years of formal instruction, learners often avoid speaking due to fear, hesitation, and lack of confidence. This problem is particularly evident among university students who demonstrate strong reading and writing skills but feel uncomfortable expressing ideas orally. Confidence, therefore, plays a decisive role in determining whether learners actively participate in communication or remain passive language users.

This article explores how speaking practice contributes to confidence building in English learners. It analyzes theoretical perspectives on speaking and confidence, identifies key psychological barriers, and highlights pedagogical approaches that encourage confident oral communication.

Speaking as a complex language skill

Characteristics of speaking. Speaking is a productive and interactive skill that requires learners to process language in real time. Unlike writing, spoken communication does not allow extensive planning or revision, which increases pressure on learners. According to Brown (2007), speaking involves simultaneous control of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and meaning, making it cognitively demanding. Because of its spontaneous nature, speaking often exposes learners' weaknesses, which can negatively affect their confidence. As a result, learners may avoid speaking opportunities, limiting their chances to improve.

Speaking and communicative ability. The concept of communicative competence emphasizes the ability to use language appropriately in various contexts. Speaking practice enables learners to develop interactional skills, manage conversations, and respond effectively to others. Through oral communication, learners gain practical experience that cannot be achieved through passive learning alone.

Confidence and Psychological Factors in Speaking

The role of self-confidence. Self-confidence refers to learners' belief in their ability to perform speaking tasks successfully. Learners with higher confidence are more willing to take risks, initiate conversations, and express personal opinions. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy suggests that belief in one's abilities strongly influences performance outcomes.

In contrast, learners with low confidence tend to remain silent, even when they possess adequate linguistic knowledge. This avoidance behavior limits progress and reinforces negative self-perceptions.

Anxiety and emotional barriers. Speaking anxiety is one of the most common emotional challenges in EFL learning. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis explains that emotional factors such as fear and stress can block language acquisition. When learners feel anxious, their ability to process and produce language decreases. Factors contributing to speaking anxiety include fear of mistakes, negative evaluation, limited speaking experience, and rigid classroom environments. Addressing these issues is essential for building confidence.

Speaking practice as a foundation for confidence

Reducing fear through repetition. Regular speaking practice allows learners to become familiar with using English orally. As learners speak more frequently, they realize that errors are inevitable and manageable. This realization reduces fear and encourages participation. Repeated speaking experiences help learners develop tolerance toward mistakes and shift focus from accuracy to meaningful communication.

Fluency development and confidence growth. Fluency is closely linked to confidence. Learners who speak more fluently experience fewer pauses and communication breakdowns. Speaking practice supports fluency development by enabling automatic language production. As fluency improves, learners gain a sense of control over the language, which directly strengthens confidence and motivation.

Pronunciation improvement. Pronunciation difficulties often undermine learners' confidence. Through continuous speaking practice, learners improve clarity, stress patterns, and intonation. Clearer pronunciation reduces misunderstandings and increases learners' willingness to speak.

Instructional approaches to promote speaking confidence

Supportive classroom atmosphere. A positive learning environment is crucial for encouraging speaking. Teachers should foster respect, patience, and encouragement in the classroom. Emphasizing communication rather than perfection helps learners feel more comfortable. Constructive feedback and acknowledgment of effort contribute to a supportive atmosphere where learners are willing to take risks.

Communicative and interactive activities. Communicative language teaching promotes interaction through meaningful tasks. Activities such as role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks allow learners to use English in realistic situations. Pair and group work reduce performance pressure and provide learners with opportunities to practice speaking in less intimidating settings.

Task-based speaking activities. Task-based learning focuses on achieving communicative goals. Speaking tasks such as presentations, interviews, and debates require learners to use language purposefully. Successfully completing tasks increases learners' confidence and sense of achievement.

Technology-assisted speaking practice

Technological tools provide additional opportunities for speaking practice. Online platforms, language exchange programs, and speech-recording applications enable learners to practice outside the classroom. Recording and reviewing spoken performance helps learners track progress and build confidence through self-reflection.

Confidence in academic and real-life communication

Speaking confidence is essential for academic success. University students are often required to participate in seminars, presentations, and group discussions. Confident speakers perform more effectively in these contexts. In international exams such as IELTS, confidence influences fluency, coherence, and interaction. Learners who practice speaking regularly are better prepared for such assessments.

Challenges in developing speaking confidence

Despite its benefits, speaking practice may be limited by large class sizes, time constraints, and traditional teaching methods. Some learners may continue to experience anxiety even with regular practice. To overcome these challenges, educators should integrate speaking activities consistently and adopt learner-centered approaches.

Conclusion

Speaking practice plays a decisive role in building confidence among English language learners. Regular oral interaction helps reduce anxiety, improve fluency, and strengthen pronunciation skills. Confidence, in turn, increases learners' willingness to communicate and enhances overall language proficiency.

Teachers must prioritize speaking activities, create supportive learning environments, and encourage learners to view mistakes as part of the learning process. Through systematic speaking practice, learners can become confident and effective users of English.

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