

HOW TO ENHANCE STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS?

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Abstract: *The role of shaping speaking competence is always widely recognized in teaching foreign languages fields. This study investigates a systematic review of factors that hinder fluent speaking and practical methods that are efficient to apply in order to naturalize speaking among young learners. This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches by involving 45 A1 and A2 learners and data were collected through classroom observations, questionnaires as well. The findings revealed the importance and effectiveness of implementing classroom activities and role-plays for strengthening confidence and these methods reduced barriers to show better oral performance in another language. Therefore, interactive classroom activities can be considered an effective approach to cultivating speaking skills, confidence and communication literacy.*

Keywords: *speaking fluency, speaking barriers, classroom interaction, A1-A2 learners, communicative activities, foreign language learning*

English is considered one of the most widely spoken languages and serves as a global tool in various fields such as education, business, international communication, and travel. As a result, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become increasingly important in today's globalized world. Communication plays a vital role in personal growth and career development, as it enables individuals to express their ideas, build relationships, and access better opportunities. In this regard, developing foreign language skills from an early age, particularly during preschool years, can be more effective than acquiring them later in formal education, as early exposure enhances language retention and confidence. However, despite the importance of early language learning, many learners face numerous challenges while acquiring basic language skills. In particular, developing speaking competence remains one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. Learners often struggle with lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient speaking practice. These challenges hinder their ability to communicate fluently and effectively in a foreign language.

However, many learners still face difficulties when trying to speak a foreign language fluently. Speaking is one of the most challenging skills because it requires not only knowing





words and grammar, but also using them quickly and confidently in real communication. In many classrooms, students do not get enough opportunities to practice speaking, which makes them feel nervous or afraid of making mistakes. As a result, learners often have limited vocabulary, low confidence, and hesitation when speaking. Some students may also rely too much on memorization instead of real communication, which further limits their speaking development. These problems make it harder for them to improve their speaking ability and use the language effectively in real-life situations.

Some previous studies have shown that using interactive and creative methods can help solve these problems. For example, digital storytelling allows students to use language in a more interesting and meaningful way, which can improve their speaking skills, creativity, and motivation (James et al., 2019; Ramalingam & Jiar, 2022). Through storytelling, learners can express their ideas more freely and practice language in context. In addition, classroom activities such as role-plays, group work, and communicative tasks can help students become more active and confident in speaking (Kushmanbekova et al., 2025; Khameis; Mutmainah et al., 2025). These methods create a supportive and interactive environment where learners feel more comfortable using the language and making mistakes as part of learning.


However, there is still a lack of research that looks at both the problems learners face in speaking and the practical methods that can help solve these problems at the same time, especially for beginner learners like A1 and A2 students. Many studies focus only on teaching strategies or only on learners' difficulties, without combining both aspects in one study. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the factors that hinder speaking fluency and to explore practical classroom methods that can help improve speaking skills among young learners.

This study employed a mixed-method research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of learners' speaking development and the factors affecting it. The use of both approaches allowed the researcher to examine not only measurable data but also learners' experiences and behaviors in real classroom settings.

The participants of the study were 45 A1 and A2 level learners who were selected from a beginner English language learning group. These learners were chosen because beginner-level students often face more difficulties in developing speaking fluency, making them suitable for identifying speaking barriers and evaluating effective teaching strategies. The participants represented young learners who are at the early stage of foreign language acquisition.

Data were collected through classroom observations and questionnaires. Classroom observations were conducted to monitor students' speaking performance, classroom





participation, level of confidence, and common difficulties during speaking activities. Particular attention was given to how students responded during communicative tasks such as speaking exercises, group work, and interactive classroom activities. In addition, questionnaires were used to gather learners' personal opinions regarding their speaking difficulties, confidence levels, and the effectiveness of classroom speaking activities.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis for the quantitative data obtained from questionnaires, while qualitative data from classroom observations were interpreted by identifying recurring patterns, behaviors, and common speaking-related challenges. This combination of methods helped ensure a more reliable and balanced understanding of learners' speaking competence and the factors influencing their fluency development.

The results of the study revealed that a majority of A1 and A2 learners experienced difficulties in speaking English fluently. Based on classroom observations, approximately 68% of students showed hesitation when responding to speaking tasks. They often paused frequently, used limited vocabulary, and required extra time to form sentences. Around 72% of learners were observed to lack confidence when speaking in front of their classmates, especially during individual speaking activities.

The questionnaire results supported these findings. About 74% of participants reported that they feel nervous when speaking English in class, while 70% indicated that they are afraid of making grammatical mistakes. In addition, nearly 65% of learners stated that they do not receive enough opportunities to practice speaking during lessons, which limits their fluency development.

However, positive changes were observed when interactive speaking activities were introduced. Approximately 80% of students became more active during role-plays and group discussions. Classroom observations showed that 67% of learners demonstrated increased willingness to participate in speaking tasks after regular use of communicative activities. Gradually, about 60% of students showed improvement in confidence and were more willing to express their ideas in English, even with minor mistakes.

Overall, the results indicate that although learners initially face significant barriers to speaking fluency, the use of interactive and practical classroom activities plays an important role in improving both their confidence and speaking performance.

The findings of this study indicate that A1 and A2 learners face significant challenges in developing speaking fluency, particularly due to lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and insufficient speaking practice. These results are consistent with the general understanding in language learning research that speaking is one of the most difficult skills for beginners because it requires both linguistic knowledge and real-time communication ability.





The observed improvement in learners' speaking performance after the use of interactive activities supports previous studies that emphasize the importance of creative and communicative teaching methods. For example, James et al. (2019) and Ramalingam and Jiar (2022) found that digital storytelling can enhance students' engagement and improve speaking skills by creating meaningful and interactive learning environments. Similarly, the findings of this study show that learners became more active and confident when they participated in structured speaking activities such as role-plays and group discussions.

In addition, the results align with the studies of Kushmanbekova et al. (2025) and Mutmainah et al. (2025), which highlight that innovative classroom strategies significantly improve students' speaking performance by encouraging participation and reducing anxiety. In this study, learners also demonstrated reduced hesitation and increased willingness to speak after regular use of communicative tasks, which confirms the effectiveness of such approaches.

However, despite these positive outcomes, the study also shows that some learners still struggle with fluency even after intervention. This suggests that speaking development requires continuous practice and long-term exposure rather than short-term classroom activities alone. It also indicates that teachers should consistently integrate speaking-focused tasks into daily lessons to ensure sustained improvement.


Overall, the findings of this study support the idea that interactive and student-centered teaching methods play an important role in improving speaking competence among beginner-level learners. They also confirm that addressing both psychological barriers and lack of practice is essential for developing fluency in a foreign language.

This study investigated the factors that hinder speaking fluency and explored practical classroom-based methods to improve speaking competence among A1 and A2 learners. The findings revealed that learners face several significant barriers, including lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient opportunities for meaningful speaking practice. These challenges negatively affect learners' ability to communicate effectively and reduce their willingness to participate in speaking activities.

However, the results also demonstrated that the use of interactive and communicative teaching methods, such as role-plays, group discussions, and creative speaking tasks, had a positive impact on learners' speaking performance. Students showed increased confidence, greater participation, and gradual improvement in fluency when exposed to consistent speaking practice in a supportive classroom environment.

Therefore, it can be concluded that structured and student-centered speaking activities are essential for improving speaking fluency among beginner-level learners.





Developing speaking skills requires not only linguistic knowledge but also continuous practice and a psychologically safe learning environment.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers should integrate more interactive speaking tasks into daily lessons and provide learners with regular opportunities to practice speaking in meaningful contexts. In addition, reducing speaking anxiety through supportive feedback and encouraging a mistake-friendly environment can further enhance learners' confidence and fluency development. Future research could focus on long-term interventions and the use of technology-based speaking activities to further support learners' oral communication skills.

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