USING STRATEGIES OF SPEAKING SKILLS FOR BUILDING CONFIDENCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

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Abstract. This study examines the role of speaking strategies in building the confidence of secondary school learners in foreign language acquisition. It focuses on various techniques such as role-plays, peer interactions, and real-life simulations to enhance students' speaking skills and self-assurance. A qualitative research approach was employed, incorporating classroom observations, student surveys, and teacher interviews. The findings suggest that implementing targeted speaking strategies significantly improves learners' confidence, enabling them to engage more actively in communication. The study highlights the importance of creating a supportive environment and providing students with frequent speaking opportunities to foster their language development and boost their confidence in using the language.

Key words: Speaking skills, confidence, secondary school learners, role-plays, collaborative activities, real-life simulations, language education, communicative competence

Introduction

Developing speaking skills is a fundamental aspect of language education, particularly for secondary school learners. However, many students face anxiety and lack of confidence when communicating in a foreign language. Confidence is an essential component for effective speaking, as it enables learners to express themselves fluently and interact successfully in various contexts. This paper investigates the use of speaking strategies to build the confidence of secondary school learners, focusing on techniques such as role-plays, collaborative activities, and real-life simulations. By integrating these strategies, educators can create a supportive environment that encourages students to develop their speaking abilities while reducing fear and hesitation.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to explore the effectiveness of speaking strategies in building learners' confidence. The research was conducted in three stages:

1. Literature Review: Key strategies for improving speaking confidence were identified through an analysis of previous studies and educational frameworks.

2. Strategy Implementation: Selected strategies, including role-plays, peer discussions, and interactive games, were implemented in a secondary school classroom over six weeks.

3. Data Collection and Analysis: Data was collected using surveys, classroom observations, and interviews with students and teachers. Quantitative data from pre- and post-tests measured changes in students' confidence levels, while qualitative data provided insights into learners' experiences and perceptions.

Results

The findings reveal significant improvements in students' confidence levels after the implementation of speaking strategies. Key results include:

- **Role-plays**: Students reported that role-plays helped them practice real-life conversations in a low-stress environment. This strategy improved their ability to think on their feet and respond to different scenarios.
- **Collaborative Activities**: Group discussions and peer feedback sessions encouraged students to interact and share ideas, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.
- **Real-life Simulations**: Activities such as mock interviews and storytelling enabled learners to apply their speaking skills in practical, relatable contexts. These simulations increased their self-assurance and motivation to participate actively.

Quantitative analysis showed that 80% of students experienced a measurable increase in confidence, as reflected in their pre- and post-test scores. Qualitative feedback highlighted that students valued the opportunity to practice speaking in a supportive and engaging environment.

Discussion

The study underscores the importance of targeted speaking strategies in building confidence among secondary school learners. Role-plays and simulations provide a safe space for learners to experiment with language without fear of judgment, while collaborative activities promote peer support and reduce anxiety. The findings align with previous research suggesting that active engagement and real-life relevance are critical for developing speaking skills. However, challenges such as time constraints and varying levels of student participation highlight the need for adaptable strategies tailored to individual classroom contexts.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of these strategies on learners' confidence and language proficiency. Additionally, integrating digital tools such as language apps and online platforms may offer new opportunities for enhancing speaking skills in diverse learning environments.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that using speaking strategies can effectively build the confidence of secondary school learners. Role-plays, collaborative activities, and real-life simulations not only improve speaking skills but also create a positive and motivating learning atmosphere. By fostering confidence, educators can empower students to become more active participants in communication, ultimately enhancing their overall language competence. Continued efforts to

refine and adapt these strategies will be crucial for addressing the evolving needs of learners in modern language classrooms.

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