

CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG UZBEK LEARNERS

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Abstract. This paper examines the main challenges Uzbek learners of English as a Foreign Language face in developing speaking skills. Although many students possess grammar and vocabulary knowledge, they often struggle to communicate fluently due to limited exposure to authentic English, fear of speaking, native-language translation, slow word retrieval, pronunciation difficulties, and insufficient classroom practice. The study highlights that traditional instruction, which prioritizes grammatical accuracy and written tasks, may hinder communicative competence. To address these issues, the paper suggests communicative language teaching, task-based learning, fluency-oriented activities such as JAM (just a minute), and AI-supported speaking tools. These approaches can improve learners' fluency, confidence, and oral communication skills.

Key words: speaking skills, Uzbek learners, fluency, speaking anxiety, communicative language teaching, JAM technique

Абстракт. В данной статье рассматриваются основные трудности, с которыми сталкиваются узбекские изучающие английский язык как иностранный в процессе развития навыков устной речи. Несмотря на то что многие студенты обладают знаниями грамматики и лексики, они часто испытывают трудности в свободном общении из-за ограниченного контакта с аутентичной англоязычной коммуникацией, страха говорить на английском языке, склонности к переводу с родного языка, медленного воспроизведения английских слов, проблем с произношением, а также недостаточной устной практики на занятиях. В исследовании подчёркивается, что традиционное обучение, ориентированное преимущественно на грамматическую точность и письменные задания, может препятствовать развитию коммуникативной компетенции. Для решения данных проблем в статье предлагается использовать коммуникативный подход к обучению языку, обучение на основе заданий, упражнения, направленные на развитие беглости речи, такие как техника JAM — “Just a Minute”, а также речевые технологии на основе искусственного интеллекта. Данные подходы могут способствовать развитию беглости речи, уверенности и навыков устной коммуникации у обучающихся.

Ключевые слова: навыки устной речи, узбекские изучающие английский язык, беглость речи, речевая тревожность, коммуникативное обучение языку, техника JAM.

Abstrakt. Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilini xorijiy til sifatida o'rganayotgan o'zbek talabalarining nutq ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirish jarayonida duch keladigan asosiy muammolar tahlil qilinadi. Ko'plab talabalar grammatika va lug'at bo'yicha yetarli bilimga ega bo'lsalar-da, ingliz tilidagi haqiqiy muloqotga cheklangan darajada duch kelish, gapirishdan qo'rqish, ona tilidan tarjima qilishga moyillik, inglizcha so'zlarni sekin esga tushirish, talaffuzdagi qiyinchiliklar hamda dars jarayonida og'zaki amaliyotning yetarli emasligi sababli ravon muloqot qilishda qiynaladilar. Tadqiqotda grammatik aniqlik va yozma mashqlarga ustuvor ahamiyat beruvchi an'anaviy ta'lim kommunikativ kompetensiya rivojlanishiga salbiy ta'sir ko'rsatishi mumkinligi ta'kidlanadi. Ushbu muammolarni bartaraf etish uchun maqolada kommunikativ til o'qitish, vazifaga asoslangan ta'lim, JAM — “Bir

daqiqa” kabi ravonlikka yo‘naltirilgan mashg‘ulotlar hamda sun‘iy intellektga asoslangan nutq texnologiyalaridan foydalanish taklif etiladi. Mazkur yondashuvlar o‘quvchilarning nutq ravonligi, o‘ziga ishonchi va og‘zaki muloqot ko‘nikmalarini rivojlantirishga xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: nutq ko‘nikmalari, o‘zbek o‘quvchilari, ravonlik, nutq xavotiri, kommunikativ til o‘qitish, JAM texnikasi.

Introduction

English is now a language that is used for international communication, education and professional growth. The interest of learning English has been rapidly growing in recent years in Uzbekistan, as a result of the educational reform and an expansion of worldwide opportunities. Thus, though there has been improvement, there are still significant problems for many Uzbek learners in the area of speaking. Learning to speak is one of the more challenging aspects of speaking a foreign language, as it involves learners using the language skills of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and fluency at the same time and in real time (Brown, 2007). The students of the Uzbek language who have learned a lot of grammar rules, and they have trouble to have any hesitation and anxiety in their speaking. One of the major reasons of this problem is the traditional teaching method which is more focusing on memorization and written exercises than communicating, which is communicative interaction (Richards, 2006).

The other is that there is a lack of authentic language input. The lack of widespread English in the natural environment in Uzbekistan means opportunities for students to speak English naturally are limited. Moreover, learners' confidence and motivation are often at risk when they are afraid of making grammatical and pronunciation errors. Krashen (1982) views emotional issues like anxiety and low self confidence as an “affective filter” which blocks the successful acquisition of a new language.

The new approach in teaching like communicative language teaching and task-based learning can be an effective instrument to enhance the students' speaking skill. The idea that meaningful communication tasks can facilitate students' communicative competence and fluency better than conventional grammar-based teaching is presented by Ellis (2003). Furthermore, the use of technological tools and speaking platforms based on artificial intelligence opens even more avenues for students to practice and gain instant feedback.

The technique JAM (Just A Minute) is one of the most effective ways to develop the fluency of speaking among students of Uzbek language. This activity aims at improving spontaneous speaking and to overcome the fear of communication among the learners. In this technique, students will talk continuously about a topic without significant pauses, repeating ideas, or written support for one minute. There are 3 stages of the exercise: spontaneous speech, note-taking/repetition, and an expanded ideas speech.

The significance of the JAM technique is that it can help to improve the fluency, confidence and idea generation of speaking. Students are expected to keep talking even when they have difficulty finding the words, so they eventually become comfortable with live communication. Based on communicative language teaching theory, it is believed that fluency is improved with meaningful and continuous practice of language rather than by reciting grammar rules (Richards, 2006). Moreover, the students are able to organize their thoughts more effectively and retrieve words easily as a result of the repeated speaking stages.

One benefit of the JAM technique is that it is possible to work on it without another person to speak with. Therefore, this is very useful for the people who study the Uzbek

language, but who do not have enough opportunities to communicate in English outside the classroom. It can make a big difference in speaking confidence and oral fluency over time, and can be used a few minutes every day.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the most frequent speech impediments of Uzbek learners and propose practical ways to develop the speaking proficiency in English language classrooms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, due to linguistic, psychological and pedagogical reasons, it is still difficult for many students from Uzbekistan to develop their English speaking skills. Learners may lack opportunities for meaningful communication, worry about being wrong, struggle with pronunciation and rely on grammar teaching to talk, which may be the reason for not becoming fluent and confident in spoken English. Consequently, many students have theory knowledge about the language, but they have difficulty in effectively using the English language in communicative situations.

To address these issues, English language classroom in Uzbekistan needs more communicative and fluency tasks. There are several methods that can help students improve their spontaneous speaking skills and decrease hesitation, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the practical methodology JAM: Just A Minute. Moreover, incorporating AI-powered speaking systems and interactive tools can offer more chances for students to practice independently and receive feedback instantly.

In general, establishing the supportive classroom and regular speaking practice are important for improving learners' oral communication skills. With the use of modern teaching methods teachers can help Uzbek learners to be more confident, fluent and effective in the use of English in learning and real-life situations.

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