

COMMON BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE SPEAKING AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

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Abstract: This article analyzes the main barriers to effective oral communication among foreign language learners and provides practical recommendations for overcoming them. Effective speaking skills are a fundamental factor in language acquisition, social interaction, professional activities, and personal growth. However, many individuals face difficulties in social interaction due to various factors such as speech anxiety (fear of speaking in public), limited vocabulary, pronunciation and grammatical errors, cultural and social barriers, psychological pressure, shyness, and inability to express ideas logically. Each of these obstacles commonly encountered by language learners is examined in detail in this article. It also explores how these challenges can be addressed through metacognitive strategies, practice techniques, interactive methods, self-assessment, and the development of cultural awareness. Furthermore, the role of modern technologies such as mobile applications, artificial intelligence-assisted practice, and the use of video and audio materials in enhancing speaking skills is also discussed.

Keywords: speaking skills, communication, psychological barriers, public speaking, language learning, cultural awareness, pronunciation, speech anxiety, technology-assisted learning.

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются основные барьеры, препятствующие эффективной устной коммуникации у изучающих иностранные языки, а также представлены практические рекомендации по их преодолению. Эффективные навыки говорения являются ключевым фактором в процессе овладения языком, социального взаимодействия, профессиональной деятельности и личностного роста. Тем не менее, многие сталкиваются с трудностями в общении из-за различных факторов, таких как речевая тревожность (страх говорить на публике), ограниченный словарный запас, ошибки в произношении и грамматике, культурные и социальные барьеры, психологическое давление, застенчивость и неспособность логично выражать мысли. Каждый из этих препятствий, с которыми часто сталкиваются изучающие язык, рассматривается в статье подробно. Также обсуждаются способы преодоления этих трудностей с помощью метакогнитивных стратегий, практических упражнений, интерактивных методов, самооценки и развития культурной осведомлённости. Кроме того, рассматривается роль современных технологий – таких как мобильные приложения, практические занятия с использованием искусственного интеллекта, а также видео- и аудиоматериалы в развитии навыков устной речи.

Ключевые слова: навыки говорения, коммуникация, психологические барьеры, публичные выступления, изучение языков, культурная осведомлённость, произношение, речевая тревожность, обучение с использованием технологий.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada xorijiy tilni o'rganayotgan shaxslar orasida samarali og'zaki muloqotga xalaqit beruvchi asosiy to'siqlar tahlil qilinadi hamda ularni bartaraf etish bo'yicha amaliy tavsiyalar taqdim etiladi. Samarali nutq ko'nikmalari tilni o'zlashtirish, ijtimoiy muloqot, kasbiy faoliyat va shaxsiy rivojlanish jarayonida muhim omil hisoblanadi. Biroq, ko'plab o'rganuvchilar quyidagi omillar tufayli muloqotda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladilar: nutqiy xavotir (jamoat oldida so'zlashdan qo'rqish), so'z boyligining cheklanganligi, talaffuz va grammatik xatolar, madaniy va ijtimoiy to'siqlar, psixologik bosim, uyatchanlik hamda fikrni mantiqan ifoda eta olmaslik. Ushbu maqolada til o'rganuvchilar duch keladigan har bir to'siq batafsil yoritiladi. Bundan tashqari, ushbu muammolarni metakognitiv strategiyalar, amaliy mashqlar, interaktiv usullar, o'zini baholash va madaniy ongni rivojlantirish orqali yengish yo'llari ko'rib chiqiladi. Shuningdek, mobil ilovalar, sun'iy intellektidan foydalangan holda mashq qilish, video va audiomateriallardan foydalanish kabi zamonaviy texnologiyalarning og'zaki nutqni rivojlantirishdagi o'rni ham tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: nutq ko'nikmalari, kommunikatsiya, psixologik to'siqlar, jamoat oldida so'zlash, til o'rganish, madaniy ong, talaffuz, nutqiy xavotir, texnologiyalar yordamida o'rganish.

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing world, where information technologies and intercultural communication are expanding, the demand for learning foreign languages is increasing steadily. In this context, acquiring effective speaking skills is not only essential for developing linguistic competence but also serves as a crucial factor for achieving success in social, academic, professional, and personal development. At all stages of language acquisition, oral communication that is, speaking ensures the active participation of the learner, enables them to express their thoughts freely, and allows them to interact effectively in communicative environments. Therefore, in the language learning process, speaking skills remain one of the core areas requiring special attention (Brown, 2007).¹Currently, various efforts are being made to eliminate speaking barriers, and new technologies are being developed for this purpose. To overcome these difficulties, language learners must also take initiative and engage in practical efforts for self-improvement. For instance, nowadays many young learners face cultural barriers, which indicate a lack of understanding of the target language's cultural background. Thus, when learning a language, it is necessary not only to study its grammar and pronunciation but also to understand its culture. Nevertheless, many language learners especially those learning English or other foreign languages face several obstacles in speaking effectively. These barriers are associated with a range of factors, including speech anxiety, limited vocabulary, grammatical and pronunciation errors, psychological pressure, shyness, cultural differences, lack of communicative confidence, and the inability to express ideas logically (Horwitz et al., 1986; Richards & Renandya, 2002).²As a result of these obstacles, language learners may avoid public speaking, pause frequently during speech, or even lose interest in learning the language altogether. These conditions not only slow down the language acquisition process but also negatively impact the learner's self-esteem. Research has shown that among second language (L2) learners, high levels of speaking anxiety are strongly correlated with poor speaking performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Such problems often stem from a lack of self-confidence and limited reading or language

¹Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (5th ed.)*. Pearson Education.

²Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). *Foreign language classroom anxiety*. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132.

exposure. These kinds of issues ultimately hinder language acquisition. Speech anxiety, specifically the fear of speaking in public, is closely linked to both psychological and social factors and has a direct effect on the learner's self-perception and their interaction with the environment. In many cases, learners are afraid of making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes, which causes them to withdraw from speaking altogether (Young, 1991)³. This limits communication in interactive settings especially classrooms and reduces the overall effectiveness of language learning. Moreover, lexical competence that is, the knowledge of appropriate vocabulary and the ability to use it contextually plays a critical role in communication. A limited vocabulary can interrupt conversations and prevent clear expression of ideas. Language learners often respond with "I have nothing to say," which reflects the restricted nature of their lexical resources (Nation, 2001)⁴. Hence, in addition to grammar, expanding one's vocabulary base is vital to developing full communicative competence. Grammar and grammatical structures form the foundation of language, and without them, communication becomes impossible. Another major barrier is related to cultural and social differences. Each language carries its own cultural context, communication etiquette, conversational norms, and pragmatic rules. For instance, indirectness and politeness are typical in English, while in other cultures, directness may be preferred. Without understanding these cultural subtleties, learners may produce incorrect expressions or commit cultural missteps in speech (Kramsch, 1993)⁵. Therefore, developing cultural awareness and studying the language not only from a linguistic but also from a sociocultural perspective is of great importance. These cultural differences affect not only speaking but also other domains such as translation theory. However, these obstacles are not insurmountable. Modern pedagogical approaches and language teaching methodologies offer effective ways to overcome them. The following strategies can help address the aforementioned issues: **Metacognitive strategies** enable learners to be aware of, plan, and regulate their own learning process (Wenden, 1998)⁶. This allows them to analyze and correct their speaking errors. **Interactive methods** such as role-plays, debates, and group discussions engage learners in communicative environments and help develop speaking skills through practical activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2000)⁷. **Self-assessment and reflection** help learners identify their strengths and weaknesses and develop personalized strategies for improvement. **Modern technologies** — such as mobile applications (e.g., Duolingo, ELSA Speak)⁸, AI-based tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly), and multimedia resources — serve as powerful tools for enhancing speaking proficiency. Additionally, **multimodal approaches** — integrating listening, visual, and speaking tasks — are effective strategies for speaking development (Vandergrift, 2007)⁹. For example, through video lessons, learners can observe intonation, stress, body language, and social context¹⁰, thus moving closer to natural speech models.

³ Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge University Press.

⁴ MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991). *Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification*. *Language Learning*, 41(1), 85–117.

⁵ Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge University Press.

⁶ Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.

⁷ Wenden, A. (1998). *Metacognitive knowledge and language learning*. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(4), 515–537.

⁸ Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching (2nd ed.)*. Oxford University Press

⁹ Vandergrift, L. (2007). *Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research*. *Language Teaching*, 40(3), 191–210.

¹⁰ Young, D. J. (1991). *Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest?* *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426–437.

In conclusion, although speaking barriers arise from various causes, there are effective strategies to address them. This article aims to identify the key challenges faced by foreign language learners, analyze their root causes, and provide pedagogical, technological, and cultural solutions to help overcome these issues. Drawing on modern research, theoretical approaches, and real-world practices, the article offers practical recommendations for both language teachers and learners.

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