

A SYSTEM OF EXERCISES FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS AND OVERCOMING LANGUAGE BARRIERS IN ENGLISH LESSONS

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Анотація

Дане дослідження розглядає методи подолання мовних бар'єрів, зокрема роль викладача у цьому процесі. Запропоновані методи включають інтерактивні ігри, дискусійні завдання та орієнтацію на активне мовлення. Результати дослідження засвідчують позитивний вплив цих підходів на розвиток мовленнєвої впевненості студентів та підвищення їхньої комунікативної активності.

Ключові слова: мовний бар'єр, викладання англійської мови

Abstract

This study examines methods to overcome language barriers, emphasizing the teacher's role. Key strategies include fostering an atmosphere of trust, enhancing student motivation, and employing targeted exercises such as interactive games, discussion-based activities, and a focus on active speaking. The findings indicate that these approaches significantly improve students' confidence and speaking proficiency.

Key words: language barrier, English language teaching

In our time, English is not just a language of international communication, but has become a tool for achieving goals and completing tasks both in everyday life and professional activities. Speaking is one of the key skills through which the process of direct active communication and information exchange is realized. Thus, learning to speak plays a crucial role in the overall language learning process, but is simultaneously one of the most challenging skills, both in terms of skill implementation and skill acquisition.

The most common problem preventing a student from starting to speak is self-doubt, fear of making a mistake and being embarrassed, which creates the so-called "language barrier". According to the survey conducted by Polishchuk in the group of Ukrainian ESL students among the most common problems that students face when speaking English are the fears of making mistakes and speaking in front of the classroom[1]. In the classification of the roles of an ESL teacher in the Teaching Knowledge Test handbook Spratt, Pulverness and Williams mention "facilitator" and "diagnostician": the first helps students with the learning process providing resources and guidance, the latter finds and resolves the learning difficulties [2]. Thus, one of the teacher's responsibilities is to create conditions for overcoming the language "barrier" and stimulating students to actively use the language. I consider the following conditions important for engaging students in the process of active speaking:

- **Atmosphere of trust**
- **Motivation**, which includes:
 - Awareness of personal goals
 - Interest and engagement
 - Excitement of the process
 - Achievability of goals (creating a situation of success)
 - Support and praise

To implement these conditions, depending on students' knowledge level and existing skills, I use the following system of exercises and tasks:

1. Establishing trusting relationships with students from the first meeting:

- Communicate my goal, emphasizing that it is to help them, not to judge them
- Together with students, establish rules for our work (4 key points)
- Encourage them to define their personal goals for learning English for this year (in writing)

2. To generate interest and create an exciting atmosphere, I apply various games for both team and individual participation:

- *Getting-to-know-you games* (e.g., a ball game)
- *Two Truths and a Lie*
- *What's in the Picture?*
- *Tic-Tac-Toe* when learning new vocabulary
- *Word Bank* (creating sentences, stories)
- *Advertising or selling specific devices* (according to the topic)
- *Role-playing games*
- *"Open Mic"* type game (asking questions to the teacher, classmates)
- *Speaking clubs* on controversial topics
- 4/3/2 activity [3]
- Pretending to be clueless about their profession and asking about the purpose, role, or features of certain things
- Emphasizing that only English is used because I "don't know any other language"

3. **Focusing all work on speaking as much as possible**, reducing time for other activities, or leaving them for independent study (such as reading long texts or writing):

- Creating and then answering questions about texts and videos
- Retelling a text or creating one based on a sample
- Limiting the length of prepared oral statements not by the number of sentences but by time, ensuring tasks remain manageable.
- Recommending the creation of personal sentences that feel "familiar to the brain" and are easier to reproduce.

4. **To generate interest in real serious issues while implementing the accessibility principle, moving from simple small tasks to more complex ones:**

- Starting the lesson with a controversial or current question, or an interesting expression for each student to discuss
- Giving creative tasks like creating presentations with subsequent oral presentation, where listeners must ask the presenter questions

As a result of applying all of the mentioned above, I observe significant progress in the formation and development of speaking skills among all students attending the classes. Those who already had this skill gladly participate in discussions of interesting topics, strive to express their opinion, are interested in increasing speaking time during classes, and are ready to speak on any topic.

Students who previously had difficulties with oral speech are happy about their first successes, begin to believe in themselves, try to keep up with their peers and also participate in discussions, enthusiastically completing tasks that were previously challenging for them.

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