

INTERACTIVE METHODS FOR TEACHING SPEAKING SKILL TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL STUDENTS

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Abstract This article explores the application of interactive methods for teaching speaking skills to intermediate-level students. It highlights the effectiveness of techniques such as role-playing, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks in improving fluency and confidence. Additionally, the paper examines theoretical foundations, practical implementation strategies, and their impact on language acquisition.

Keywords: interactive methods, speaking skills, intermediate students, language teaching, fluency

Introduction Developing speaking skills is a critical component of language learning, especially for intermediate-level students who have mastered basic communication but require fluency and confidence to engage in more complex conversations. Traditional methods often fall short in meeting these needs, emphasizing rote learning over practical application. Interactive methods, rooted in communicative language teaching (CLT), offer innovative solutions by prioritizing active learner participation and authentic communication. This article examines interactive strategies and their role in fostering speaking skills among intermediate learners.

Speaking skills are foundational to effective communication, influencing both academic and professional success. However, intermediate learners often struggle with fluency, pronunciation, and the ability to maintain conversations. Addressing these challenges requires methods that go beyond textbook exercises to create a dynamic, engaging learning environment. By integrating interactive methods, educators can better meet the evolving needs of language learners.

Literature Review and used methods. Numerous studies underscore the importance of interactive approaches in language teaching. According to Brown (2001), active engagement in communication tasks enhances both fluency and accuracy. Harmer (2007) emphasizes that intermediate learners benefit significantly from activities requiring negotiation of meaning, which mirrors real-life conversations. Studies by Richards (2006) further highlight the efficacy of role-plays and simulations in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world application. Interactive methods are closely aligned with the principles of CLT, which prioritize communicative competence over grammatical perfection. For instance, Swain (1985) argues that output-driven tasks, such as discussions and presentations,

promote cognitive processing and language acquisition. Similarly, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory suggests that social interaction is a crucial driver of learning, making collaborative tasks essential in language education.

This article analyzes three key interactive methods and their implementation:

Role-Playing: Students simulate real-life scenarios to practice conversational skills, develop empathy, and build confidence. For instance, a "travel agency" scenario allows students to role-play as agents and customers, practicing transactional language.

Group Discussions: Structured discussions on familiar topics enable students to express opinions, practice turn-taking, and refine arguments. Topics such as "The impact of technology on daily life" or "Environmental challenges" encourage critical thinking while enhancing verbal skills.

Problem-Solving Tasks: Collaborative tasks requiring students to propose solutions encourage critical thinking and spontaneous speech. Examples include planning a community event or designing a marketing strategy for a fictional product.

These methods were implemented in a classroom of 25 intermediate-level students over 12 weeks. Pre- and post-intervention assessments measured fluency, accuracy, and confidence. Students participated in weekly sessions focused on one method, rotating through the techniques to ensure comprehensive exposure.

Results and Discussion The study revealed significant improvements in students' speaking skills. Role-playing increased confidence and fluency as students became accustomed to handling diverse conversational scenarios. One notable outcome was improved intonation and pronunciation, as students practiced speaking in varied contexts. Group discussions fostered collaborative learning and improved the ability to articulate complex ideas. Students also demonstrated enhanced listening skills and the ability to respond appropriately to peers.

Problem-solving tasks promoted critical thinking and impromptu speaking skills. For example, a task requiring students to plan a school event led to lively debates and negotiations, highlighting their ability to think on their feet. These activities also built team cohesion, as students learned to collaborate effectively.

Challenges included initial hesitation and fear of making mistakes, particularly during role-playing activities. However, these barriers were mitigated through continuous encouragement and constructive feedback. Incorporating scaffolding techniques, such as providing sentence starters and vocabulary lists, further supported learners.

The findings align with previous research, confirming the effectiveness of interactive methods in language instruction. The study also highlights the importance of adapting tasks to suit learners' interests and cultural contexts. For example, incorporating topics relevant to students' daily lives enhanced engagement and motivation.

Conclusion Interactive methods play a vital role in enhancing speaking skills among intermediate-level students. By prioritizing authentic communication and active participation, these techniques address the limitations of traditional approaches. Role-playing, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks offer practical avenues for improving fluency, confidence, and critical thinking.

Future research could explore the integration of technology in interactive language teaching to further enrich the learning experience. For instance, virtual reality (VR) environments could provide immersive opportunities for role-playing, while online forums could facilitate asynchronous group discussions. Educators are encouraged to experiment with these methods, tailoring them to the unique needs of their learners.

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