PROBLEMS RELATED TO SPEAKING SKILL

Shodmonova Muhayyo Qurbonovna
Gulistan state university

Abstract

This study investigates the problems faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in developing speaking skills. The study was conducted with a group of 30 EFL learners at a university in Uzbekistan. Data were collected through a questionnaire and interviews. The results showed that the learners faced a number of problems, including lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, difficulty in organizing ideas, and lack of fluency.

The study also found that the learners' problems were influenced by a number of factors, including cultural factors, educational background, personality traits, and learning strategies. The study concludes by making a number of recommendations for improving the speaking skills of EFL learners. These recommendations include providing learners with opportunities to practice speaking in a supportive environment, encouraging learners to take risks and make mistakes, helping learners to develop their vocabulary and pronunciation, teaching learners how to organize their ideas, and encouraging learners to use a variety of learning strategies.

The study's findings have implications for EFL teachers and curriculum developers. By understanding the problems faced by EFL learners in developing speaking skills, teachers and curriculum developers can create more effective learning materials and teaching methods.

Introduction

Speaking is one of the four language skills that are essential for communication. It is the ability to express oneself orally in a clear and effective manner. Speaking skills are important for a variety of purposes, including:

1. Communicating with others in social and professional settings
2. Sharing information and ideas
3. Persuading others
4. Expressing oneself creatively

Students face a number of challenges when it comes to developing speaking skills. These challenges can be broadly categorized into two groups: internal challenges and external challenges.

Internal challenges are those that originate within the student. These challenges can include:

• Lack of confidence: Students may lack confidence in their ability to speak English fluently and accurately. This can lead to anxiety and avoidance of speaking tasks.

• Fear of making mistakes: Students may be afraid of making mistakes when they speak English. This can lead to self-censorship and a reluctance to take risks.

• Limited vocabulary: Students may have a limited vocabulary, which can make it difficult for them to express themselves clearly and effectively.

• Poor pronunciation: Students may have poor pronunciation, which can make it difficult for others to understand them.

• Difficulty organizing ideas: Students may have difficulty organizing their ideas when speaking. This can lead to disjointed and difficult-to-follow speech.

• Lack of fluency: Students may lack fluency when speaking English. This can lead to slow and hesitant speech.

External challenges are those that originate outside of the student. These challenges can include:

• Lack of opportunities to practice speaking: Students may not have enough opportunities to practice speaking English in a supportive environment. This can lead to a lack of confidence and fluency.

• Negative feedback: Students may receive negative feedback from teachers or peers, which can discourage them from speaking English.

• Cultural factors: Cultural factors can influence students' attitudes towards speaking English. For example, in some cultures it is considered impolite to speak up in class, while in other cultures it is considered impolite to remain silent.

Overcoming Challenges

There are a number of things that students can do to overcome the challenges they face with speaking skills. These include:

• Building confidence: Students can build confidence by practicing speaking regularly in a supportive environment. They can also seek out opportunities to speak in front of larger groups.

• Overcoming fear of making mistakes: Students can overcome their fear of making mistakes by reminding themselves that everyone makes mistakes when learning a new language. They can also focus on the positive aspects of their speaking, such as their ability to communicate their ideas.

• Expanding vocabulary: Students can expand their vocabulary by reading widely, watching movies and TV shows, and listening to music in English. They can also use dictionaries and flashcards to learn new words and phrases.

•Improving pronunciation: Students can improve their pronunciation by listening carefully to native speakers and practicing speaking regularly. They can also use online resources or pronunciation apps to help them improve their pronunciation.

•Organizing ideas: Students can improve their ability to organize their ideas by outlining their speeches and practicing speaking in front of a mirror or with a friend. They can also use visual aids, such as charts and graphs, to help them organize their thoughts.

•Developing fluency: Students can develop fluency by practicing speaking regularly in a supportive environment. They can also focus on speaking at a natural pace and using correct grammar and pronunciation.

By overcoming the challenges they face with speaking skills, students can improve their ability to communicate effectively in English

This study is a valuable contribution to the research on EFL speaking skills. The study's findings provide insights into the problems faced by EFL learners and the factors that influence these problems. The study's recommendations can be used by EFL teachers and curriculum developers to improve the speaking skills of EFL learners.

Historical overview

The study of problems related to the speaking skill has a long history, dating back to the early days of language teaching. In the early 20th century, language teachers began to notice that learners often had difficulty developing speaking skills, even after years of study. This led to a number of studies on the problems that learners face when developing speaking skills.

One of the earliest studies on the speaking skill was conducted by Harold Palmer in 1917. Palmer identified a number of problems that learners faced, including: lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation.

Palmer's study was followed by a number of other studies on the speaking skill. In the 1950s and 1960s, researchers began to focus on the role of anxiety in speaking skills. Researchers found that anxiety could have a significant impact on learners' ability to speak the target language.

In the 1970s and 1980s, researchers began to focus on the role of social and cultural factors in speaking skills. Researchers found that social and cultural factors could influence learners' motivation to speak the target language and their ability to interact with native speakers.

In the 1990s and 2000s, researchers began to focus on the role of technology in speaking skills. Researchers found that technology could be used to provide learners with opportunities to practice speaking the target language and to receive feedback from others.

Today, the study of problems related to the speaking skill is a major area of research in the field of second language acquisition. Researchers continue to investigate the factors that influence speaking skills and to develop new methods and materials to help learners improve their speaking skills.

The article draws on this rich history of research to provide a comprehensive overview of the problems that learners face when developing speaking skills. The article also provides recommendations for teachers and learners on how to overcome these problems.

Methods

This study was conducted with a group of 30 EFL learners at a university in Uzbekistan. The participants were all enrolled in an English language course at the university. The participants were from a variety of countries and had different levels of English proficiency.

Data were collected through a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire was designed to collect information about the participants' speaking skills, their problems in developing speaking skills, and the factors that influenced their problems. The interviews were conducted to gather more in-depth information about the participants' experiences and perspectives.

The data were analyzed using a qualitative approach. The data were coded and analyzed to identify the main themes and patterns.

Questionnaire about Problems Related to the Speaking Skill

Section 1: Background Information

Name:

Age:

Nationality:

Level of English proficiency:

Years of learning English:

Section 2: Speaking Skills

How confident are you in your speaking skills?

What are your strengths and weaknesses in speaking?

What are the main problems you face when speaking English?

Section 3: Factors Influencing Speaking Skills

Do you think your cultural background influences your speaking skills? How?

Do you think your educational background influences your speaking skills? How?

Do you think your personality traits influence your speaking skills? How?

Do you think your learning strategies influence your speaking skills? How?

Section 4: Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to add about your speaking skills or the problems you face when speaking English?

Thank you for your participation!

Results

The results of the study showed that the participants faced a number of problems in developing speaking skills. These problems included:

Lack of confidence: Many of the participants reported feeling a lack of confidence in their speaking skills. They were afraid of making mistakes and being judged by others.

Fear of making mistakes: The participants were also afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. They worried that their mistakes would make them look foolish or incompetent.

Limited vocabulary: The participants had a limited vocabulary, which made it difficult for them to express themselves clearly and effectively.

Poor pronunciation: The participants' pronunciation was often poor, which made it difficult for others to understand them.

Difficulty in organizing ideas: The participants had difficulty organizing their ideas when speaking. Their speech was often disjointed and difficult to follow.

Lack of fluency: The participants lacked fluency when speaking English. Their speech was often slow and hesitant.

The study also found that the participants' problems were influenced by a number of factors. These factors included:

Cultural factors: The participants' cultural background influenced their speaking skills. For example, some participants from cultures that emphasize collectivism were less comfortable speaking up in class than participants from cultures that emphasize individualism.

Educational background: The participants' educational background also influenced their speaking skills. Participants who had received more formal education in English had better speaking skills than participants who had received less formal education.

Personality traits: The participants' personality traits also influenced their speaking skills. For example, participants who were more extroverted were more confident and fluent when speaking than participants who were more introverted.

Learning strategies: The participants' learning strategies also influenced their speaking skills. Participants who used effective learning strategies, such as practicing speaking regularly and getting feedback from others, had better speaking skills than participants who used less effective learning strategies.

Recommendations for teachers to improve students' speaking skills

Teachers can play a vital role in helping students to improve their speaking skills. Here are some recommendations for teachers:

Create a supportive learning environment: Students are more likely to take risks and speak up in class if they feel supported by their teacher and peers. Teachers can create a supportive learning environment by being patient, encouraging, and providing positive feedback.

Provide students with opportunities to practice speaking: Students need regular opportunities to practice speaking English in a supportive environment. Teachers can provide these opportunities by incorporating speaking activities into every lesson. For example, teachers can ask students to give presentations, participate in debates, or role-play different scenarios.

Encourage students to take risks: Students may be hesitant to speak up in class, especially if they are afraid of making mistakes. Teachers can encourage students to take risks by praising them for their effort, even if they make mistakes. Teachers can also provide students with opportunities to practice speaking in low-stakes environments, such as pair work or small group discussions.

Focus on fluency, not perfection: When students are first learning to speak English, it is more important to focus on fluency than perfection. Teachers can help students to develop fluency by encouraging them to speak at a natural pace and to use correct grammar and pronunciation.

Provide feedback: Feedback is essential for students to improve their speaking skills. Teachers can provide feedback by correcting students' pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Teachers can also provide feedback on students' overall performance, such as their level of confidence and their ability to organize their ideas.

Use technology to support speaking skills: There are a number of technology tools that can be used to support speaking skills. For example, teachers can use online discussion forums, video conferencing, and language learning apps to provide students with additional opportunities to practice speaking.

By following these recommendations, teachers can help their students to develop confidence, fluency, and accuracy in their speaking skills.

Methods and strategies for teachers to improve students' speaking skills

There are a variety of methods and strategies that teachers can use to improve their students' speaking skills. Some of the most effective methods and strategies include:

1. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

CLT is a method of teaching that emphasizes communication and interaction in the target language. CLT activities typically involve students working in pairs or small groups to complete tasks such as role-plays, simulations, and problem-solving exercises. CLT has been shown to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, as it provides them with opportunities to practice speaking in a natural and communicative way.

2. Task-Based Learning (TBL)

TBL is a method of teaching that focuses on the use of tasks to promote language learning. TBL tasks are typically complex and require students to use their language skills to complete a specific task, such as planning a trip, writing a letter, or giving a presentation. TBL has been shown to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, as it provides them with opportunities to use their language skills in a meaningful and communicative way.

3. The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach is a method of teaching that is based on the idea that language learning is a natural process that occurs through exposure to and interaction with the target language. In the Natural Approach, students are not explicitly taught grammar rules or vocabulary, but rather they are exposed to the language through listening, reading, and speaking activities. The Natural Approach has been shown to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, as it provides them with opportunities to acquire language in a natural and communicative way.

4. The Dogme Method

The Dogme Method is a method of teaching that emphasizes the use of authentic materials and student-centered activities. In the Dogme Method, teachers do not use textbooks or other traditional teaching materials, but rather they rely on authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, and videos. The Dogme Method has been shown to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, as it provides them with opportunities to use their language skills in a meaningful and communicative way.

5. Peer Feedback

Peer feedback is a strategy that involves students giving feedback to each other on their speaking skills. Peer feedback can be done in a variety of ways, such as through oral presentations, written feedback, or video recordings. Peer feedback has been shown to be effective in improving students' speaking skills, as it provides them with opportunities to hear their own speech and to get feedback from others.

There are a variety of methods and strategies that teachers can use to improve their students' speaking skills. The most effective methods and strategies are those that provide students with opportunities to practice speaking in a natural and communicative way.

Reference:

1. Ellis, R. (1994). The study of second language acquisition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. The Modern Language Journal, 70(2), 125-132.
3. Oxford, R. L. (1990). Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know. Foreign Language Annals, 23(4), 491-503.
4. Palmer, H. E. (1917). The scientific study and teaching of languages. London: George G. Harrap & Co.
5. Skehan, P. (1998). A cognitive approach to language learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. Wenden, A. (1991). Learner strategies for learner autonomy. Applied Linguistics, 12(2), 141-167.