

## HOW TO TEACH SPEAKING SKILLS EFFECTIVELY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN UZBEKISTAN

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**Abstract:** *This article is about effective methods of teaching speaking skills in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan. Speaking is argued one of the most challenging skills for learners due to limited exposure to English outside the classroom, fear of making mistakes, and lack of communicative practice. The article highlights common problems faced by Uzbek learners and suggests practical strategies, communicative activities, and teacher roles that can help improve students' speaking competence.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking skills, English language teaching, communicative approach, Uzbekistan, EFL learners, interaction, face to face, shadowing;*

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, English has become increasingly important in Uzbekistan due to globalization, international education, and career opportunities. As a result, teaching English effectively has become a priority. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—speaking is often regarded as the most difficult for learners. Many students in Uzbekistan have a good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but struggle to express their ideas orally. This article explores how speaking skills can be taught more effectively in the Uzbek EFL context.

#### Challenges of Teaching Speaking in Uzbekistan

Despite the growing interest in learning English, teachers in Uzbekistan face several challenges when teaching speaking:

1. Limited exposure to English outside the classroom

Students rarely use English in daily life, which reduces fluency development.

2. Fear of making mistakes, a less interaction, debates and formal and informal meetings

Learners are often afraid of being criticized or laughed at by peers.

3. Teacher-centered classrooms

Traditional teaching methods still dominate, leaving little time for student talk.

4. Large class sizes

This makes it difficult to give each learner enough speaking practice.

#### Effective Strategies for Teaching Speaking

1. It is important to have a creating and supportive Classroom Environment. Teachers should create a friendly and motivating atmosphere where students feel comfortable speaking. Mistakes should be seen as a natural part of learning, not as failures. To have an effective speaking lesson, teachers should focus on creating meaningful communication

opportunities and increasing students' confidence to speak English. First, it is essential to set a clear speaking objective for each lesson. Students should know what they are expected to do by the end of the lesson, such as expressing opinions, describing experiences, or taking part in a discussion.

Second, teachers should create a supportive and non-threatening classroom environment. Learners need to feel safe to make mistakes, as errors are a natural part of language learning. Encouragement and positive feedback help reduce anxiety and motivate students to participate actively.

Third, using student-centered and communicative activities is crucial. Pair work, group discussions, role-plays, problem-solving tasks, and debates allow students to speak more and use language in real-life situations. These activities increase student talking time and improve fluency.

The most fundamental aspect is pre-speaking preparation. Before asking students to speak, teachers should introduce relevant vocabulary, useful expressions, and examples. This preparation helps learners feel more confident and reduces hesitation during speaking tasks.

In addition, teachers should limit excessive correction during speaking activities. While accuracy is important, interrupting students too often can harm fluency. Instead, teachers can note common mistakes and provide feedback after the activity.

Finally, reflection and feedback play a key role in an effective speaking lesson. Students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their performance, and teachers should offer constructive feedback focusing on both strengths and areas for improvement.

## 2. Using Communicative Activities

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) plays a crucial role in developing speaking skills. Activities such as:

role-plays

discussions

debates

interviews

information gap activities

encourage students to use English for real communication.

## 3. Integrating Pair and Group Work

Pair and group work increase student talking time and reduce anxiety. Learners feel more confident speaking with classmates rather than in front of the whole class.

## 4. Teaching Functional Language

Students should be taught useful expressions for real-life situations, such as:

giving opinions

agreeing and disagreeing

asking for clarification

This helps them communicate more naturally.

## 5. Using Technology

Digital tools such as videos, online speaking platforms, and mobile applications can enhance speaking practice. Students can record their voices, participate in online discussions, and receive feedback.

### The Role of the Teacher

In speaking lessons, the teacher's role shifts from a lecturer to a facilitator. Teachers should:

- encourage participation
- provide constructive feedback
- model correct pronunciation and intonation
- monitor activities without interrupting fluency

### Other Perspectives on Effective Speaking Lessons

Some researchers and educators argue that an effective speaking lesson is not only about fluency, but also about interaction, autonomy, and authenticity. From this perspective, speaking lessons should reflect real communication and encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning.

### Sample Teaching Approaches and Lesson Methods

#### 1. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

##### Opinion:

Speaking develops best when students are engaged in meaningful tasks rather than controlled drills.

##### Method:

Give students a real-life task (planning a trip, solving a problem, making a decision).

Students work in pairs or groups to complete the task using English.

Language focus and correction come after the speaking task.

##### Example:

Students plan a weekend tour in Uzbekistan and present their plan to the class.

#### 2. Lexical Approach to Speaking

##### Opinion:

Fluency improves when learners use chunks of language, not individual words.

##### Method:

Teach common speaking phrases (e.g., In my opinion, In my view, I tend to think that, That's a good point).

Students practice these chunks in short dialogues and discussion Example:

Students discuss a social topic using at least five given expressions.

#### 3. Scaffolded Speaking Method

##### Opinion:

Learners need gradual support before independent speaking.

##### Method:

Start with controlled practice (model dialogues).

Move to semi-controlled activities (guided role-plays).

Finish with free speaking (open discussion).

Example:

Topic: Talking about hobbies

Model → guided Q&A → free pair discussion.

#### 4. Project-Based Speaking Lessons

Opinion:

Long-term projects increase motivation and real communication.

Method:

Students work on a project over several lessons.

Each stage requires speaking (planning, discussing, presenting).

Final product is an oral presentation.

Example:

Students create a presentation about “Problems in Our Community”.

#### 5. Debate-Based Speaking Lessons

Opinion:

Debates develop critical thinking and advanced speaking skills.

Method:

Divide the class into “for” and “against” groups.

Teach debate language beforehand.

Students prepare arguments and speak in turns.

Example:

Topic: Online education is better than traditional education.

#### 6. Pronunciation-Focused Speaking Lessons

Opinion:

Clear pronunciation is as important as fluency for effective communication.

Method:

Focus on stress, intonation, and connected speech.

Use repetition, shadowing, and minimal pair activities.

Integrate pronunciation into speaking tasks.

Example:

Students record themselves speaking and compare with a model.

### **CONCLUSION**

Teaching speaking skills in Uzbekistan requires modern, student-centered approaches that focus on communication rather than memorization. By creating a supportive environment, using communicative activities, and integrating technology, teachers can help learners become confident and fluent speakers of English. Developing speaking skills not only improves language competence but also prepares students for global communication.