THE ROLE OF SPEAKING ACTIVITIES AND SHADOWING TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR B1 LEVEL LEARNERS

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ANNOTATSIYA. Ushbu maqolada B1 darajadagi ingliz tili o'rganuvchilarining nutq ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishda gapirish mashqlari va Shadowing (soya ortidan takrorlash) metodining ahamiyati keng yoritiladi. Ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganayotgan talabalar og'zaki muloqot jarayonida ko'pincha lug'at boyligining cheklanganligi, grammatik qoidalardan foydalanishda ikkilanib qolish, talaffuzdagi qiyinchiliklar, nutq ravonligining yetarli darajada rivojlanmaganligi va xato qilishdan qo'rqish kabi muammolarga duch keladilar. Ushbu muammolar talabalarning darsdagi faolligi, o'ziga bo'lgan ishonchi va erkin muloqot qilish qobiliyatiga salbiy ta'sir ko'rsatishi mumkin. Maqolada juftlikda ishlash, rolli o'yinlar, guruh muhokamalari, qisqa taqdimotlar va savol-javob mashqlari kabi kommunikativ faoliyatlarning nutq ko'nikmalarini shakllantirishdagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi. Shuningdek, Shadowing metodining talaffuzni yaxshilash, nutq ritmi va intonatsiyasini o'zlashtirish, tinglab tushunish hamda og'zaki nutq o'rtasidagi bog'liqlikni mustahkamlashdagi imkoniyatlari ko'rib chiqiladi. Maqolada Communicative Language Teaching yondashuvi hamda Jack C. Richards, Theodore S. Rodgers, I. S. P. Nation, Jonathan Newton, Scott Thornbury va Alexander Arguelles kabi olimlarning nazariy qarashlariga murojaat qilinadi. Bundan tashqari, xato qilishdan qo'rqmay fikr bildirish imkonini beruvchi qulay ta'lim muhitini yaratish, o'quvchilarga konstruktiv fikr-mulohazalar berish va muntazam mustaqil mashq qilishning ahamiyati ta'kidlanadi. Maqola xulosasida kommunikativ mashqlar va Shadowing metodini birgalikda qo'llash B1 darajadagi o'rganuvchilarning nutq ravonligi, talaffuzi, faol lug'at boyligi va o'ziga bo'lgan ishonchini rivojlantirishga yordam berishi mumkinligi asoslab beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: ingliz tilini o'rganish, B1 daraja, nutq ko'nikmalari, gapirish mashqlari, juftlikda ishlash, Shadowing metodi, kommunikativ til o'qitish, nutq ravonligi, talaffuz, o'ziga ishonch, kommunikativ kompetensiya.

АННОТАЦИЯ. В данной статье подробно рассматривается роль разговорных упражнений и метода Shadowing в развитии навыков устной речи у изучающих английский язык на уровне B1. Учащиеся, изучающие английский язык как иностранный, часто сталкиваются с такими трудностями в процессе устного общения, как ограниченный словарный запас, неуверенность при использовании грамматических конструкций, проблемы с произношением, недостаточная беглость речи и страх совершения ошибок. Эти трудности могут отрицательно влиять на активность учащихся на занятиях, их уверенность в себе и способность свободно общаться на английском языке. В статье анализируется значение коммуникативных упражнений, включая работу в парах, ролевые игры, групповые дискуссии, короткие презентации и упражнения в формате вопросов и ответов. Особое внимание уделяется возможностям метода Shadowing в улучшении произношения, освоении ритма и интонации английской речи, а также укреплении взаимосвязи между аудированием и говорением. Теоретической основой статьи служат подход

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Communicative Language Teaching и научные взгляды таких исследователей, как Jack C. Richards, Theodore S. Rodgers, I. S. P. Nation, Jonathan Newton, Scott Thornbury и Alexander Arguelles. Кроме того, подчёркивается важность создания благоприятной образовательной среды, в которой учащиеся могут свободно выражать свои мысли без чрезмерного страха перед ошибками. Рассматривается значение конструктивной обратной связи, регулярной речевой практики и самостоятельных упражнений. В заключение обосновывается, что совместное использование коммуникативных упражнений и метода Shadowing может способствовать развитию беглости речи, произношения, активного словарного запаса и уверенности в себе у изучающих английский язык на уровне B1.

Ключевые слова: изучение английского языка, уровень B1, навыки устной речи, разговорные упражнения, работа в парах, метод Shadowing, коммуникативное обучение языку, беглость речи, произношение, уверенность в себе, коммуникативная компетенция.

ABSTRACT. This article provides a detailed examination of the role of speaking activities and the Shadowing technique in developing English speaking skills among B1-level learners. Students learning English as a foreign language often encounter difficulties during oral communication, including limited vocabulary, hesitation when using grammatical structures, pronunciation problems, insufficient speaking fluency, and fear of making mistakes. These challenges may negatively affect students' classroom participation, self-confidence, and ability to communicate freely in English. The article analyses the contribution of communicative activities, including pair work, role-play, group discussions, short presentations, and question-and-answer exercises, to the development of speaking skills. Particular attention is given to the potential of the Shadowing technique to improve pronunciation, develop awareness of English speech rhythm and intonation, and strengthen the connection between listening comprehension and spoken production. The theoretical framework draws on Communicative Language Teaching and the contributions of prominent scholars, including Jack C. Richards, Theodore S. Rodgers, I. S. P. Nation, Jonathan Newton, Scott Thornbury, and Alexander Arguelles. Furthermore, the article highlights the importance of creating a supportive learning environment in which students can express their ideas without excessive fear of making mistakes. It also discusses the value of constructive feedback, regular speaking practice, and independent learning activities. The article concludes that combining communicative speaking activities with the Shadowing technique may help B1-level learners improve their speaking fluency, pronunciation, active vocabulary, and self-confidence. These methods provide complementary opportunities for learners to practise spoken English, develop communicative competence, and become more effective language users.

Keywords: English language learning, B1-level learners, speaking skills, speaking activities, pair work, Shadowing technique, Communicative Language Teaching, speaking fluency, pronunciation, self-confidence, communicative competence.

INTRODUCTION

In todays society, English has become an important means of communication in international education, business, science, technology, tourism, and cultural exchange. Many people use English to study another country, communicate with foreign people from different countries, access information, and create strong work-related connections. Studying English is not only about remembering vocabulary

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and grammatical structures. Students must also improve the ability to use the language effectively in daily-life circumstances.

English language learning traditionally involves four important abilities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language proficiency is achieved through the improvement of several essential skills. Listening helps learners understand spoken information, reading improve comprehension and vocabulary, and writing enables them to communicate through written texts. Speaking, although, has a particularly important role in direct communication because it allows learners to express ideas, ask questions, address challenges, and respond to other people immediately.

Although it is important, speaking is often one of the most challenging abilities for students of English as a foreign language. Although students may have a good understanding of texts and grammar, expressing their thoughts quickly in conversations can still be challenging. Although learners might be familiar with the appropriate vocabulary, using these words during spontaneous conversations can still be challenging.Furthermore, understanding a speakers message does not always guarantee that students can give a natural and confident response.

B1-level learners often experience these difficulties more clearly. Although they already have a basic knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, they can usually understand the general meaning of familiar conversations. Although B1 learners are usually able to talk about familiar subjects,share personal experiences and give basic opinions, expressing themselves without preparation can still be challenging.They may also find it difficult to communicate complicated thoughts or keep a convrsation going for an extended time.

One important reason for these difficulties is the difference between passive knowledge and active language use. Passive knowledge allows learners to recognise words and grammatical structures when reading or listening. Active knowledge requires them to retrieve and use those words and structures while speaking. Developing this ability requires regular practice, meaningful interaction, and appropriate learning strategies.

Through activities such as working in pairs, role-playing, group discussions and presentations students can practise communicating in English.These tasks help them move beyond theoretical knowledge by giving them the chance to express their thoughts, understand different viewpoints and take part in conversations. At the same time, the Shadowing technique offers an additional way to practise pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, and speech fluency by repeating spoken English while listening to an audio recording.

The purpose of this article is to examine how speaking activities and the Shadowing technique can support the development of English speaking skills among B1-level learners. It also considers the psychological challenges that influence oral communication and presents practical recommendations for teachers and students.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING ACTIVITIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Speaking activities are essential in language education because they help learners transform theoretical knowledge into practical communication skills. Learning grammar and vocabulary is necessary, but these elements alone do not guarantee that a student can communicate effectively. Learners need opportunities to use language in different situations and develop the ability to select appropriate expressions quickly.

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Speaking activities can help students improve several aspects of language proficiency. First, they support vocabulary development. When learners discuss familiar topics, ask questions, and explain their opinions, they repeatedly use words and expressions in meaningful contexts. This can make vocabulary easier to remember and use in future conversations.

Second, speaking activities provide opportunities to practise grammar. By taking part in regular speaking practice, learners become more familiar with various grammatic can grammatical patterns.They can apply these structures when talking about previous experiences, making future plans, expressing their likes and dislikes, or offering suggestions. Although errors are a natural part of learning, consistent practice helps students use grammar more accurately over time.

Third, speaking activities contribute to pronunciation development. Through interaction with teachers and classmates, learners can become more aware of word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and the pronunciation of individual sounds. Listening carefully to other speakers also helps students recognise how English is used in natural communication.

Another important benefit is the development of fluency. Fluency refers to the ability to express ideas at a reasonable pace without excessive hesitation. It does not mean speaking perfectly or never making mistakes. Instead, fluent communication involves maintaining a conversation, connecting ideas, and responding appropriately.

Speaking activities also improve listening skills because communication requires learners to understand other people before responding. In pair work and group discussions, students must pay attention to questions, identify important information, and formulate relevant answers. Therefore, speaking and listening develop together.

Finally, regular speaking practice can increase learners' confidence. Students who frequently participate in supportive classroom activities become more familiar with speaking English in front of others. As a result, they may become more willing to express their opinions and participate in discussions.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Several important approaches in English language teaching explain why meaningful speaking practice is necessary for language development.

3.1. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasises the use of language for meaningful communication. Richards and Rodgers (2014) discuss communicative approaches in which language learning focuses on developing learners' ability to use English appropriately in different contexts.

From this perspective, students should not spend all their time memorising grammatical rules or completing mechanical exercises. They should also participate in activities that require them to exchange information, express opinions, ask for clarification, and respond to other speakers.

For example, a teacher may ask students to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of studying online. Students can share their experiences, explain their opinions, and respond to their partners' ideas. This activity requires learners to use English for a meaningful purpose.

For B1-level students, communicative activities should be connected to familiar situations. Topics such as education, hobbies, travel, technology, family traditions, and future careers can make communication easier because learners already have ideas and experiences related to them.

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CLT also encourages learners to become active participants in the learning process. Instead of depending entirely on the teacher, students work together, solve communicative problems, and practise using English independently.

3.2. The Four Strands Framework

Nation and Newton (2009) describe four important strands of language learning: meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development.

Meaning-focused input involves understanding messages through listening and reading. For example, students may listen to a short conversation or read a text about everyday life. These activities provide examples of vocabulary, grammar, and natural language use.

Meaning-focused output requires learners to communicate their own messages through speaking or writing. Pair discussions, interviews, and short presentations are examples of meaning-focused output because students use English to express their own ideas.

Language-focused learning gives attention to specific language features, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and useful expressions. Teachers may introduce phrases such as "In my opinion," "I agree with you," and "Could you explain that again?" before asking students to participate in a discussion.

Fluency development focuses on using familiar language more quickly and confidently. Students may repeat a short presentation, discuss a familiar topic several times, or retell a story using their own words.

These four strands suggest that effective speaking instruction should combine different types of learning. Students need to understand English, produce meaningful messages, study language features, and practise speaking with familiar language. Pair work and shadowing can contribute to different parts of this process.

3.3. Balancing Fluency and Accuracy

Thornbury (2005) emphasises the importance of developing speaking through appropriate classroom activities and practice. Two important aspects of speaking development are fluency and accuracy.

Accuracy refers to the correct use of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Accuracy-focused activities help learners notice and correct language problems. For example, students may practise asking questions in the present perfect or describing past experiences using the past simple.

Fluency refers to the ability to communicate ideas smoothly and maintain the flow of speech. Fluency-focused activities encourage students to continue speaking even when they cannot immediately find the perfect word or sentence structure.Both aspects are important for B1-level learners. If students focus only on accuracy, they may become afraid of making mistakes and speak very slowly. If they focus only on fluency, they may repeatedly use incorrect forms without noticing them.

Teachers should therefore provide a balance between the two. During a fluency activity, students should have enough freedom to express their ideas. After the activity, the teacher can discuss common errors and provide examples of more appropriate expressions.

THE SHADOWING TECHNIQUE AND ITS ROLE IN SPEAKING DEVELOPMENT

The Shadowing technique is an individual practice method in which learners listen to spoken language and repeat it almost simultaneously, following the original speaker with a short delay. The

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learner attempts to reproduce the speaker's pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation as accurately as possible.

Alexander Arguelles is widely associated with promoting shadowing as a language-learning practice. The technique can be useful for learners who understand English but have difficulty speaking smoothly or reproducing natural speech patterns.

Unlike traditional repetition exercises, shadowing encourages learners to listen and speak continuously. They must pay attention to the audio while producing the words, which creates a close connection between listening and speaking.

4.1. Improving Pronunciation

Pronunciation is an important part of effective oral communication. Even when learners know the correct words, unclear pronunciation can sometimes make their messages difficult to understand.

Shadowing gives learners an opportunity to observe and imitate how English speakers pronounce words and connect sounds. They can practise individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, and intonation.

For example, a learner may listen to a short conversation about daily routines and repeat the sentences while following the speaker's rhythm. Repeated practice can help the learner become more familiar with common pronunciation patterns.

The main goal is not necessarily to copy a particular accent perfectly. The goal is to develop clear, understandable pronunciation and communicate messages effectively.

4.2. Developing Fluency and Reducing Hesitation

B1-level learners sometimes pause frequently because they need time to remember vocabulary, construct sentences, and check grammar. These pauses can make communication difficult, especially when the learner is trying to respond quickly.

Shadowing provides structured practice in producing spoken English continuously. By repeating familiar expressions and sentence patterns, learners can become more comfortable with the physical and mental processes involved in speaking.

The technique may also help students become more familiar with common expressions and word combinations. For example, phrases such as "I would like to," "The main reason is," and "In my opinion" can become easier to retrieve after repeated practice.

However, shadowing alone does not teach learners how to organise every original thought or respond appropriately in a conversation. It should be combined with communicative activities that require independent language production.

4.3. Connecting Listening and Speaking

Listening and speaking are closely connected. To participate in a conversation, learners need to understand the message they hear and produce a suitable response.

Shadowing requires students to listen carefully while repeating spoken language. This can help them become more attentive to pronunciation, rhythm, sentence structure, and natural pauses.

For B1 learners, short recordings with clear pronunciation are usually a practical starting point. As learners become more comfortable, they can gradually move to longer or more challenging audio materials.

4.4. Expanding Active Vocabulary

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Learners may recognise many English words when reading or listening but struggle to use them in conversation. This happens because recognising a word and retrieving it quickly during speech are different skills.

Shadowing exposes learners to vocabulary in complete sentences rather than isolated word lists. When students repeat useful expressions in context, they have opportunities to become familiar with how words are combined.

For example, learners can practise expressions used to give opinions, describe experiences, make suggestions, and explain problems. They should then use these expressions in their own sentences and conversations.

This final step is important because repeating a sentence does not automatically mean that a learner can use the same structure independently.

4.5. A Practical Shadowing Routine for B1 Learners

Learners can follow a simple routine to make shadowing more organised and effective.

First, they should choose a short audio recording appropriate for their English level. The recording should have clear pronunciation and a topic they can understand.

Second, they should listen to the recording once without speaking. This helps them understand the general meaning and identify the topic.

Third, they can listen again while reading the transcript, if one is available. They should pay attention to unfamiliar words, sentence stress, and pronunciation.

Fourth, learners should repeat the recording in short sections before attempting to shadow the entire passage. They should try to follow the speaker without creating long pauses between sentences.

Fifth, they can record their own voice and compare it with the original audio. This allows them to notice differences in pronunciation, rhythm, and clarity.

Finally, learners should summarise the audio in their own words or discuss its topic with another person. This stage connects shadowing practice with independent communication.

Regular practice for approximately 10–15 minutes can be a manageable addition to a daily English-learning routine. The quality and consistency of practice are more important than completing a very long session occasionally.

THE FEAR OF MAKING MISTAKES IN SPEAKING

One of the major psychological barriers to speaking English is the fear of making mistakes. Many students worry about using incorrect grammar, choosing the wrong word, or pronouncing something incorrectly. They may also feel uncomfortable when classmates or teachers listen to them.

This fear can be particularly noticeable among B1-level learners because they already know enough English to recognise many of their own mistakes. As a result, they may spend too much time checking every sentence before speaking.

When students are overly concerned about accuracy, they may avoid participating in discussions or give very short answers. This reduces their opportunities to practise speaking and develop fluency.

Teachers can help students overcome this problem by creating a supportive classroom environment. Students should understand that mistakes are a normal part of learning a foreign language. Making an error does not mean that a learner is unsuccessful; it indicates an area that may need further practice.

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Another useful strategy is delayed error correction. During a fluency activity, the teacher can allow students to finish expressing their ideas rather than interrupting every time a mistake occurs. After the activity, the teacher can discuss several common errors and demonstrate how to correct them.

For example, if several students have difficulty using past-tense verbs, the teacher can write a few anonymous examples on the board and ask the class to improve the sentences together. This approach supports learning without unnecessarily embarrassing individual students.

Preparation time can also reduce speaking anxiety. Before a discussion, learners may receive a list of useful expressions or a few minutes to organise their ideas. This support makes it easier for them to participate.

Pair work is especially useful in this context because speaking to one classmate may feel less stressful than speaking in front of the entire class. As students gain experience, they can gradually develop the confidence needed for larger discussions and presentations.

THE ROLE OF PAIR WORK IN IMPROVING B1 SPEAKING SKILLS

Pair work is a classroom activity in which two students work together to complete a task, exchange information, solve a problem, or discuss a topic. It is widely used in communicative language teaching because it creates opportunities for students to use English actively.

6.1. Increasing Student Talking Time

In a teacher-centred classroom, the teacher may speak for much of the lesson, leaving individual students with limited opportunities to practise oral communication.

Pair work allows many students to speak at the same time. Instead of waiting for the teacher to ask them a question, learners can ask and answer questions, exchange opinions, and explain their ideas directly to a partner.

For example, students can interview each other about hobbies, university life, favourite books, or future plans. Each student has a clear reason to listen and respond.

Increasing student talking time is important because speaking is a practical skill that develops through use. Students need repeated opportunities to retrieve vocabulary, construct sentences, and respond to other people.

6.2. Reducing Anxiety and Building Confidence

Pair work creates a smaller and often more comfortable communication setting. Students who feel nervous about speaking in front of a large group may find it easier to communicate with one partner.

Working in pairs also allows learners to make mistakes, ask for help, and try unfamiliar expressions in a less public situation. When the classroom atmosphere is supportive, students may become more willing to participate.

Teachers should explain that the purpose of pair work is communication and learning, not competition between students. Partners should listen respectfully and help each other when necessary.

6.3. Developing Interaction Skills

Successful communication requires more than producing grammatically correct sentences. Speakers also need to listen carefully, ask follow-up questions, clarify information, and respond appropriately.

Pair work provides opportunities to practise these skills. If a student does not understand a partner, they can ask, "Could you repeat that, please?" or "What do you mean by that?"

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Learners can also practise expressions such as "I agree with you," "I see your point, but…," and "Could you give me an example?"

These expressions are particularly useful at B1 level because they help students maintain conversations even when they have limited vocabulary.

6.4. Encouraging Independent Learning

Pair work gives students more responsibility for their learning. Instead of depending entirely on the teacher, they must ask questions, listen to their partners, and complete the task together.

This can help students develop communication strategies and become more independent language users. It also allows teachers to observe learners' difficulties and provide support when necessary.

For pair work to be effective, teachers should provide clear instructions, an appropriate time limit, and a meaningful goal. Both students should have opportunities to speak, and the task should require genuine interaction rather than simply copying answers.

OTHER EFFECTIVE SPEAKING ACTIVITIES FOR B1 LEARNERS

Although pair work and shadowing are useful, learners benefit from a variety of activities. Different tasks develop different aspects of oral communication.

7.1. Role-Play

Role-play allows students to practise realistic situations by taking different roles. Examples include checking into a hotel, ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions, attending a job interview, or discussing a problem with a university adviser.

For instance, one student can act as a hotel receptionist while another student plays the role of a guest. The guest asks about room availability and hotel facilities, while the receptionist provides information.

This activity helps learners practise functional language and prepares them for situations they may encounter outside the classroom.

7.2. Group Discussions

Group discussions encourage students to exchange opinions and respond to different viewpoints. Suitable B1-level topics include online education, the advantages of reading, social media, healthy habits, travel, and the importance of learning foreign languages.

Teachers can provide guiding questions to help students organise their ideas. Learners should practise expressing agreement and disagreement politely and giving reasons for their opinions.

Group discussions also help students learn to take turns and listen respectfully to others.

7.3. Short Presentations

Short presentations allow learners to organise their thoughts and speak to an audience. Students can prepare two- or three-minute presentations about a favourite book, an important personal experience, a country they want to visit, or their future career.

Teachers can provide a simple structure: introduction, main points, examples, and conclusion.

Learners can also practise linking expressions such as "First of all," "In addition," "For example," "However," and "To sum up."

Regular short presentations can gradually improve students' ability to speak in front of others.

7.4. Question-and-Answer Activities

Question-and-answer activities help learners develop the ability to respond quickly. Students can work in pairs and take turns asking questions about everyday topics.

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For example, one student asks, "What do you usually do at weekends?" The other student answers and then asks a related follow-up question.

The activity becomes more communicative when students ask additional questions instead of giving only one-word answers. This encourages longer responses and more natural interaction.

7.5. Storytelling and Picture Description

Storytelling encourages learners to organise events in a logical order. Students can describe a personal experience, retell a short story, or invent a simple situation.

Picture description is another useful activity. The teacher provides a picture and asks students to describe the people, objects, actions, and possible situation.

These activities develop vocabulary, grammatical control, sequencing, and the ability to speak for an extended period.

INTEGRATING PAIR WORK AND SHADOWING INTO ONE LESSON

Pair work and shadowing serve different but complementary purposes. Shadowing provides focused practice in listening, pronunciation, rhythm, and repeating useful expressions. Pair work requires learners to use language to communicate their own meanings.

A teacher can combine both techniques in one lesson about everyday communication.

Stage 1: Pre-communicative activities

The teacher introduces the topic and teaches useful vocabulary and expressions. Students listen to a short dialogue and identify the main ideas. The teacher can briefly explain important pronunciation features.

Stage 2: Communicative activities

Students work in pairs and practise shadowing selected sentences from the dialogue. They then use the expressions in their own conversations. For example, after practising a dialogue about travel, students can ask each other about their favourite destinations and future travel plans.

Stage 3: Post-communicative activities

Students discuss what they have learned, summarise the conversation, and identify expressions they found useful. The teacher provides constructive feedback on common pronunciation and grammar problems.

This sequence moves from preparation to meaningful interaction and then reflection. It gives students support before speaking independently and allows them to apply what they have practised.

The teacher should ensure that shadowing does not replace genuine communication. Students need both opportunities to imitate language models and opportunities to create their own messages.

CHALLENGES AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Although speaking activities and shadowing can support language development, their effectiveness depends on how they are implemented. Teachers and learners may encounter several challenges.

One common challenge is limited vocabulary. Students may understand a topic but lack the words needed to express their opinions. Teachers can address this by introducing key vocabulary before an activity and providing useful expressions that students can refer to while speaking.

Another challenge is unequal participation. In some pairs, one student may speak much more than the other. Teachers should assign clear roles, alternate speaking turns, and monitor participation to ensure that both students practise.

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Pronunciation difficulties may also affect communication. Learners should have access to clear audio materials and opportunities to repeat short sections. Teachers can focus on the pronunciation features that most affect understanding rather than expecting immediate perfection.

A further challenge is the fear of making mistakes. Teachers should establish respectful classroom rules and provide feedback that encourages improvement. Correcting every mistake during a conversation can interrupt fluency, so teachers should select an appropriate time and method for correction.

The following recommendations can help make speaking practice more effective:

Practise regularly. Learners should include short speaking activities in their daily or weekly routines instead of practising only before examinations.

Choose suitable materials. Audio recordings, dialogues, and videos should match the learner's current level and interests.

Prepare before speaking. A short planning period and a list of useful expressions can help students organise their ideas.

Combine different activities. Pair work, role-play, discussions, presentations, and shadowing develop different but complementary skills.

Focus on communication first. During fluency activities, students should try to express their ideas rather than stop after every small mistake.

Use feedback constructively. Teachers should explain how learners can improve and give them opportunities to practise corrected forms.

Monitor progress. Students can record short speaking samples from time to time and reflect on changes in their fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence.

Encourage independent practice. Learners should use English outside the classroom through suitable audio materials, conversations, and self-directed speaking exercises.

Progress in speaking may be gradual. Students should not expect to become fluent after practising for only a few days. Consistency, suitable materials, meaningful communication, and constructive feedback are important elements of long-term development.

DISCUSSION

The approaches discussed in this article indicate that B1-level learners need more than theoretical knowledge of English to develop effective speaking skills. They require opportunities to use the language, receive understandable input, practise pronunciation, and communicate with other people.

Communicative Language Teaching highlights the importance of meaningful interaction. The Four Strands Framework demonstrates the value of combining input, output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. Thornbury's discussion of speaking pedagogy also supports the need to provide opportunities for both accuracy and fluent communication.

Pair work contributes to communicative development by increasing student participation and creating opportunities for negotiation of meaning. Shadowing offers a more focused form of practice that helps learners pay attention to spoken models and become familiar with natural pronunciation and rhythm.

These methods should not be viewed as competing alternatives. They address different needs and can be used together. For example, a student can first shadow a short dialogue, practise the expressions with a partner, and then use the same language to discuss a personal experience.

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Nevertheless, the methods should be adapted to individual learning needs. Some students may need more pronunciation practice, while others may need additional vocabulary support or opportunities to overcome speaking anxiety. Teachers should observe students' performance and adjust activities accordingly.

It is also important to recognise the limits of the discussion. This article presents a theoretical and methodological analysis of speaking activities and shadowing; it does not report an original classroom experiment or measured results from a group of B1 learners. Therefore, the benefits described should be understood as pedagogical reasons for using these techniques, rather than as numerical evidence of their effectiveness in a particular class. Further classroom research could investigate how learners' speaking performance changes when the two approaches are used regularly.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, speaking is a fundamental component of English language learning, particularly for B1-level learners who are developing the ability to communicate more independently. Although these learners may possess a reasonable understanding of grammar and vocabulary, they can still experience difficulties with spontaneous speech, pronunciation, hesitation, and confidence.

Speaking activities provide essential opportunities to transform passive knowledge into active communication. Pair work increases student talking time, encourages interaction, reduces the pressure of speaking before a large audience, and helps learners practise asking questions and expressing opinions. Role-play, group discussions, presentations, storytelling, and question-and-answer activities provide additional opportunities to use English in meaningful situations.

The Shadowing technique offers a complementary approach by connecting listening with immediate oral practice. Through repeated exposure to spoken English, learners can practise pronunciation, sentence rhythm, intonation, and useful expressions. When combined with independent speaking tasks, this practice can support the development of more confident and fluent communication.

The theoretical perspectives of Richards and Rodgers, Nation and Newton, Thornbury, and Arguelles provide useful foundations for understanding the role of communication, balanced practice, and shadowing in language learning. However, no single technique can address every difficulty faced by learners. Effective instruction requires a combination of meaningful interaction, appropriate language input, focused practice, and constructive feedback.

Teachers should create a supportive learning environment in which students are encouraged to participate and understand that mistakes are a normal part of language development. Learners, in turn, should practise consistently, use English in different situations, and reflect on their progress.

Ultimately, combining communicative speaking activities with regular shadowing practice offers a practical approach to supporting B1-level learners as they develop clearer pronunciation, greater fluency, more active vocabulary, and stronger confidence in using English.

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