

# Evolving Speaking Skills in Primary Schools Through Non-Traditional Teaching Methods

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**Annotation:** Developing speaking skills in primary school pupils is a critical component of language acquisition, setting the foundation for effective communication. While traditional teaching methods have been the cornerstone of education, the rise of non-traditional methods has shown promise in enhancing pupils' speaking abilities. This article explores innovative strategies to evolve speaking skills, emphasizing learner-centered, experiential, and technology-integrated approaches.

**Key words:** young learners, non-traditional methods, communication, tasks, pupils, speaking skills, language, technology.

Speaking is one of the foundational skills in language acquisition and communication, playing a crucial role in a child's academic, social, and emotional development. In primary education, the development of speaking skills is particularly important because it coincides with a critical period for cognitive and linguistic growth. This section explores the multifaceted significance of speaking skills and their impact on learners' overall development, supported by relevant research and theories.

Speaking is the primary mode of communication for young learners, allowing them to express thoughts, ask questions, and share ideas. It is a key skill that bridges interpersonal interaction and learning. Harmer emphasizes that speaking enables children to articulate their understanding, negotiate meaning, and participate in collaborative learning activities, making it indispensable for both classroom success and real-world interactions [7].

Evolving strong speaking skills also facilitates effective participation in group discussions, presentations, and storytelling, which are common activities in primary school curricula. These interactions encourage active engagement, a sense of belonging, and confidence in voicing opinions.

Speaking activities help pupils overcome communication apprehension and build self-assurance. A supportive environment where pupils can practice speaking without fear of judgment is crucial for this confidence-building process. According to Brown, when pupils succeed in expressing themselves, they develop a positive self-image and are more likely to participate in future communicative tasks [2].

Moreover, frequent opportunities to practice speaking reduce the fear of making mistakes, which is often a barrier for young learners. This fosters a mindset where pupils view errors as learning opportunities, a concept aligned with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which asserts that a low-anxiety environment facilitates language acquisition [9].

Speaking is an essential component of the communicative process, encompassing pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and interactive competencies. For primary school pupils, mastering speaking skills is particularly significant as it lays the foundation for their personal, academic, and social growth.

Speaking enables children to connect with their peers and adults, fostering relationships and promoting teamwork. Effective verbal communication helps pupils:

- Express their emotions and ideas: Sharing their feelings or thoughts confidently in various settings, such as during group activities or casual conversations;

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- Collaborate with peers: Working in teams on classroom projects or participating in games where clear communication is key;
- Resolve conflicts: Using words to negotiate, explain their perspective, and find solutions during disagreements. Strong social interaction skills contribute to developing empathy, understanding, and respect for others' opinions [3].
- Speaking skills are closely linked to cognitive processes like critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving. Through verbal expression, pupils learn to:
- Organize thoughts: Structuring their ideas logically before expressing them;
- Clarify concepts: Asking questions when they do not understand something, which enhances their understanding;
- Engage in analytical discussions: Participating in classroom discussions where they must evaluate information and provide thoughtful responses.

The ability to articulate their thoughts helps pupils refine their mental processes and promotes intellectual growth [5].

Speaking skills are fundamental to academic achievement as they enable pupils to actively engage in the learning process. Pupils with strong speaking abilities can:

- Participate in class discussions: Sharing their opinions and answering questions contributes to a dynamic learning environment;
- Present their ideas effectively: Delivering oral presentations or reciting poems enhances confidence and academic engagement.

Speaking allows pupils to express their individuality and share their unique perspectives. It builds their confidence as they see their opinions valued in a group setting. Confident speakers are more likely to take initiative, lead group activities, and overcome stage fright [12].

By focusing on the development of speaking skills, educators can nurture well-rounded individuals who are equipped to communicate effectively, think critically, and engage meaningfully in society.

The evolution of teaching practices has ushered in innovative, non-traditional methods that significantly improve speaking skills in primary education. These methods focus on engaging learners through interaction, creativity, and real-world application, departing from rote memorization and passive learning. Below is a comprehensive exploration of these methods, supported by research and practical examples [10].

- Task-Based Learning (TBL) emphasizes meaningful communication through practical tasks, fostering an immersive language environment. Pupils focus on completing real-world tasks rather than learning language rules in isolation.
- ✓ Role-playing scenarios, such as ordering food at a restaurant or asking for directions.
- ✓ Conducting interviews with classmates or family members.
- ✓ Group projects that require collaborative planning and oral presentations.

TBL encourages pupils to use language naturally, improving fluency and confidence [6].

- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) involves teaching subjects like science, history, or art through the medium of a second language, integrating content and language learning.
- ✓ Pupils explain a science experiment or describe historical events in the target language.
- ✓ Art projects where pupils present their work orally in English.

CLIL creates a purposeful context for language use, promoting both subject knowledge and speaking proficiency [4].



- Drama and storytelling are powerful methods to engage pupils in speaking through role-play and narrative techniques.
- ✓ Acting out fairy tales, historical events, or original stories in pairs or groups.
- ✓ Participating in improv activities where pupils react to unpredictable scenarios.
- ✓ Retelling personal experiences or cultural myths in storytelling circles.

Drama promotes emotional engagement and expressive communication, while storytelling enhances coherence and vocabulary [8].

Project-Based Learning (PBL) involves pupils working on a project that culminates in a presentation, integrating multiple language skills.

- ✓ Designing a class newsletter or blog and presenting articles orally.
- ✓ Creating a short video documentary on a chosen topic and narrating the process.

PBL emphasizes critical thinking, collaboration, and the practical application of speaking skills [1].

Non-traditional teaching methods offer immense potential to enhance speaking skills in primary schools. By focusing on interactive, creative, and technology-enabled approaches, educators can create engaging learning experiences that not only improve pupils' speaking proficiency but also build their confidence, critical thinking, and collaboration abilities [11]. These methods, supported by thoughtful implementation and teacher training, have the power to transform language education in primary classrooms.

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