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ELIMINATING SPEAKING BARRIERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING THROUGH THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract, *Ehis article explores the major speaking barriers faced by learners in English language learning and suggests effective strategies to overcome them through the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The study analyzes psychological, lexical, grammatical, and methodological challenges and provides practical classroom solutions using interactive methods and modern technologies. Visual illustrations and structured tables are included to enhance understanding.*

Keywords: *communicative approach, speaking barriers, CLT, interactive methods, speaking skills, motivation, language anxiety, English teaching*

Introduction

In contemporary language teaching, a widespread issue is that many learners can understand English but struggle to speak it fluently. This gap between receptive skills such as listening and reading, and productive skills like speaking and writing, is commonly observed in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. The main causes of this problem include psychological difficulties, insufficient vocabulary knowledge, limited opportunities for speaking practice, and traditional teacher-centered instructional methods. In many educational environments, teaching is often focused on grammar explanation, translation tasks, and written exercises, while speaking activities receive less attention. Consequently, students may acquire theoretical knowledge of English but lack the confidence or ability to use it in real-life communication. This situation creates a significant barrier to developing communicative competence. Another important factor is the influence of affective or emotional barriers such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence. These issues reduce learners' willingness to participate in oral communication. According to Stephen Krashen, emotional factors can raise the affective filter, which prevents learners from effectively processing and producing language when they feel anxious or insecure. To overcome these challenges, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is widely recognized as an effective methodology in modern language education. CLT emphasizes meaningful interaction, authentic communication, and the practical use of

language in real-life contexts rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy. It encourages active participation through pair work, group activities, and communicative tasks. Jack C. Richards and Theodore Rodgers argue that the primary goal of communicative language teaching is to develop learners' ability to use language effectively in real communicative situations. Therefore, the development of speaking skills requires not only linguistic knowledge but also a supportive classroom environment, interactive teaching strategies, and sufficient opportunities for meaningful communication practice.

Types of Speaking Barriers

Speaking barriers can be divided into four main categories:

Table 1: Types of Speaking Barriers

Type	Explanation	Example	Solution
Psychological	Fear, shyness, low confidence	"I can't speak… I'm afraid"	Role play, positive feedback
Lexical	Lack of vocabulary	"I don't know this word…"	Flashcards, vocabulary games
Grammatical	Fear of making mistakes	"I go… or went?"	Focus on fluency first
Methodological	Lack of speaking practice	Teacher talks, students silent	Group work, discussions

Explanation: Psychological barriers are the most common. Students often know the answer but are afraid to speak. H. Douglas Brown emphasizes: "Interaction is the heart of communication."[2]

Process Diagram (Conceptual Visualization)

This diagram illustrates the process of reducing speaking barriers through the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. It shows that learners first face different types of barriers such as psychological, lexical, grammatical, and methodological

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difficulties. These barriers are addressed through CLT-based interactive activities such as role play, group work, and language games. Continuous practice combined with constructive feedback leads to increased learner confidence, which ultimately results in impro ved speaking fluency.
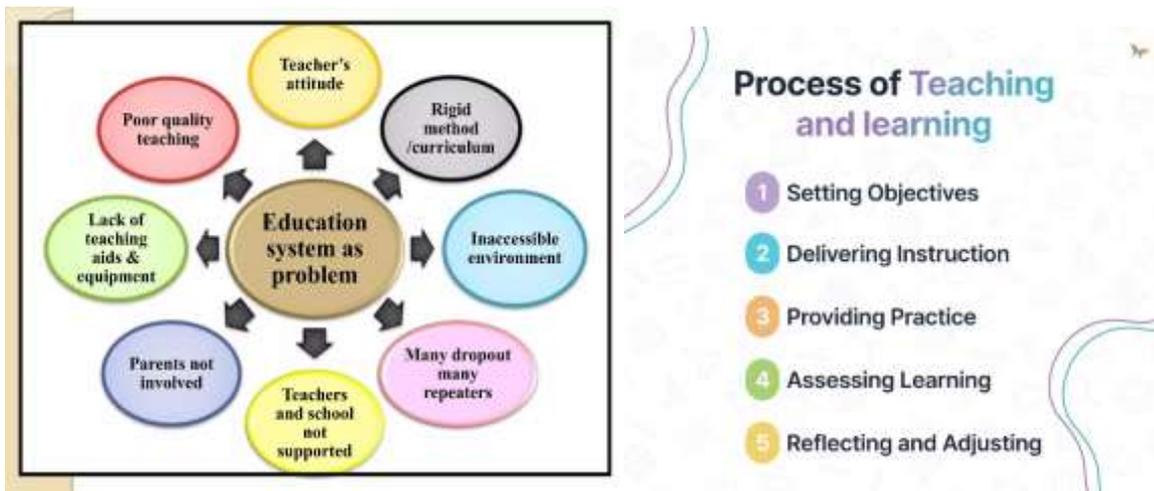
Explanation of diagram: Speaking Barrier → Interactive Method → Practice → Confidence → Fluency

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Practical Application Example Lesson Topic: *My Future Profession*

Methods: Role Play, Pair Work, Vocabulary Games

Procedure: Learners discuss their future professions in pairs. They practice questions and answers related to the topic. Outcomes are shared during class discussion.

Observed Outcomes: Reduced anxiety and hesitation. Increased speaking fluency. Expanded vocabulary repertoire

Table 2: Example Role Play Activity

Situation	Roles	Task	Expected Outcome
Restaurant ordering	Customer, Waiter	Use target vocabulary in conversation	Increased confidence and fluency
Airport check-in	Passenger, Staff	Ask and answer relevant questions	Reduced fear and hesitation
Job interview	Interviewer, Applicant	Respond to typical interview questions	Enhanced fluency and grammar usage

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Coclusion, Speaking barriers are intrinsic to the language learning process, yet they can be effectively mitigated through the communicative approach. Employing interactive methods, task-based strategies, and appropriate technological tools fosters learner engagement, increases confidence, and promotes real-life communicative competence. Teachers are advised to create supportive environments where students can practice speaking freely and meaningfully.

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