

## INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS FOR EMPOWERING SPEAKING ABILITIES

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**Abstract:** The development of speaking skills is a central component in language learning and teaching. In the modern educational landscape, traditional methods are increasingly complemented or replaced by innovative, student-centered approaches that emphasize communicative competence, fluency, and interaction. This paper explores a range of contemporary teaching methods designed to enhance speaking abilities, including task-based learning, communicative language teaching (CLT), project-based learning, and the integration of digital technologies. It also highlights the role of authentic materials, peer collaboration, and formative assessment in fostering learners' oral proficiency. Emphasis is placed on the adaptability of these methods across different educational contexts and learner needs, aiming to create an engaging and effective speaking environment.

**Keywords:** speaking skills, communicative competence, contemporary methods, language teaching, task-based learning, digital tools, oral proficiency

**Introduction:** Teaching speaking skills has evolved significantly over the years, shifting from traditional, teacher-centered methods to dynamic, student-centered approaches that emphasize authentic communication and interaction. Modern methods prioritize fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence, enabling learners to use language effectively in real-world contexts. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), effective teaching of speaking requires methods that reflect the interactive nature of spoken language and cater to learners' communicative needs.

### MAIN PART

One of the most influential approaches in modern language teaching is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Developed in response to the limitations of grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods, CLT focuses on teaching language for communication rather than for mastering grammatical forms. The approach emphasizes the importance of context, real-life interaction, and meaningful communication. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), CLT encourages learners to express themselves fluently and accurately while using appropriate language forms. It prioritizes fluency over error-free speech, acknowledging that mistakes are a natural part of language learning. Classroom activities in CLT often include role-plays, interviews, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks. These activities simulate real-world scenarios, allowing students to practice speaking in authentic contexts.

Another prominent method is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which shares many principles with CLT but places a stronger emphasis on using language to accomplish specific tasks. According to Ellis (2003), TBLT engages learners in meaningful communication by focusing on task completion rather than language forms. Tasks in TBLT are often designed around real-life situations, such as planning an event, solving a problem, or giving directions. Learners are encouraged to use language creatively to achieve communicative goals. This approach not only develops fluency and confidence but also helps learners understand how language functions in different contexts. The task cycle typically includes three stages: pre-task (introducing the topic and task), task performance (conducting the task), and post-task (reflecting and analyzing language

use). By emphasizing meaning over accuracy, TBLT motivates learners to communicate freely and adapt to spontaneous situations.

The Natural Approach, developed by Krashen and Terrell (1983), is another method grounded in the idea that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current proficiency level ( $i+1$ ). The approach prioritizes understanding messages over producing language, particularly in the early stages of learning. Learners are encouraged to listen and understand before speaking, gradually building confidence to communicate. This method emphasizes a stress-free environment where learners feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes. Activities often include listening exercises, storytelling, and question-and-answer sessions designed to expose students to natural, meaningful language.

The Silent Way, introduced by Gattegno (1972), takes a different approach to teaching speaking skills. This method focuses on learner autonomy, encouraging students to explore language on their own with minimal teacher intervention. The teacher uses visual aids, such as colored rods and phonemic charts, to guide learners in producing sounds, words, and sentences. The method emphasizes pronunciation and intonation while promoting self-correction and critical thinking. Although not widely adopted, the Silent Way highlights the importance of discovery-based learning and active participation.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a modern approach that integrates language instruction with subject matter content. According to Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010), CLIL enables learners to acquire language skills while studying subjects such as science, history, or geography. The method encourages learners to use language in context, promoting both fluency and cognitive skills. CLIL activities include project-based learning, presentations, debates, and problem-solving tasks that require learners to use the target language meaningfully. This approach aligns with the principles of bilingual education, supporting language development and content mastery simultaneously.

Blended Learning and Flipped Classroom Approaches have gained popularity with advancements in technology. Blended learning combines traditional classroom instruction with online learning, providing learners with flexibility and personalized practice. The flipped classroom model involves students studying lesson materials at home (e.g., watching instructional videos) and engaging in interactive speaking activities during class time. According to Bergmann and Sams (2012), this approach allows teachers to focus on speaking practice, feedback, and collaborative tasks while students review language input independently. The use of digital tools, such as video conferencing platforms, language learning apps, and online discussion boards, enhances speaking practice and provides learners with exposure to authentic language.

Total Physical Response (TPR), developed by Asher (1969), is a method that uses physical movement to teach language. It is particularly effective for beginners and young learners, helping them associate words and actions. The teacher gives commands, and learners respond physically, reinforcing comprehension and memory. Although primarily a listening and comprehension technique, TPR can be adapted to promote speaking by encouraging learners to give commands and interact with peers.

Audiovisual Methods leverage multimedia tools to teach speaking skills. According to Lee and VanPatten (2003), using videos, animations, and audio recordings in the classroom exposes learners to authentic pronunciation, intonation, and expressions. These methods provide context, making it easier for learners to understand and practice language. Teachers can use audiovisual materials for role-plays, discussions, and presentations.

**In summary**, modern approaches and methods in teaching speaking skills emphasize communication, interaction, and real-world language use. They prioritize fluency over grammatical accuracy, create meaningful contexts for practice, and incorporate technology to enhance the learning experience. Approaches like CLT, TBLT, the Natural Approach, CLIL, and Blended Learning offer dynamic and engaging ways to develop speaking skills, enabling learners to communicate effectively and confidently in diverse situations.

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