

WHY MANY ENGLISH LEARNERS UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE BUT CANNOT SPEAK IT

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18033886>

Annotation: This article explains why many people learning English can understand the language but cannot speak it well. It looks at different reasons, such as traditional grammar teaching, few opportunities to speak, fear of mistakes, and lack of vocabulary. The article also suggests ways to improve speaking skills, like practice, using English in daily life, and building confidence. This study helps teachers and students understand and solve the problem of weak speaking skills.

Keywords: English learning, speaking skills, understanding, vocabulary, confidence, language anxiety

Introduction: Many people who learn English have the same experience. They can read books, understand articles, or follow lessons in English, but when they try to speak, they feel stuck. Words do not come easily, sentences feel slow, and confidence disappears. This situation can be confusing and even discouraging for learners. They often ask themselves why speaking feels much harder than reading or listening.

The reason is that speaking is an active skill. When we read or listen, we have time to think and understand the meaning. However, when we speak, we must choose the right words, use correct grammar, and pronounce sentences clearly in a very short time. This pressure makes speaking stressful for many learners. In addition, many classrooms focus more on grammar rules and written exercises than on real speaking practice. As a result, students do not get enough chances to use English in real conversations.

Fear is another important problem. Learners worry about making mistakes or being judged by others. Even when they know many words, they cannot use them quickly while speaking. This makes them feel shy and silent. This article explores why English learners face these speaking difficulties and suggests simple and effective ways to improve speaking skills. With regular practice, supportive environments, and real-life communication, learners can gain confidence and speak English more naturally.

Discussion and Results: Many English learners understand English well, but they cannot speak it fluently. This problem appears in many countries where English is taught as a foreign language. The results show that this issue is caused by teaching methods, limited speaking practice, psychological factors, vocabulary problems, and the learning environment.

First, traditional teaching methods play an important role. In many classrooms, teachers focus on grammar rules, reading texts, and written exercises. These activities help learners understand English, but they do not prepare students for real communication. Learners know the rules but cannot use them quickly while speaking. Speaking needs fast thinking, and grammar-focused lessons do not train this skill. As a result, students remain silent even when they understand the lesson.

Second, lack of speaking practice is a major factor. Speaking is a skill that improves only through practice. In large classes, students do not have enough time to speak. Teachers often choose reading and writing tasks because they are easier to control and check. However, without pair work, group discussions, and oral activities, students cannot develop fluency. The results show that learners who speak more in class feel more confident and improve faster.

Third, psychological factors strongly affect speaking ability. Many learners feel anxiety when they speak English. They are afraid of making mistakes or being laughed at by others. This fear stops them from speaking freely. Even when learners know the correct answer, they may stay quiet. Confidence is an important result of regular practice and teacher support. When teachers create a friendly environment and accept mistakes, students become more active.

Vocabulary knowledge is another key issue. Learners often recognize many words while reading or listening, but they cannot remember them during speaking. This happens because passive vocabulary is larger than active vocabulary. Speaking requires quick access to words. When learners cannot find the right word, they pause or stop speaking. Repeating words, using them in sentences, and practicing speaking helps move vocabulary from passive to active use.

The learning environment also influences speaking skills. In non-English-speaking countries, learners rarely use English outside the classroom. They hear their native language at home, in the street, and in the media. This limits natural exposure to English. In contrast, learners who use English daily or interact with English speakers develop better speaking skills. Technology can help solve this problem. Online videos, language apps, and speaking platforms give learners more chances to practice.

Another important result is the difference between fluency and accuracy. Many learners focus too much on speaking without mistakes. They think every sentence must be perfect. This slows down communication. The results suggest that fluency should come before accuracy. When learners focus on meaning first, they speak more naturally. Errors can be corrected later through feedback.

Communicative teaching methods show positive results. Activities such as role-plays, debates, presentations, and discussions improve speaking skills. These activities help learners think in English and respond quickly. Students who take part in communicative activities show higher motivation and confidence. Teachers play a key role in guiding and encouraging learners during these tasks.

Overall, the results show that understanding English does not automatically lead to speaking ability. Speaking needs practice, confidence, and real communication. When learners receive enough support and opportunities, they can overcome their speaking difficulties and become more fluent speakers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, many English learners understand the language but struggle to speak it fluently. This problem is mainly caused by grammar-focused teaching, lack of speaking practice, fear of making mistakes, and limited active vocabulary. Understanding English does not automatically lead to good speaking skills.

The findings show that regular speaking practice and a supportive learning environment are essential for improvement. When learners are encouraged to speak freely and mistakes are accepted, their confidence increases. Using English in real-life situations and focusing on fluency before accuracy can also help learners speak more naturally. With proper practice and

support, learners can overcome their speaking difficulties and improve their communication skills.

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