

# USING SHORT STORIES IN ENGLISH TO IMPROVE YOUNG LEARNERS' SPEAKING SKILLS

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## Abstract

This article focuses on how teachers can provide opportunities in the classroom to increase students' confidence and fluency. It highlights several important aspects to consider when helping students develop their speaking skills, specifically by using short stories in English to enhance young learners' speaking abilities.

**Keywords:** Main goal, logical thinking, vocabulary, new projects, elements of oral speech.

## Introduction

In recent years, learning a foreign language has become not just a method of self-development but a necessity. A foreign language is now an essential component of education, not only in schools and universities but also in many additional preschool educational institutions. The demand for foreign language skills in society, as well as parents' recognition that a foreign language is not only a factor in raising a modern individual but also the foundation of social and material well-being, has made early foreign language learning both popular and relevant.

## Main Objectives of Teaching Foreign Languages to Preschool Children:

- To develop initial communication skills in a foreign language;
- To enable children to express their thoughts and emotions in real-life communication using the foreign language;
- To equip children with the ability to achieve their goals using the foreign language.

In an ideal world, regularly communicating with English speakers on various topics would be the best way to learn to speak fluently. However, few English learners have the opportunity to practice speaking in an immersive classroom setting. Instead, they often find themselves in groups with many other students who primarily speak their native language.

This highlights the importance of providing regular speaking opportunities in the classroom.

## Focus on Fluency:

Fluency is a key indicator of advanced language proficiency. Research shows that introducing some urgency into speaking tasks can improve fluency. For example, the 4/3/2 technique allows students to practice speaking multiple times, encouraging them to resolve pauses and



hesitations while gradually improving fluency. This method helps students structure their communication better and link ideas coherently.

Research suggests that as students repeat the activity, their speech becomes more dense, precise, and confident. While pronunciation is not a major obstacle to fluency for most students, it cannot be ignored because incorrect pronunciation can lead to misunderstandings or communication breakdowns.

### **Improving Pronunciation:**

Some students struggle with pronunciation because there is no one-to-one correspondence between English spelling and sounds. Familiarity with stress and intonation in English words and sentences is essential. For instance, changing the stress in a word can turn it from a noun to a verb. In natural speech, English words often link or break apart, and native speakers tend to emphasize certain words in a sentence to convey meaning.

Students need guidance on these pronunciation features, as they may not exist in their first language. Activities that help with pronunciation include:

- Traditional repetition exercises;
- Shadowing exercises where students listen to English songs or speeches and imitate the pronunciation;
- Practicing reading aloud from short story texts;
- Writing and performing dialogues.

### **Oral Speaking as a Mental Process:**

Oral speaking is a mental activity that involves psychological mechanisms such as listening, thinking, and reasoning. Developing oral speaking skills in English requires studying and researching the lexical, grammatical, and phonetic aspects of the language. A major focus should be placed on improving speaking skills.

For beginners, teaching speaking can include presenting fixed conversational phrases that do not require extensive grammar knowledge, such as common expressions used in everyday interactions. For example:

- “Hello, my name is ... What’s yours?”
- “Nice to meet you.”
- “Where are you from?”
- “What do you do?”

Teaching these fixed expressions can be beneficial because consistent use makes the language more automatic, helping students learn to apply them correctly in different contexts.

### **Interactive Methods:**

Interactive methods like storytelling and cartoons are effective for young learners. In the “Voice Stories” activity, children and the teacher look at pictures together and practice pronouncing words. English-language cartoons are particularly helpful because children love watching them and can learn the language while enjoying the content.



Teachers can also use songs, poems, tongue twisters, and animated videos to make lessons more engaging. For example:

- Starting a class with a cheerful English song allows children to sing and dance, which helps them memorize the lyrics faster and creates a positive learning environment.

Engaging children in such activities naturally integrates them into the English-speaking environment and keeps their attention, which can otherwise be difficult to maintain.

### **Conclusion:**

Teaching young children a foreign language should be conducted not as a strict obligation but as an enjoyable activity. Using a variety of effective methods helps lay the foundation for their future knowledge. It is important to convey the significance of learning foreign languages in a natural and engaging way.

The great thinker Abu Nasr Al-Farabi mastered multiple foreign languages, communicated fluently, and even created works in those languages. Such opportunities enabled him to study global science and achieve great success.

Games like “Mirror” and “Find the Mistake” can also enhance learning. For example, while teaching numbers, students can identify mistakes in images with numbers and correct them. This tests their understanding and reinforces the lesson content.

### **Summary:**

The main principles and aspects of developing oral speaking skills in English, as well as related linguistic competencies, have been explored. Oral speaking is one of the key areas of focus in foreign language education. It requires the application of innovative and modern methods to ensure effective learning outcomes. The development of oral speaking skills demonstrates the progress being made in foreign language education across the country.

Language is a reflection of humanity, and improving it should be a priority. Through innovative methods and consistent efforts, oral speaking skills can be developed effectively and contribute significantly to personal and professional growth.

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