



TEACHER TALK: TEACHERS' LANGUAGE AFFECTS STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE

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Abstract

This article highlights the role and importance of teacher's speech in forming students' self-confidence. The teacher's language, tone, attitude, and communication style in the lesson directly influence the psychological state, motivation, and learning process of students. Especially in English lessons, the teacher's encouraging and positive speech encourages students not to be afraid of mistakes, to express themselves freely, and to believe in their abilities. The study emphasizes that a teacher's positive language increases students' internal motivation to learn, creates an environment of psychological security during the lesson, and increases the effectiveness of language learning. Also, the teacher's cultural, emotional, and pedagogical competence in communication is assessed as an important factor in the personal development of students.

Keywords: Teacher's speech, self-confidence, motivation, communication culture, positive language, psychological environment, English language education, pedagogical competence.

Introduction

A teacher's speech is not only a means of imparting knowledge, but also a powerful psychological factor in the formation of students' self-confidence. Especially in the process of learning a foreign language, such as English, the teacher's language, intonation, choice of words, and attitude directly affect the motivation of students, speech activity, and the courage to express one's opinion. Since the language learning process is often associated with emotions such as



fear, embarrassment, or shame from making mistakes for students, the teacher's speech is crucial in softening or intensifying these emotions.

The speech of an English teacher should be, first of all, supportive, encouraging, and positive. For example, if the teacher, without criticizing the student's mistake, reiterates it in the correct form or encourages them with phrases like "Good try!," "You're getting better!," "That's a good idea!," it increases the student's self-confidence. Such positively constructed speech encourages students not to be afraid of mistakes, to speak freely, and to be more active in expressing their thoughts. Conversely, speaking in a cold, critical, or low-evaluating language causes them to become internally closed, weakened, and lose interest in learning the language. The teacher's speech is also a means of teaching communication culture.¹ If an English teacher uses natural, fluent, and culturally appropriate expressions in their speech, students will master the language not only as grammatical rules, but also as a real form of communication. For example, if the teacher uses soft expressions in the classroom, such as "Could you please...," "Would you mind...," "Let's try this together," this teaches students the etiquette of cultural communication in English. In this way, the teacher's speech, along with language, also forms social culture in students.

The importance of a teacher's speech is also closely related to the psychological state of the students. Especially when learning a new language, students feel insecure, ashamed of pronunciation or grammatical errors. If the teacher speaks in a gentle, supportive, and sincere tone during this time, students will feel safe. This reduces the psychological barrier called the "affective filter" - that is, students become mentally relaxed and have the opportunity to naturally master the language.

The teacher's speech is not just a tool for conducting a lesson, but a model that shapes students' confidence in language learning. For example, if an English teacher speaks with clear pronunciation, clearly, naturally, and emotionally, students will imitate them. The teacher's speech develops their auditory perception, improves pronunciation, and enriches speech. In addition, the

¹ Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Longman. pp. 25–210.



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teacher's vocabulary, intonation, facial expressions, and body language also have a great influence on students. They learn not only words from the teacher, but also the tone of communication, facial expressions, and communication culture.

To do this practically, the teacher must consciously plan their speech. In every lesson, it is necessary to use words that inspire and give confidence to students, to show a gentle attitude towards mistakes, and to conduct communication in a positive tone. The teacher must control the tone, speed, pronunciation, and body language of their voice. Also, the teacher can increase students' self-confidence by publicly acknowledging their achievements. For example, phrases like "I really liked how you explained that," "You're improving fast," or "That's a clever answer" evoke in students a sense of self-worth.

There can be many reasons for decreased motivation in language learning - the student feels like they are developing slowly, feels ashamed of their mistakes, the lessons seem monotonous, or they lose the original purpose of language learning. At such times, the teacher's most important task is to restore the student's inner conviction and guide them towards success.²

First of all, the teacher should inspire the student through positive communication. Every word in the teacher's speech influences motivation. For example, "You're not there yet, but you're improving every day," "Remember how difficult this was a month ago? Expressions like "Look at you now!," "Mistakes mean you're learning" teach students to appreciate their achievements. Such words transform the negative thought "I can't cope" into the positive thought "I'm learning slowly."

The second aspect is the activation of the lesson. In the lesson, it is necessary not only to limit oneself to grammatical exercises or word memorization, but also to create opportunities for the practical application of language through games, real-life situations, role-playing, mini-interviews, videos, or travel topics. For example, active activities such as "Imagine you're a tourist in London," "Let's make a short podcast," or "You're a journalist - interview your partner" reawaken

² Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press. pp. 10–120.



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students' enthusiasm. Such methods make the lesson enjoyable and students never tire of learning the language.³

The third aspect is the restoration of the goal. Many students lose motivation because they forget why they are learning the language. The teacher should remind them: knowledge of the language opens the door to new opportunities, travels, foreign friends, success in work and education. For example, short conversations in the classroom, such as "What can English give you?" or "Where do you want to use English?," help students re-evaluate their goals.

The fourth aspect is the feeling of success. Every student needs to be noticed and evaluated even for minor achievements. The teacher should pay attention to this: "You used a new word today!," "You spoke very clearly!," or "Your pronunciation is improving!" Sometimes small awards, contests like "Student of the Week," or praise in front of the class intensify motivation.⁴

In conclusion, the teacher's speech is not only a communicative tool in teaching English, but also a motivational and educational force. It encourages students to freely express their thoughts and act with positive emotions in language learning. Every word, intonation, and phrase in the teacher's speech resonates in the student's psyche - a positive word strengthens confidence, while a negative word weakens it. Therefore, every English teacher should develop their speech as an important part of pedagogical mastery, consciously manage it, and create a language learning environment that is psychologically safe, reliable, and inspiring.

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³ Cameron, L. (2001). Teaching Languages to Young Learners. Cambridge University Press. pp. 52–230.

⁴ Oxford, R. L. (2016). Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies: Self-Regulation in Context. Routledge. pp. 60–194.



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