

# A Comprehensive Review of Student's Perceptions Towards Learning Speaking Skills in Secondary Education

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## Abstract

This study examines how secondary-school students perceive learning to speak English and what factors shape their engagement. Using a qualitative descriptive design—interviews, observations, and questionnaires with students from several schools—we assessed the impact of motivation, teaching methods, and classroom climate on speaking performance. Results show that motivated students participate more confidently, especially when teachers use interactive techniques such as group tasks and digital tools in a supportive, low-anxiety environment. Key obstacles remain—fear of errors and limited vocabulary—suggesting a need for gradual skill-building, constructive feedback, and engaging strategies like task-based and gamified activities. These insights help educators refine speaking instruction and point to future research on cultural and technological influences.

**Keywords:** Student Perceptions; Speaking Skills; Learning Strategies; Language Proficiency; Communication Skills.

## 1. Introduction

For secondary school students to effectively communicate in both academic and real-world settings, they must possess strong speaking abilities (Dah, M. N.: 2024). Even with the acknowledged significance of these abilities, speaking especially when speaking in a second language becomes extremely difficult for a lot of pupils, who experience severe anxiety. Teachers who want to enhance their teaching methods and establish safe spaces where students feel comfortable and competent must first understand how kids view learning how to speak. This thorough analysis looks at the different aspects that affect students' perspectives, such as individual learning experiences, classroom dynamics, and teaching strategies. We can learn important things about how students approach speaking assignments, what obstacles they encounter, and what motivates them to learn by looking at these impressions. In the end, the goal of this analysis is to add to the conversation on language education by emphasizing the necessity of customized approaches that improve speaking abilities and foster a satisfying secondary education experience.

According to (Brown, 2007), English speaking ability is one of the basic skills that is very important in education, especially at the secondary education level. In the current era of globalization, the ability to communicate effectively in English is not only an academic necessity but also an essential skill in the world of work and daily life. Despite this, many students experience difficulties in developing their speaking skills. This can be due to various factors, including lack of motivation, ineffective teaching methods, and lack of confidence when communicating. Therefore, it is important to understand students' perceptions of learning speaking skills in order to design more effective interventions in English language teaching. According to Richards (2008), the development of speaking skills requires a focus on both fluency and accuracy, which are often influenced by the classroom environment and the teaching resources available. The integration of multimedia tools, for example, has been shown to create a more dynamic and interactive learning experience, helping students to engage more effectively with speaking tasks. Moreover, peer feedback and collaborative exercises can encourage students to express themselves without fear of judgment, thus reducing anxiety and fostering confidence. When these elements are combined with a supportive and inclusive teaching approach, students are more likely to perceive learning speaking skills as an achievable and enjoyable endeavor. Research on students' perceptions of learning speaking skills has been widely conducted, revealing various factors that influence their learning experience. According to Tsui (1996), students often feel anxious when faced with speaking tasks, which can inhibit active participation in class. This is reinforced by research conducted by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), which shows that language anxiety can interfere with students' ability to communicate.

Furthermore, the teaching methods used by teachers also have a significant impact on students' perceptions. Brown (2001) states that the communicative approach in English 3 teaching, which emphasizes interaction and language

use in real contexts, can increase students' motivation and engagement in speaking learning. Research by Liu and Zhang (2018) also shows that students prefer learning methods that involve group activities and role-playing, as this can create a more supportive and enjoyable learning environment. On the other hand, personal factors such as intrinsic motivation also play an important role. Ryan and Deci (2000) stated that students who have high intrinsic motivation tend to have a positive perception of learning and are more active in practicing speaking. Research by Kormos and Csizér (2008) found that students who feel confident and have clear goals in learning English are better able to overcome the barriers they face. Based on the existing literature, it is clear that understanding students' perceptions of learning speaking skills is an important step in improving the quality of English language teaching at the secondary education level. This study aims to identify factors that influence students' perceptions toward speaking skill at secondary learn.

## 2. Method

This comprehensive review will utilize a descriptive approach from various resources such as literature review, surveys, and focus group, to analyze students' perceptions of learning speaking skills in secondary education, ultimately aiming to inform educators and policymakers about effective strategies to enhance these skills. This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to explore students' perceptions of learning speaking skills in secondary education, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive analysis. First, an extensive literature review will be conducted, drawing from academic journals, books, and prior studies. This will help establish a theoretical foundation for the research, identify knowledge gaps, and align the study's objectives with current educational needs. By reviewing existing works, the study aims to understand the challenges and effective strategies in developing speaking skills.

Next, surveys will be employed to gather quantitative data on students' attitudes, challenges, and motivations. Structured questionnaires will be distributed to a diverse sample of secondary school students, ensuring a broad representation of perspectives. This step will provide measurable insights into trends and correlations that influence students' experiences in learning speaking skills. In addition to surveys, focus group discussions will be conducted to collect qualitative data. These discussions will allow students to share their experiences, preferences, and expectations in a more detailed and personal manner. By fostering open-ended conversations, the study will uncover recurring themes and unique insights into the factors affecting students' confidence and engagement in speaking tasks.

The collected data will then be analyzed using both statistical tools for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data. This dual approach ensures a balanced understanding of the trends, challenges, and individual experiences related to speaking skills development. Finally, the findings will be synthesized into actionable recommendations for educators and policymakers. These recommendations will emphasize evidence-based practices that foster motivation, effective teaching strategies, and supportive learning environments. This comprehensive descriptive approach will provide a holistic understanding of the factors influencing students' speaking skills. The insights gained will serve as valuable guidance for improving English language education and curriculum design at the secondary school level.

## 3. Findings and Discussion

Based on the analysis of the studies reviewed, secondary-school students' perceptions of learning speaking skills vary widely. The literature indicates that three factors—student motivation, teaching methods, and the learning environment significantly shape their attitudes toward and performance in speaking (Dörnyei, 2001; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Mih & Mih, 2015). Both intrinsic motivation (e.g., personal growth) and extrinsic motivation (e.g., academic achievement or career goals) encourage active participation in speaking activities. (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students who are highly motivated are more confident and willing to practice speaking, overcoming obstacles like fear or hesitation (Kormos & Csizér, 2008), while students who are less motivated are frequently disengaged and demonstrate a slower rate of improvement in their speaking abilities. Learning methods in students' perspectives and speaking development are greatly influenced by how well instructional strategies work. By fostering interactive and collaborative learning environments, strategies including project-based learning, group discussions, and technology integration have been demonstrated to improve students' speaking abilities (Brown, 2001; Liu & Zhang, 2018). Because they lower anxiety and promote the use of natural language, students choose teaching strategies that provide them the opportunity to practice speaking in authentic settings. For example, peer-to-peer interactions and role-playing exercises are very good at helping students develop their communication skills in a fun and encouraging way. Learning environment in students' perspectives are also greatly influenced by the learning environment. Students are more likely to participate fully and practice speaking without worrying about being judged in a classroom that is safe and encouraging (Tsui, 1996; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Students' confidence increases and they are more inclined to participate in speaking assignments when they perceive that their professors and classmates respect and encourage them.

On the other hand, a setting that is unsupportive or too critical might prevent students from participating and worsen their anxiety, which will ultimately impede their growth. Challenges faced with these advantages, children still face a number of difficulties when learning how to speak. Common barriers include a lack of confidence, a fear of receiving a poor grade, and a restricted vocabulary (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). These difficulties frequently result from prior failures or criticisms, which can further undermine their confidence and start a vicious cycle of avoidance. Adaptive teaching techniques that emphasize support, helpful criticism, and incremental skill development are necessary

to overcome these problems. Recommendations to develop more positive impressions of gaining speaking skills, educators are urged to employ creative and student-centered teaching techniques, such as task-based learning and gamified language exercises (Brown, 2001; Liu & Zhang, 2018). Establishing a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere is equally important as it may greatly reduce fear and promote involvement. Other elements that could affect students' experiences and views, such cultural influences or technology developments, require more investigation (Kormos & Csizér, 2008). This study intends to give educators practical insights to enhance teaching methods by addressing the interrelated elements of motivation, approach, and environment. This will eventually increase students' speaking competency and promote a good language learning experience.

There are many good and negative aspects that affect secondary school students' learning of speaking abilities, and each one is important in forming their experiences and perspectives. Fostering effective communication skills and guaranteeing a well-rounded educational experience require addressing these elements (Ryan & Deci, 2000; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

#### **A. Positive Factors**

Among the most significant advantages mentioned by students are the growth of their self-confidence and improved communication abilities. Engaging in organized speaking exercises enables students to develop their reasoning and critical thinking abilities, which are crucial for both academic and practical communication (Brown, 2001). For example, group discussions and debates help students express their ideas effectively and convincingly while simultaneously improving fluency (Kormos & Csizér, 2008). This increase in proficiency frequently results in a more optimistic outlook on learning to speak, generating a positive feedback loop of development and success (Liu & Zhang, 2018).

#### **B. Negative Factors**

Even with these advantages, many students still face major obstacles including pain and worry. Public speaking anxiety, which is frequently based on worries about being judged or making mistakes, can impede engagement and advancement (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Furthermore, students may be deterred from actively participating in speaking activities by a lack of a supportive learning environment combined with an excessive focus on technical elements like grammar (Tsui, 1996). These elements provide an unfavorable environment, which frequently results in annoyance and disinterest.

#### **C. Implications for Learning**

The results emphasize how crucial it is that students use techniques that promote engagement and introspection during the learning process. For example, students may make learning more engaging and fun by using technology-driven speaking exercises, role-plays, and group projects (Brown, 2001; Liu & Zhang, 2018). Furthermore, accepting errors as worthwhile learning experiences rather than humiliating ones can boost self-esteem and cultivate a more resilient mindset when it comes to improving speaking abilities (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students may more effectively overcome obstacles and make more significant progress in their communication skills by actively seeking out opportunities to practice speaking in a variety of settings and cultivating a growth attitude.

### **4. Conclusion**

Strong speaking abilities are essential for secondary school students to communicate effectively in academic and real-world settings. However, speaking in a second language often presents challenges, such as anxiety and lack of confidence. Understanding students' perceptions is key to helping educators improve teaching methods and create supportive learning environments. Factors like motivation, teaching methods, and the learning environment significantly shape students' experiences. Motivated students are more confident and willing to practice, while interactive teaching methods like group activities and technology integration can make learning more engaging. A positive and inclusive environment encourages participation and reduces fear of judgment, helping students build confidence in their speaking skills. Challenges such as fear of mistakes and limited vocabulary highlight the need for adaptive teaching approaches that focus on skill development and constructive feedback. Innovative techniques like task-based learning and gamified exercises can make speaking practice enjoyable and achievable. Emphasizing growth and learning from mistakes can further boost students' confidence.

In summary, addressing these factors can enhance students' speaking abilities and create a fulfilling educational experience. Further research is needed to explore additional influences, such as cultural factors and technological advancements, to improve teaching methods and outcomes in language education.

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