

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS IN THE IELTS THROUGH WELL-KNOWN TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

Speaking skills are a crucial part of the IELTS exam. The article discusses effective methods for improving speaking skills in English. It focuses on communicative approaches, role plays, group activities, and the use of audio and video materials to enhance students' speaking abilities. Creating opportunities for students to use the language freely and actively participate in communication is essential. The article is based on the research of Uzbek, English, and Russian scholars in this field. Although most of the students are non-native speakers they struggle speak, communicate, and maintain fluency. However, nowadays, there are many methods to improve speaking, for example, shadowing, watching films, learning new words, and learning answers before exams. Some students who do those exercises can not see progress. In this article, I will write about learning band 9 answers, and the shadowing technique. Also, why are students afraid of speaking in an exam because of grammar or lack of vocabulary?

Key words: IELTS speaking skills, English speaking proficiency, Communicative language teaching, Role play activities, Group discussion, Audio and video materials, Language interaction, Speaking fluency,

Introduction

In the IELTS exam students need to answer three different parts of questions and there is an example of what students need to answer in Part 1: Personal introduction (4-5 minutes)

The examiner asks basic questions about yourself. Topics include home, family, work, studies, and hobbies. Generally, they are straightforward questions to help you feel comfortable.

Part 2: Long Turn (3-4 minutes)

You receive a topic card containing a prompt. You have 1 minute to prepare for a 2-minute continuous speech about the given topic. This part aims to test your ability to speak at length coherently.

Part 3: Discussion (4-5 minutes)

This part follows Part 2's topic. The examiner asks more abstract, analytical questions that aim to evaluate complex language and critical thinking skills. Moreover, academic exams have their own criteria, which include fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. Also, more students fail in those stages because some of the candidates learn answers and that is a big mistake, as the examiner knows and reduces the score to 6 or 5.5 because speaking is critical thinking and connecting the meaning of words with each other.

Then, developing speaking skills is significant because it is part of language. In addition, students can learn the culture of that country, not only the language. There are a lot of methods to improve speaking skills, such as watching movies, listening to podcasts, recording their own voice, and communicating with foreign people. That kind of useful information students can find on the internet or on Telegram channels such as BBC learning English, TED Talk, and The Mel Robbins podcast. Moreover, those podcasts are more useful for dictation, shadowing, and recording. Therefore, the development of speaking competence is a priority in modern language pedagogy.

Problem

A) Many students spend months memorizing Band 8 or 9 model answers, believing that strong preparation and fluent delivery will guarantee success. They walk into the speaking test confident. Their answers sound polished and well-structured.

However, the result is not always what they expect. Some of these candidates receive scores of only 6 or 5.5. It is frustrating. This situation highlights how complex the speaking test really is and shows that memorization alone cannot accurately reflect real communicative ability. Even excellent preparation does not always guarantee the desired outcome.

B) Many students think the Shadowing technique doesn't work. They spend hours practicing but feel they see no results. This misunderstanding is very common. In Uzbekistan, even teachers notice it often. Professional IELTS instructors say this belief is a big mistake. Students usually don't realize how much Shadowing can help them. By ignoring it, they miss a powerful way to improve their language skills.

C) In the past, learning a new language was full of challenges. People would write down every word and translate it into Uzbek, Russian, or other languages, hoping it would help them remember. But this method often didn't work. Without using the words in real conversations or hearing them in context, learners quickly forgot what they had studied. Many felt frustrated, stuck, and powerless as their progress remained slow. The real problem was that language isn't just about memorizing words—it's about understanding, using, and connecting them in everyday life.

Research and comparing

Stephen Issitt (2025) in the University of Birmingham shows that IELTS Speaking success depends not just on English skills, but on understanding the test, speaking confidently, and communicating naturally. Observing real classes, he found that fluent, continuous speech—even with minor errors—often scores better than perfect but hesitant answers. Preparing for Part 2, using planning time wisely, giving detailed answers with examples, and clear pronunciation all help. Treating the test like a real conversation also

improves performance. His research highlights that strategy, confidence, and natural communication matter as much as language knowledge.

Saeed Roshan, from The Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in Auckland, New Zealand, mainly examines the revised IELTS Speaking test and questions whether it truly measures candidates' speaking ability. His research focuses on the fairness, validity, and authenticity of the speaking component rather than on test scores or preparation strategies. A key focus of Roshan's study is Part 2 of the Speaking test, where candidates receive a cue card topic. He argues that these topics are often unpredictable and unfamiliar, which can disadvantage test-takers. Because of this, performance may depend more on background knowledge or personal experience than on actual English ability. This raises concerns about the fairness of the test.

In 2010 research, Clark-Gareca explains that a language test is only effective if it is used fairly in the real world. They created a simple guide called the Assessment Use Argument to help teachers prove that their tests actually help students. Instead of just teaching grammar, they believe tests should resemble real-life tasks, such as conversing with a boss or a friend. They argue that teachers—not just big companies—should be the ones who design these tests because they know their students best. Overall, their work focuses on making testing more humane by looking at how a score affects a person's life.

Difference and similarities

Issitt emphasizes the importance of confidence and effective strategies in IELTS Speaking. He shows that understanding how the test works and speaking naturally can strongly influence success.

Roshan focuses on the role of background knowledge and questions the fairness of the IELTS Speaking test. He argues that performance may depend more on topic familiarity than on true speaking ability.

Clark-Gareca (2010) highlights that a language test is only effective if it is used fairly in real-world contexts. They introduce the Assessment Use Argument, a guide that helps

teachers ensure their tests genuinely benefit students. Instead of focusing only on grammar, they argue that speaking tests should reflect real-life communication, such as talking to a boss or a friend. They also stress that teachers, rather than large testing companies, should design assessments because they understand learners' needs best.

All three researchers agree that success in speaking assessments is not based only on language knowledge. Human and contextual factors such as confidence, experience, topic familiarity, and fair test use play a major role.

In terms of research focus, Issitt investigates how candidates succeed in IELTS Speaking and what strategies help them perform better. Roshan examines whether the speaking test is fair, valid, and reliable. Clark-Gareca, on the other hand, studies how language tests should be applied ethically and meaningfully, with attention to their impact on learners' lives.

Their perspectives also differ. Issitt works from a classroom and test-preparation viewpoint, concentrating on practical strategies for learners. Roshan takes a critical approach to assessment design, questioning whether IELTS truly measures speaking ability. Clark-Gareca adopts a broader social and ethical perspective, arguing that assessments must be humane, realistic, and beneficial in real-world settings.

Solution

To overcome this problem, students should focus on practical speaking practice rather than just memorizing model answers. They can practice speaking about familiar topics in their own words, participate in group discussions, or record themselves to identify areas for improvement. Using a variety of vocabulary and expressions naturally, instead of repeating memorized sentences, helps develop true fluency and confidence. Teachers can also give feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and coherence to guide progress. By combining preparation with real communication practice, students are more likely to perform well and achieve scores that reflect their actual speaking ability.

B) To make Shadowing effective, students should practice step by step, starting with short sentences and gradually moving to longer ones, while carefully imitating pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. Students can use tools like ChatGPT to identify their level—A1, B2, or higher—and choose material that matches their ability. It also helps to combine repeating sentences exactly with adapting them into your own words, like turning direct speech into reported speech. Practicing consistently every day and seeking feedback from teachers, friends, or AI tools can turn Shadowing into a powerful way to improve listening, speaking, and overall confidence.

C) The best way to overcome this challenge is to use new words in real situations instead of just memorizing them. Learners can practice speaking with friends, record themselves, or write short sentences and stories using the words. Listening to podcasts, watching videos, or reading in the target language also helps connect words with their meaning naturally. Over time, repeating words in context makes them easier to remember and use confidently, turning memorization into real communication skills.

Conclusion

Conclusion Improving performance in the IELTS Speaking test requires dedication, practice, and strategic preparation. By understanding the test format, practicing regularly, enhancing vocabulary, improving pronunciation, developing fluency and coherence, receiving constructive feedback, building confidence, and expanding on ideas, candidates can significantly enhance their speaking skills and achieve higher band scores. Consistent effort and a positive mindset are key to mastering the IELTS Speaking test.

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