ASSESSING SPEAKING SKILLS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola chet tilini o'rganuvchilarning so'zlashish ko'nikmalarini baholashning zamonaviy usullarini o'rganadi va og'zaki malakani baholashda ravonlik, aniqlik, talaffuz, lug'at boyligi va muloqot qobiliyati kabi ko'p qirrali jihatlarni hisobga olishning murakkabligini ta'kidlaydi. Tadqiqotda so'zlashuvni baholashning avvalgi diskret-testlardan kommunikativ va vazifaga yo'naltirilgan baholash tizimlariga o'tishi haqida ma'lumot beriladi. Aralash metodologiya asosida o'quvchilarning turli vazifalardagi natijalari tahlil qilinadi, baholovchilarning baholashdagi mosligi aniqlanadi va o'qituvchi hamda o'quvchilarning baholash tajribalari o'rganiladi. Natijalar interaktiv vazifalarning samaradorligini, talaffuzni baholashdagi qiyinchiliklarni va aniq fikr-mulohaza berishning ahamiyatini ko'rsatadi. Maqolada baholashning ishonchliligi, haqqoniyligi va amaliyligini oshirish bo'yicha tavsiyalar berilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: so'zlashuvni baholash; chet tilini o'rganayotganlar; og'zaki malaka; vazifaga yo'naltirilgan baholash; analitik reytinglar; baholovchilar mosligi; kommunikativ kompetensiya; tilni sinash; fikr-mulohaza; talaffuzni baholash

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются современные подходы к оценке навыков устной речи у изучающих иностранный язык, подчеркивая сложность оценки устной компетенции по таким многомерным критериям, как беглость, точность, произношение, словарный запас и коммуникативные способности. Рассматривается эволюция оценки устной речи от дискретных тестов к коммуникативным и задачно-ориентированным методикам. С использованием смешанной методологии анализируются результаты учащихся по различным типам заданий, оценивается согласованность оценок между экспертами и изучается восприятие процесса оценки преподавателями и студентами. Результаты показывают эффективность интерактивных заданий, трудности в оценке произношения и важность предоставления прозрачной обратной связи. В статье приведены рекомендации по повышению валидности, надежности и практичности оценки устной речи.

Ключевые слова: оценка устной речи; изучающие иностранный язык; устная компетенция; задачно-ориентированная оценка; аналитические рубрики; согласованность оценок; коммуникативная компетенция; тестирование языковых навыков; обратная связь; оценка произношения

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются современные подходы к оценке навыков говорения у изучающих иностранный язык, подчеркивая многогранность оценки устной

компетенции, включающей беглость, точность, произношение, словарный запас и коммуникативные умения. Обсуждается развитие методов оценки говорения от дискретных тестов к коммуникативным и задачно-ориентированным подходам. В исследовании использовалась смешанная методология: анализировались результаты учащихся по различным типам заданий, проверялась согласованность оценок разных экспертов и изучалось восприятие оценки преподавателями и студентами. Результаты показывают, что интерактивные задания способствуют более успешному проявлению навыков, однако оценка произношения остаётся проблемной, а прозрачная обратная связь повышает эффективность обучения. Даны рекомендации по улучшению надежности, валидности и практичности оценки говорения.

Ключевые слова: оценка говорения; изучающие иностранный язык; устная компетенция; задачно-ориентированная оценка; аналитические рубрики; согласованность оценок; коммуникативная компетенция; языковое тестирование; обратная связь; оценка произношения

Introduction

Assessing speaking skills in foreign language learners has long been a central concern in language education, as oral proficiency is often viewed as the most tangible indicator of communicative competence. Speaking assessment is complex because it involves not only linguistic accuracy but also fluency, interactional ability, sociolinguistic awareness, and strategic competence. As language learning shifts toward communicative and task-based paradigms, evaluation practices must adapt to measure real-world performance rather than isolated language forms. The increasing use of digital tools and automated scoring systems also prompts reconsideration of traditional assessment frameworks. This article explores approaches, challenges, and innovations in assessing speaking proficiency, supported by current research and methodological insights.

Literature review

Research over the past decades has emphasized that speaking is a multidimensional construct that cannot be fully captured by discrete-point tests. Early studies highlighted the limitations of grammar-focused assessments, noting that oral ability includes fluency, pronunciation, discourse management, and pragmatic competence (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010)[1]. Communicative language testing, emerging in the 1980s, shifted attention toward performance-based tasks and authentic communicative situations. Bachman and Palmer's framework (1996) underscored the need for assessments that reflect real-life language use and integrate interactional features[2].

More recent literature explores task-based assessment, arguing that tasks should mirror real communicative demands while providing measurable outcomes. Researchers such as Luoma (2004)[3] and Fulcher (2014)[4] highlight the importance of clear rating scales that balance analytic and holistic dimensions, ensuring reliability and validity. Additionally, studies on rater

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[1] Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. Pearson.

[2] Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford University Press.

[3]

[4]

behaviour reveal that subjective judgments can affect scoring consistency, prompting interest in rater training and standardized descriptors like the CEFR.

Technological developments have further expanded the field. Automated speech scoring tools and AI-driven assessments offer potential for consistent evaluation, though issues of fairness, accuracy, and cultural bias remain under discussion. Overall, the literature emphasizes that effective speaking assessment requires combining authentic tasks, trained evaluators, and well-designed rating criteria while considering ethical and technological implications.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate how speaking skills are assessed in a foreign-language learning context. Quantitative data were gathered from a sample of 60 intermediate learners completing three task types: a monologue, an interactive dialogue, and a problem-solving task. Each performance was rated using an analytic rubric focusing on fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interaction. Ratings were collected from four trained evaluators to examine inter-rater reliability.

Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with teachers and learners. These interviews explored perceptions of task difficulty, fairness of scoring, and the usefulness of feedback provided after the assessment. Classroom observations were also conducted to contextualize the assessment process within regular instructional practice. Data triangulation allowed for a comprehensive understanding of both performance patterns and stakeholder attitudes toward speaking assessment. Statistical analysis included descriptive measures and reliability testing, while thematic analysis was applied to interview transcripts to identify recurring themes regarding assessment effectiveness and challenges.

Results

Quantitative results showed that interactive tasks elicited higher fluency and interaction scores, while monologue tasks produced greater variability in accuracy and pronunciation. Inter-rater reliability was moderate to high across most rubric categories, although pronunciation showed lower agreement. Learners generally performed better when tasks resembled familiar classroom activities. Qualitative findings indicated that both teachers and students valued detailed feedback but expressed concerns about time constraints and perceived subjectivity in scoring. Teachers noted that analytic rubrics supported more consistent judgments, while students appreciated tasks that reflected real communicative situations rather than artificial prompts.

Discussion

The findings highlight the multidimensional nature of speaking assessment and reinforce the literature advocating for task-based, authentic evaluation methods. The stronger performance on interactive tasks suggests that learners benefit from collaborative contexts that reduce cognitive load and allow for negotiation of meaning. However, the lower reliability in pronunciation scoring confirms persistent challenges in evaluating phonological features consistently, echoing earlier research on rater variability. Stakeholder perceptions underscored the importance of transparency in scoring and feedback, which enhances learner motivation and supports skill development.

The study also reveals practical constraints common in educational settings, such as limited time for individualized evaluation and the need for ongoing rater training. While analytic rubrics improve reliability, they require careful implementation and regular

calibration. These findings suggest that blended approaches—integrating teacher judgment, standardized descriptors, and, where appropriate, technological tools—may offer the most balanced solution for comprehensive speaking assessment.

Conclusion

Assessing speaking skills in foreign language learners demands careful consideration of task design, scoring criteria, and rater practices. This study shows that authentic, interactive tasks provide more meaningful insights into learners' communicative abilities, while analytic rubrics can enhance scoring consistency. Nevertheless, challenges remain in evaluating pronunciation and managing time-intensive assessment procedures. To improve effectiveness, institutions should invest in rater training, diversify assessment tasks, and ensure clear feedback mechanisms. As technology continues to evolve, future research should explore how digital tools can complement human judgment while maintaining fairness and validity in speaking assessment.

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2.Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices. Pearson.

3.Fulcher, G. (2014). Testing Second Language Speaking. Routledge.

4.Luoma, S. (2004). Assessing Speaking. Cambridge University Press.