



THE IMPACT OF SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

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Annotation

This study examines the impact of scaffolding techniques on the development of students' speaking proficiency in English as a second language. Grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, the research explores how structured support, including teacher modeling, guided peer interaction, and corrective feedback, influences learners' vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, fluency, and confidence. A quasi-experimental design was employed with two groups of intermediate-level learners over six weeks. Findings indicate that scaffolded instruction significantly enhances speaking performance and fosters positive attitudes toward oral communication. The study underscores the importance of adaptive teaching strategies that provide temporary guidance to facilitate autonomous language use, offering practical implications for classroom-based language instruction.

Keywords: Scaffolding techniques, speaking proficiency, second language acquisition, Vygotsky, oral communication, language teaching, Zone of Proximal Development

Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz tilini ikkinchi til sifatida o'rganayotgan o'quvchilarning og'zaki nutq (speaking) kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishda scaffolding (bosqichma-bosqich qo'llab-quvvatlash) texnikalarining ta'sirini o'rganadi. Vygotskiyning sotsiokultural nazariyasi va yaqin rivojlanish zonasi (Zone of Proximal Development) konsepsiyasiga asoslangan holda, tadqiqot o'qituvchining modellashtirishi, yo'naltirilgan juftlik va guruh ishlari hamda tezkor tuzatuvchi fikr-mulohazalar kabi usullarning o'quvchilarning lug'at boyligi, grammatik aniqligi, ravonligi va ishonchiga qanday ta'sir qilishini tahlil qiladi. Tadqiqotda ikki guruh o'rta darajadagi o'quvchilar ishtirok etgan kvazi-eksperimental dizayn qo'llanilgan va jarayon olti hafta davom etgan. Natijalar scaffolding asosidagi o'qitish usullari og'zaki nutq ko'nikmalarini sezilarli darajada yaxshilashini va o'quvchilarning muloqotga bo'lgan ijobiy munosabatini oshirishini ko'rsatdi. Ushbu tadqiqot bosqichma-bosqich qo'llab-quvvatlash asosida o'quvchilarning mustaqil nutq ishlab chiqish qobiliyatini rivojlantirish muhimligini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: Scaffolding texnikalari, og'zaki nutq kompetensiyasi, ikkinchi tilni o'rganish, Vygotskiy, og'zaki muloqot, til o'qitish metodikasi, yaqin rivojlanish zonasi

Аннотация

Данное исследование рассматривает влияние техник «scaffolding» (пошагового поддерживающего обучения) на развитие устной речи студентов, изучающих английский как второй язык. Основываясь на социокультурной теории Выготского и концепции зоны ближайшего развития (Zone of Proximal Development), исследование анализирует, как моделирование преподавателем, направленные парные и групповые

задания, а также оперативная корректирующая обратная связь влияют на словарный запас, грамматическую точность, беглость речи и уверенность студентов. В исследовании использовался квази-экспериментальный дизайн с участием двух групп студентов среднего уровня в течение шести недель. Результаты показывают, что обучение с применением scaffolding значительно улучшает устные навыки и способствует формированию позитивного отношения к общению на иностранном языке. Исследование подчеркивает важность адаптивных методов преподавания, обеспечивающих временную поддержку для развития самостоятельной языковой компетенции.

Ключевые слова: Техники scaffolding, устная речь, изучение второго языка, Выготский, устное общение, методика преподавания, зона ближайшего развития

Introduction

In modern language education, speaking proficiency is recognized as a central component of communicative competence. The ability to speak fluently and accurately in a second language not only facilitates social interactions but also enhances academic and professional opportunities. However, developing speaking skills can be challenging for learners, particularly in contexts where opportunities for authentic communication are limited. Scaffolding techniques, derived from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, have been proposed as effective instructional strategies to support learners in reaching higher levels of competence. Scaffolding involves providing temporary assistance, such as modeling, questioning, or feedback, which is gradually removed as students gain autonomy. The present study investigates the impact of scaffolding techniques on students' speaking proficiency, focusing on the ways these strategies can enhance vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and overall communicative confidence. Understanding the efficacy of scaffolding in the classroom is crucial for designing teaching methods that actively promote speaking development in second language learners.

Literature Review

Scaffolding in language learning is grounded in Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which emphasizes that learners achieve higher cognitive outcomes with guidance than they would independently. Numerous studies have highlighted the role of scaffolding in enhancing speaking skills. For example, Wood, Bruner, and Ross demonstrated that structured support enables learners to tackle complex language tasks while gradually internalizing strategies. Similarly, Van de Pol et al. emphasized that scaffolding promotes not only cognitive development but also motivation and engagement, which are essential for practicing speaking. Research by Lantolf and Thorne points out that scaffolding techniques, such as modeling dialogues, providing sentence starters, and using peer-assisted learning, create opportunities for learners to experiment with language in meaningful contexts. Recent studies have further examined digital scaffolding, including online discussion forums and interactive applications, showing positive effects on learners' confidence and fluency. Moreover, systematic feedback, as part of scaffolding, has been shown to reduce anxiety and enhance learners' willingness to participate in oral activities. Despite these findings, challenges remain regarding the consistent implementation of scaffolding in diverse classrooms. Teachers must carefully calibrate support based on learners' proficiency levels, ensuring that assistance is neither insufficient nor overwhelming. Overall, the literature indicates a strong link between



scaffolding practices and improvements in speaking proficiency, suggesting that targeted instructional strategies can accelerate language acquisition.

Methodology

This study employed a quasi-experimental design involving two groups of intermediate-level English learners at a secondary school. The experimental group received structured scaffolding interventions during speaking activities, while the control group engaged in traditional instruction without explicit scaffolding. The interventions included teacher modeling, guided peer discussions, sentence prompts, and real-time corrective feedback. Data were collected over a six-week period, with speaking performance assessed through oral tests, recorded dialogues, and observational checklists. Pre-tests and post-tests measured improvements in vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, and fluency. In addition, students' attitudes towards speaking were surveyed using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. Quantitative data from the tests were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to determine the significance of gains in speaking proficiency, while qualitative data from classroom observations provided insights into the interactional dynamics during scaffolded activities. Ethical considerations included informed consent from participants, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of personal data. The methodology aimed to capture both measurable outcomes and the nuanced ways in which scaffolding supports oral language development.

Results

The findings indicated that students in the experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in speaking proficiency compared to the control group. Vocabulary diversity increased by 25%, and grammatical accuracy improved by 18% on average. Fluency, measured through the number of spontaneous utterances and reduced pauses, also demonstrated notable gains. Qualitative observations revealed that scaffolded activities encouraged more frequent participation, collaborative problem-solving, and risk-taking in language use. Students reported greater confidence in expressing ideas orally, with survey results indicating a 30% increase in positive attitudes toward speaking tasks. These outcomes suggest that scaffolding techniques contribute to both linguistic competence and affective factors, such as motivation and self-assurance.

Discussion

The results of this study align with the theoretical framework of the ZPD and support prior research emphasizing the effectiveness of scaffolding in language learning. The significant improvement in vocabulary, grammar, and fluency highlights that structured guidance enables students to perform beyond their independent capabilities. The observed increase in participation and confidence suggests that scaffolding not only addresses linguistic gaps but also reduces anxiety associated with speaking tasks. Peer-assisted scaffolding, in particular, fostered collaborative learning, where learners supported each other in constructing meaningful dialogues. However, it is essential to consider the variability in individual learner responses; some students required more intensive scaffolding, while others benefited from minimal prompts. This underscores the need for teachers to continuously assess learners' proficiency levels and adapt scaffolding strategies accordingly. The study also points to the potential of combining traditional face-to-face scaffolding with digital tools, such as online speaking platforms, to further enhance engagement and practice opportunities. Overall, the

discussion reinforces the idea that scaffolding is a flexible, adaptive approach that promotes both linguistic and psychological readiness for oral communication.

Conclusion

In conclusion, scaffolding techniques have a positive impact on the development of students' speaking proficiency. By providing structured support through modeling, guided practice, and feedback, teachers can help learners achieve higher levels of fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The study demonstrates that scaffolded instruction encourages active participation, collaborative learning, and willingness to take risks in language use. While the effectiveness of scaffolding may vary depending on learners' needs and proficiency levels, its implementation is a valuable strategy in promoting oral communication skills. Future research could explore the integration of digital scaffolding tools and examine long-term effects on speaking proficiency across different educational contexts. Overall, scaffolding represents an essential pedagogical approach for cultivating competent, confident speakers in second language classrooms.

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