

**PEER REVIEW AS A METHOD FOR FOSTERING SPEAKING
SKILLS**

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***Annotation:** This article explores the impact of peer review in enhancing speaking skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. It investigates how structured peer feedback contributes to improved fluency, accuracy, confidence, and engagement in speaking tasks. Drawing on both theoretical perspectives and practical implementations, the article discusses the benefits, challenges, and pedagogical implications of integrating peer review into speaking curricula. The findings suggest that peer review fosters learner autonomy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning, ultimately promoting long-term speaking proficiency.*

***Keywords:** Fluency, Confidence, Theoretical perspectives, Practical implementations, Collaborative, Critical thinking*

In contemporary language education, learner-centered approaches are increasingly valued for their ability to engage students actively in their learning journey. One such approach is peer review, which involves learners giving and receiving feedback on performance from one another. While peer review is commonly associated with writing, its application in speaking skills development has gained growing attention. Speaking, as a productive and interactive skill, can be significantly enhanced when learners reflect on their own and their peers' oral





performances. This article aims to explore peer review as a viable method for fostering speaking skills in EFL contexts.

Peer review practices are rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, particularly the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky, learners develop higher mental functions through social interaction with more knowledgeable others. In peer review settings, students often assume alternating roles of more and less capable peers, enabling them to provide scaffolding and mutual support. This interaction aligns with the collaborative nature of speaking practice, where meaning-making and negotiation are central.

Rollinson (2005) supports this view by emphasizing the collaborative and reflective dimensions of peer feedback. When learners assess each other's spoken performances, they become active participants in the learning process. Through this active engagement, they internalize performance criteria and develop metacognitive awareness, which are key to successful language acquisition.

One of the primary benefits of peer review is the promotion of self-regulation. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) argue that effective feedback, especially from peers, helps learners clarify performance standards, reflect on their own abilities, and take ownership of their progress. These features are particularly important in speaking tasks, where students must monitor aspects like fluency, coherence, accuracy, and pronunciation in real-time. Furthermore, peer review provides learners with multiple perspectives on their performance. While teacher feedback is often authoritative, peer feedback tends to be more relatable and accessible. It fosters a non-threatening environment, which can lower anxiety and increase willingness to communicate. According to Rollinson (2005), this supportive environment leads to improved interactional skills and increased motivation to speak.

For peer review to be effective, it must be well-structured and purposeful. Teachers should provide training on how to give constructive feedback, use



rubrics aligned with speaking criteria, and guide reflection. Structured peer review sessions might include:

Listening to peer presentations and completing a feedback form;

Discussing strengths and areas for improvement in pairs or small groups;

Recording and reviewing speech to assess progress over time. Using rubrics that include criteria such as fluency, vocabulary usage, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence ensures that students have a clear framework for evaluation. This not only supports consistency but also strengthens students' understanding of what constitutes effective spoken communication.

Despite its advantages, peer review is not without challenges. Some students may lack confidence in their evaluative abilities, while others may feel uncomfortable critiquing their peers. There is also the risk of feedback being too general or inaccurate. To mitigate these issues, instructors must cultivate a classroom culture of respect, trust, and professionalism, and provide explicit instruction on how to engage in meaningful peer evaluation. In addition, teacher monitoring and feedback moderation are crucial to ensure the reliability of peer assessments. Combining peer review with teacher input can maximize the effectiveness of feedback and reinforce learning objectives.

Peer review is particularly effective when aligned with the core criteria used to assess speaking skills. These criteria typically include fluency, coherence, pronunciation, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy. When students engage in peer feedback, they become more familiar with these elements not just theoretically, but through real-life application. For example, when assessing a peer's pronunciation or coherence, learners sharpen their listening and analytical skills, which in turn helps them monitor these same features in their own speech. Moreover, peer review provides authentic opportunities for learners to hear varied examples of spoken language. This exposure to diverse speaking styles helps learners recognize different strategies for organizing speech, using discourse markers, managing hesitation, and expressing ideas clearly. As Rollinson (2005) notes, peer interaction allows learners to better understand what





constitutes effective communication and apply this understanding to their own performance. Additionally, peer review encourages metacognitive reflection. As students comment on others' strengths and weaknesses, they internalize the language of assessment. This awareness can lead to more deliberate practice and goal-setting in speaking tasks, especially when learners notice recurring patterns in feedback—either given or received.

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