

DEVELOPING ARGUMENTATIVE SPEAKING SKILLS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSES: A COMMUNICATIVE-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE.

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Abstract: In modern education, the development of students' communicative competence in English is closely connected with their ability to express and justify opinions. Argumentative speaking, as one of the most complex types of speech activity, requires not only linguistic knowledge but also logical thinking and the ability to interact in dialogue. This study examines the effectiveness of a communicative-cognitive approach to teaching argumentative speaking to secondary school students. The results show that integrating interactive tasks and structured argumentation models significantly improves learners' fluency, coherence, and confidence.

Key words: argumentative speaking, communicative approach, cognitive development, English teaching, secondary school.

The integration of Uzbekistan into the global educational space has increased the importance of mastering English as a tool for academic and professional communication. In this context, special attention is paid to the development of speaking skills, particularly argumentative speech, which enables students to express their opinions, justify their ideas, and engage in discussions. Argumentative speaking is a complex cognitive and communicative process. It involves not only the use of appropriate vocabulary and grammar but also the ability to think critically, organize ideas logically, and respond to alternative viewpoints. According to Bloom's taxonomy, higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis play a crucial role

in constructing arguments (Bloom, 1956). In addition, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of interaction and social context in language learning, suggesting that communication with peers enhances cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). In traditional English classes, students often focus on memorization and reproduction of language forms, which does not adequately prepare them for real communication. Therefore, a communicative-cognitive approach is proposed, combining language practice with the development of thinking skills. This approach encourages students to actively participate in discussions, express personal opinions, and justify their viewpoints. The structure of argumentative speech typically includes several components: stating an opinion, providing supporting arguments, considering counterarguments, and drawing a conclusion. Toulmin's model of argumentation highlights the importance of claims, evidence, and reasoning in building effective arguments (Toulmin, 2003). Teaching students to follow this structure helps them organize their speech more clearly and logically.

The study was conducted among 8th and 9th grade students in secondary schools. At the initial stage, students demonstrated limited ability to construct arguments and respond to opposing opinions. To address this issue, a series of interactive teaching methods was introduced, including debates, role-playing activities, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks. These activities created a communicative environment in which students could practice argumentation in meaningful contexts. During the lessons, students were provided with language support in the form of functional expressions such as "I believe that...", "In my opinion...", "However...", and "On the other hand...". Such expressions helped them structure their speech and participate more confidently in discussions. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), communicative language teaching emphasizes the use of language for meaningful interaction, which is essential for developing speaking skills.

The results of the study indicate significant improvement in students' performance. Their ability to construct logical arguments increased, and their speech became more coherent and fluent. Students also showed greater confidence and willingness to participate in discussions. These findings are consistent with previous research, which highlights the effectiveness of interactive methods in language teaching (Nunan, 2003). Furthermore, the use of argumentative speaking tasks contributed to the development of critical thinking skills. Students learned to evaluate different viewpoints, compare arguments, and express their own positions more clearly. This is particularly important in modern education, where learners are expected to think independently and make informed decisions.

In conclusion, the communicative-cognitive approach to teaching argumentative speaking proves to be effective in improving both linguistic and cognitive abilities of secondary school students. By integrating interactive activities and structured argumentation models, teachers can create a dynamic learning environment that fosters meaningful communication and critical thinking. Future research may explore the use of digital tools and multilingual resources to further enhance the teaching of argumentative speech.

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