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MEANINGFUL LEARNING: ITS CHARACTERISTICS AND BENEFITS IN SPEAKING SKILLS

APRENDIZAJE SIGNIFICATIVO: SUS CARACTERÍSTICAS Y BENEFICIOS EN LAS HABILIDADES DE EXPRESIÓN ORAL

Leonardo Mauricio Martínez Paredes [1], Jessica María Guaranga Lema[2]

{leonardo.martinez@unach.edu.ec[1], jessica.guaranga@unach.edu.ec[2]}

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RESUMEN: El aprendizaje significativo es el proceso por el cual la información nueva se integra con conocimientos previos pertinentes mediante relaciones basadas en el significado. Se caracteriza por la presencia de saberes que sirven de anclaje, la organización del material de forma que pueda relacionarse con ellos y la disposición del estudiante para establecer esas conexiones. Esta revisión narrativa examinó cómo se aplican estas características al desarrollo de la expresión oral en inglés como lengua extranjera y qué beneficios se han documentado. La síntesis incluyó 24 artículos identificados mediante búsquedas temáticas y verificados en registros editoriales. El reporte metodológico se orientó por los elementos aplicables de PRISMA 2020. Se examinaron estudios sobre repetición de tareas, proyectos, narración digital, retroalimentación y conversación asistida por tecnología. Se observaron mejoras en algunas medidas de fluidez, precisión de la pronunciación, complejidad sintáctica y desempeño oral, así como una mayor disposición a comunicarse en ciertos contextos. Algunos indicadores léxicos y gramaticales no mostraron mejoras significativas. La diversidad de diseños y mediciones limita la atribución de estos resultados al aprendizaje significativo como mecanismo específico. La síntesis orienta el diseño de actividades que activan saberes previos, organizan los recursos nuevos en torno a un propósito comunicativo e incorporan oportunidades para revisar la producción y comprobar si el alumnado puede aplicar esos recursos en tareas nuevas. El desempeño inmediato, la retención y la transferencia requieren evaluaciones diferenciadas.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje significativo, expresión oral, inglés como lengua extranjera, enseñanza por tareas, retroalimentación

ABSTRACT: Meaningful learning is the process through which learners integrate new information with relevant prior knowledge by establishing relationships based on meaning. It involves prior knowledge that can anchor new ideas, learning material organized, linked to that

[1]Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH), https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8166-5914

[2]Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH), https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8451-9736

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knowledge, and a learner's willingness to make those connections. This narrative review examined how these characteristics apply to speaking development in English as a foreign language and what benefits have been documented. The thematic synthesis included 24 articles identified through topic-based searches and verified against publication records. Methods reporting was informed by applicable PRISMA 2020 items. The review examined studies of task repetition, projects, digital storytelling, feedback, and technology-assisted conversation. Studies reported gains on selected measures of fluency, pronunciation accuracy, syntactic complexity, and speaking performance, along with greater willingness to communicate in some settings. Some lexical and grammatical measures showed no significant improvement. Variation in study designs and measures limits attribution of these outcomes to meaningful learning as a specific mechanism. The synthesis informs the design of speaking activities that activate prior knowledge, organize new resources around a communicative purpose, and provide opportunities to revise spoken production and assess whether learners can use those resources in new tasks. Immediate performance, delayed retention, and transfer should be assessed separately.

Keywords: meaningful learning, speaking skills, English as a foreign language, task-based instruction, feedback

INTRODUCTION

Speaking in English as a foreign language (EFL) that requires learners to coordinate decisions about content, lexical retrieval, and grammatical organization under the time constraints of interaction. A learner may recognize an expression in a text, pronounce it in an exercise, and still struggle to retrieve it when explaining an idea or answering an unexpected question. This difficulty has implications for how classroom performance is interpreted. An intervention may reduce pauses in a rehearsed presentation without producing comparable changes in spontaneous conversation. Research on speaking skills therefore needs to specify the task used to observe them and the inferences that can reasonably be drawn from performance on that task.

Meaningful learning and its characteristics

In Ausubel's theory, meaningful learning occurs when learners integrate new information with relevant knowledge they already possess. Bryce and Blown (1) describe how existing concepts can provide an anchor for new ideas and explain why teaching needs to establish what learners understand about a topic. The connection is substantive when it concerns the underlying idea and can be expressed in different words. It is nonarbitrary when the new information is linked to a relevant concept through a discernible relationship, such as cause and effect. A learner's existing understanding can guide the interpretation of new material and could be refined in turn, and refined as new relationships established.

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Three conditions help characterize the process. First, learners need relevant prior knowledge to which new material can be related. Brief explanations and follow-up questions can help teachers identify what learners already understand. Second, the material needs a structure that makes the relationship between old and new ideas intelligible to those learners. A model or advance organizer can make a relationship explicit. Third, learners need to engage with the material with the intention of making those connections. Explaining an idea in their own words or revising a relationship after a question can provide evidence of that engagement (1).

In an English course, prior knowledge includes experience with the topic, discourse schemas developed in other languages, and resources within the learner's existing vocabulary of English. In addition, knowing how to structure a recommendation can help the learner organize a message. New expressions for justifying a choice linked to that familiar structure and used to state a reason in English. Asking learners to justify the choice in their own words and respond to a request for clarification helps reveal how they use those connections. A subsequent task with a different topic or interlocutor can provide evidence of transfer when it requires the same communicative function.

In EFL instruction, concept maps can represent relationships that learners need to explain during an oral presentation. In a study of 80 learners, Tsai (2) compared the use of expert-generated maps with learner-generated maps. Both groups improved in oral presentation performance from pretest to posttest. The group that constructed its own maps showed better selection and organization of information and stronger coherence between the spoken discourse and its visual supports. The between-group difference in oral presentation performance was nonsignificant because both groups used maps; the study compares two ways of using them in multimodal presentations.

Fluency includes dimensions of speed, breakdown, and repair. Suzuki and Kormos (3) investigated relationships between cognitive processes and temporal features of speech. Tavakoli (4) examined challenges in fluency assessment, including the interpretation of pauses and the dependence of measures on the task. A pause between ideas may signal discourse organization. Repeated pauses within a unit may reflect difficulty formulating speech. Accuracy has to do with specified grammatical or phonological targets. Complexity reflects the range or elaboration of linguistic resources, and comprehensibility concerns the effort listeners expend to understand the speech. Conversation also requires turn management, follow-up questions, and the resolution of misunderstandings.

In a meta-analysis of 49 reports, Chau and Huensch (5) estimated a weighted correlation of 0.57 between intelligibility and comprehensibility and of 0.32 between intelligibility and perceived accentedness. Task type moderated several of these relationships. When assessing a meaningful learning activity, these findings support the use of distinct indicators for whether listeners recover

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the message, how much effort they expend to understand it, and which pronunciation features affect the interaction.

Speaking instruction often combines several components to serve a single purpose. In a narrative task, learners may choose an episode, select details for a particular audience, and rehearse the sequence of events. In a project, they may negotiate decisions, submit a product, and defend it in response to questions. Feedback received in either setting can guide the revision of a communication strategy. The contribution of each component is difficult to isolate when all components change simultaneously. This difficulty is particularly relevant to interventions involving applications or conversational agents, in which practice time, access outside class, and the type of support available may also vary.

The overall aim of this review was to examine the characteristics of meaningful learning relevant to speaking in EFL and to analyze recent evidence on the associated benefits. Three specific objectives guided the synthesis. The first was to identify observable instructional conditions, such as activating prior knowledge and establishing a communicative purpose. The second was to compare the dimensions of speech measured and the outcomes reported across instructional strategies. The third was to examine limits to generalization and propose criteria for assessing retention and transfer. The review asked which speaking practice conditions are consistent with meaningful learning and which conclusions about outcomes are supported by research published during the selected period.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

It conducted a qualitative narrative literature review with a thematic synthesis of studies on meaningful learning and speaking in English as a foreign language. In addition, published quantitative findings incorporated descriptively. Applicable items from the PRISMA 2020 reporting guideline, used to describe the information sources, eligibility criteria, document selection, data extraction, and synthesis method (6). Selection was purposive. The review proceeded without a registered protocol or independent duplicate screening, and verifiable counts were unavailable for some selection stages. The review was classified as narrative, and reporting covered the stages that could be documented.

Population or sample

The unit of analysis was an article published in an academic journal. The documentary sample comprised 24 articles. The PRISMA guideline cited as a methodological reference external to the axis for the current work. The search combined topic-based queries with direct verification on publishing platforms such as Cambridge Core, Springer Nature Link, ScienceDirect, and Wiley

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Online Library, and on journal websites. English search terms covered meaningful learning, prior knowledge, speaking, task repetition, projects, digital storytelling, feedback, anxiety, and willingness to communicate. Also the research phrases included “Ausubel meaningful learning,” “EFL speaking oral task repetition,” and “EFL project-based learning speaking.”

Eligible articles were peer-reviewed and first published by a journal from 2021 through 2026. Studies were eligible which provided a basis for understanding the relationship between prior knowledge and meaningful learning, investigated relevant speaking or affective outcomes in English, or contributed methods for interpreting those outcomes. Duplicate records, preprints, and studies unrelated to the review question were excluded. Relevance was assessed using titles, abstracts, and full texts where available. DOIs were verified, and the information extracted was cross-checked against publication records.

Setting

The review was conducted online using published documents. The articles examined English-language teaching settings, primarily secondary and higher education classrooms, with some studies in primary education. The settings were those of the original studies and included in-person, online, and device-assisted practice. The review involved no participant recruitment or fieldwork at an educational institution.

Measurements

Data were collected by reviewing the articles and extracting relevant information. In addition, the data extracted from each article included the educational context, study design, sample size or composition when reported, type of activity, comparator, instruments, and relevant outcomes. The review involved no manipulation of variables and no administration of surveys, interviews, or tests. Indicators of fluency, pronunciation, comprehensibility, accuracy, linguistic complexity, interaction, anxiety, and willingness to communicate extracted from the original studies. Performance measures, such as oral tests, rubrics, and speech records, were distinguished from self-reported data obtained through questionnaires or interviews.

Findings were grouped by theme and compared by study design, task type, and assessment timing. Where the articles provided sufficient information, immediate performance was distinguished from delayed retention and transfer to new tasks. Outcome heterogeneity was addressed through descriptive synthesis. Furthermore, the combined effects were not estimated, nor was a formal assessment of the risks of bias was conducted.

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RESULTS

Connecting prior knowledge to a communicative purpose

The analysis identified four conditions for applying the concept of meaningful learning to the design of speaking activities. The first was activating knowledge that learners could draw on to construct a message. Familiar experiences help learners generate ideas, and discourse models show how to organize those ideas for an audience. The second condition was presenting information in a recognizable structure. A brief example can show how to give a reason, illustrate it with an example, and end with a proposal. Scaffolding is relevant when it enables learners to reconstruct that structure using their own vocabulary and adapt it to a new topic (1,2).

The third condition was a clear purpose for speaking. A task, which requires choosing among options, asks learners to give reasons, listen to complaints, and be ready to revise their proposal. A clear communicative purpose makes it possible to assess whether the learner's words served a specific function. The fourth condition was an opportunity to revise and reapply what had been learned. Revision can be observed by comparing recordings or examining how a learner incorporates a clarification into a subsequent turn. Reapplication changes one feature of the task while retaining the communicative function targeted for transfer. Figure 1 presents these four conditions as criteria for designing and interpreting speaking activities.

The conditions can operate together within a single activity. To recommend an itinerary, a learner might select local places, use arrows to sequence the route, justify the stops, and respond to someone with less time available. After receiving feedback, the learner can make a second recommendation under different constraints. In this example, the conceptual relationships include the proximity of the places and how well the activities match the listener's interests. The linguistic resources include sequencing markers, expressions of preference, and language for negotiating an adjustment. Observing the process makes it possible to identify which resources are used with support and which the learner uses independently in the second situation.

A familiar topic can also elicit superficial responses when the procedure requires learners to reproduce set phrases. The quality of the explanation help to determine how learners drew on prior knowledge. An intervention can include a diagnostic question, a learner-generated outline, and a record of the learner's first spoken formulation. Comparing these products with performance on a subsequent task makes it possible to examine whether the learner incorporates new relationships and expresses them in English. The subsequent task should preserve the construct of interest. When conceptual complexity, the audience, and planning time all change at once, differences are harder to attribute to transfer.

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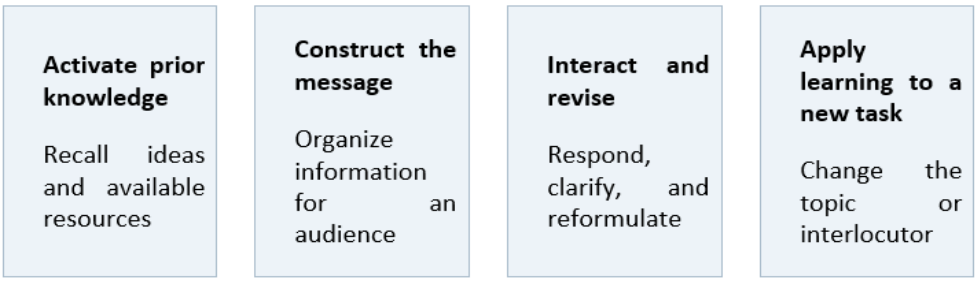

Figure 1. Instructional conditions for meaningful speaking practice

Dao and Hiver (7) studied 105 learners of English using two interactive tasks. One involved collaborative planning and the other visual comparison with information distributed among participants. Beliefs about interaction predicted aspects of engagement and lexical learning. Task type was also associated with participation and achievement of the task goal. The study helps clarify what can be observed during a purposeful activity, including each participant's contribution, whether an agreement is reached, and how vocabulary is used. These findings concern interaction and lexical learning in the tasks analyzed.

Planning, task repetition, and practice spacing

Repeating a task allows making planning resources available by reducing the number of decisions about content. In the study by Kakitani and Kormos (8), which analyzed data from 116 university students, oral practice at intervals of one or seven days produced different trajectories during training. Both schedules were associated with similar gains on fluency tests at seven and 28 days. This finding qualifies the interpretation of performance during practice. Faster progress within the practice sessions alone cannot establish the superiority of one schedule at the end of follow up.

Chen et al. (9) compared collaborative planning in the first language, in English, and in both languages with a no-planning condition. The 128 participants performed a picture-based narrative task four times. There was no overall effect of planning language on fluency, but its contribution varied with English proficiency. Higher proficiency participants benefited more from first language planning on measures of formulation and monitoring, whereas lower proficiency participants encountered difficulties under that condition. The improvements observed across repetitions pertain to the narrative that participants practiced.

In the study by Duong et al. (10), 90 university students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) were assigned to three conditions that varied in their exposure to video input, including a condition without such input. All participants performed the task again after two days. The authors found no significant effects of the treatments on the lexical or fluency measures analyzed.

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The study shows that re-exposure to a model and another opportunity to produce the same speech can provide a plausible instructional structure without yielding a detectable difference. The ability to use an expression depends in part on the learner's initial receptive target and the demands of retrieving it during the task.

Hanzawa et al. (11) mapped 74 empirical studies and identified two purposes of oral task repetition: facilitating immediate performance on the same task and developing skills applicable to new tasks. Hanzawa and Suzuki (12) found higher perceived engagement under spaced practice conditions and a tendency to overestimate progress under massed practice. Róg (13) reported that, among 52 young adults who immediately repeated an English-language task, lexical diversity increased and fluency improved marginally. Enjoyment was associated with some measures, but the interaction between enjoyment and repetition was statistically nonsignificant. These findings distinguish the practice experience, immediate performance, and delayed retention.

Instruction can combine an initial repetition for revision with a later task that introduces a controlled change. For example, after narrating an incident, a learner might retell it using temporal connectives that help the listener follow the account. In another session, the learner can reconstruct a different episode using the same kinds of temporal relationships. This distinction separates improvement when reformulating one task item from the use of a discourse resource in another, so that repetition can help address a specific difficulty, and variation requires learners to select and adapt the resources they use.

Projects and digital storytelling

Benlaghrissi and Ouahidi (14) assigned 91 Moroccan secondary school students to mobile assisted projects, projects without devices, or conventional instruction for one semester. The mean oral posttest scores, out of 20 points, were 13.84, 11.59, and 9.58, respectively. The projects distributed language production across preparation, discussion, recording, and presentation. An individual assessment helps determine whether each participant was able to organize a message and respond to questions. The observed differences pertain to the combined intervention, which incorporated resources for comprehension and production alongside the devices.

Zhussupova and Shadiev (15) examined digital storytelling over seven weeks with preservice English teachers in a multilingual classroom. The case study documented improvements in fluency, coherence, and cohesion, among other dimensions, using an academic speaking rubric. Developing personal or cultural stories enabled learners to draw on prior experiences. The format allowed learners to record, edit, and repeat segments. A presentation with questions; therefore provides additional evidence about how a learner adjusts when interacting with another speaker.

Zhong et al. (16) compared video assisted projects with conventional instruction in 96 first year students at a Chinese polytechnic institution, in groups of 49 and 47 participants. After 12 weeks,

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the findings favored the intervention on some measures of syntactic complexity, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency. There were no significant differences in lexical complexity or syntactic accuracy. Figure 2 compares mean overall fluency, speech rate, and self-repair scores on the posttest. An instructional sequence that requires learners to justify ideas and edit presentations can provide opportunities to elaborate utterances and revise pronunciation. In addition, expanding the range of vocabulary used spontaneously may require additional retrieval practice across varied contexts.

Project assessment should identify the evidence provided by each deliverable. A script shows how learners planned and selected content. A recording captures prepared oral production and allows for analysis of pausing, rate, or pronunciation. A brief oral defense demonstrates the ability to answer questions and reformulate a response. A second defense on a different topic provides information about transfer. The choice of assessment instruments depends on the competence the course aims to develop. If interaction is the objective, a rehearsed presentation is retained as one component of the project, and the primary assessment might incorporate turn taking, clarification, and follow-up on another speaker's ideas.

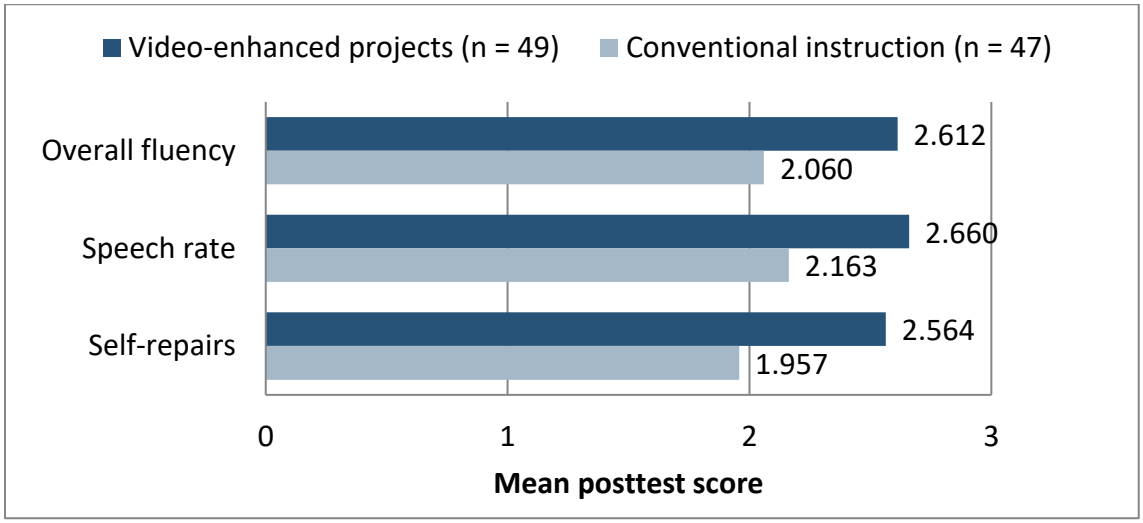

Figure 2. Fluency outcomes for video-enhanced projects

Source: *Table 5 of Zhong et al. (16). The graph shows group mean posttest scores. The article reports between-group contrasts of p = 0.015, 0.033, and 0.007, respectively. The plotted means do not represent change from baseline.*

Feedback and revision of spoken production

Huang et al. (17) found that peer feedback improved the comprehensibility of spoken English in the group studied, with no comparable improvement in accentedness. The value of this practice depends on the feature being observed, the way feedback is phrased, and whether the learner

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has another opportunity to produce the message. Feedback about a word that caused difficulty in comprehension directs attention to a specific problem. A peer's intervention add value by clarifying how they understood the message, being possible to check whether the modification improves understanding. Instruction support this process through examples, specific criteria, and brief turns for revision.

Ha (18) recorded the practices of 10 teachers before and after an eight week professional development program. The study reported changes in the frequency, types, and targets of corrective feedback. The outcome assessed was teaching practice. In designing a speaking activity, immediate correction may be appropriate when a problem prevents the listener from understanding a key relationship. Delayed correction can preserve the flow of a discussion and defer formal observation until a second version.

As part of a feedback sequence, the learner is able to review a segment, explain the original intention, and formulate an alternative. This cycle helps document how the learner uses the feedback. A transfer assessment can determine whether the change appears in a later task without a specific prompt. Recording the change in a prepared version allows confirming that the learner revised the targeted segment. Using the resource in a new situation requires retrieving and selecting it under different conditions. Table 2 links both kinds of evidence to indicators which could be are observed in practice.

Technology-assisted conversation and participation

Tai (19) compared out-of-class practice with Google Assistant with interaction with speakers of English as a first or second language in a sample of 89 students. The study documented improvements in speaking performance with assisted practice. Tai and Chen (20) studied 85 schoolchildren over three weeks. On the posttest, both groups that used generative agents outperformed the group receiving conventional instruction. There was no significant difference between individual and paired practice. The mode of practice alone leaves open the question of how many turns each participant takes.

Fathi et al. (21) reported improvements in speaking proficiency and willingness to communicate after an intervention mediated by artificial intelligence. The distinction between these outcomes allows observed performance to be examined separately from the inclination to participate. Du and Daniel (22) synthesized 24 empirical studies published from 2017 to 2023 on conversational agents for speaking practice. Their review characterizes this area of research as emerging. Variation in formats, populations, and tasks are important to document exposure, conversational objectives, and the type of feedback provided.

Hoang et al. (23) recorded improvements between pretests and posttests after incorporating mobile virtual reality into speaking practice for 23 university students. The single-group design

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limits causal attribution. In a study of 83 participants, Huang and Kakham (24) observed a favorable outcome for speaking proficiency and no overall between-group difference in anxiety. The analysis by activity identified lower anxiety during pair work and presentations, illustrating the value of recording task type separately.

Zhang et al. (25) studied 131 university students in a six-week intervention. On the questionnaires, the group, using a speaking assistant reported greater enjoyment and willingness to communicate and lower anxiety. These measures captured self-reported experiences. Estimating changes in language production requires additional indicators, such as the turns that learners initiate, the duration of their contributions, or tests assessed by listeners. Interpretation is more precise when the study reports whom the learner interacted with and whether practice continued after the tool was withdrawn.

Table 1. Selected studies on speaking practice and performance

Study	Practice and outcome measure	Finding and scope
Kakitani and Kormos (8)	Speaking practice at one-day or seven-day intervals. The analysis included 116 university students.	The two practice groups showed similar fluency gains at 7 and 28 days.
Duong et al. (10)	Videos and task repetition with 90 university students.	No significant effects were detected for fluency or lexical use.
Benlaghrissi and Ouahidi (14)	Mobile-assisted projects, projects without devices, or conventional instruction with 91 students.	The mobile-assisted project group performed better on the speaking posttest.
Zhussupova and Shadiev (15)	Digital storytelling for academic speaking.	Context-specific evidence from a case study with preservice teachers.
Zhong et al. (16)	Quasi-experimental comparison of video-enhanced projects with 96 students.	Advantages on selected measures of pronunciation, syntax, and fluency.
Huang et al. (17)	Peer feedback with 32 students.	Comprehensibility improved. No comparable change was observed in accentedness.
Tai and Chen (20)	Individual or paired practice with generative agents among 85 schoolchildren.	Both formats outperformed conventional instruction on the posttest.
Fathi et al. (21)	AI-mediated interaction, speaking tests, and willingness to communicate.	The study reported gains in speaking performance and willingness to communicate.

Assessment of observed benefits

The evidence of benefits grouped into three domains. The first was performance under specified conditions. The findings that lend themselves most readily to interpretation identify a change in a specific measure on a specific task. For example, pronunciation accuracy on a posttest may improve while syntactic accuracy remains unchanged (16). The second domain was participation.

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Willingness to communicate and a sense of safety may facilitate access to practice (21,24,25). The third domain concerned the relationship with meaningful learning processes. The interventions provide opportunities for making connections to prior knowledge and revising spoken production, but few of the selected studies directly compare the effects of activating prior knowledge with an equivalent practice condition.

A sound fluency assessment can report both speech rate and patterns of pausing. Measuring change at the individual level requires comparable units and an explicit account of whether time spent in silence is included. Transcription can identify segments that were reformulated or restarted. The interpretation of the number of repairs depends on their function. A repair may reflect difficulty with formulation or serve as a useful strategy for preventing a misunderstanding. Analyzing the different dimensions of fluency and examining task design help to explain why the same intervention improves some measures and produces mixed results on others (3,4,8,10).

In pronunciation assessment, intelligibility measured by the proportion of words understood or by listeners' ability to identify details in the message. Comprehension estimated from judgments of the effort required to understand. When assessment focuses on segmental or suprasegmental features, the instrument should specify the segments, stress patterns, or prosodic features evaluated. Using more than one rater and a documented rubric allow estimating the consistency of judgments. To assess interaction, relevant acts of initiation, requests for clarification, and responses that build on information from the interlocutor can be recorded.

A classroom assessment design combine an initial sample, a supported performance, an immediate performance on a varied task, and a delayed performance. The initial sample establishes a baseline. The supported performance documents decisions and opportunities for correction. Immediate performance on a varied task indicates the extent of adaptation to a controlled change. Delayed performance allows for the examination of retention. If it uses an equivalent but unfamiliar task, it also provides information on transfer. Table 2 shows how a pedagogical feature can be linked to observable evidence.

Table 2. Indicators for assessing a speaking sequence

Component	Evidence during practice	Evidence in a different situation
Activation of prior knowledge	Explains relationships among ideas and incorporates them into the speaking plan.	Selects relevant examples for a new question.
Purpose and interaction	Presents a decision and responds to a request for clarification.	Adapts the response to a different interlocutor or constraint.
Feedback	Identifies a difficulty and reformulates the segment in question.	Applies the revision without prompting in another exchange.
Fluency and comprehensibility	Records pauses and repairs. A listener identifies the central message.	Maintains clarity in a parallel task with equivalent preparation.

Maintenance	Records immediate performance using the established rubric.	Repeats the assessment after a specified interval using an equivalent task.

Classroom implementation and assessment sequence

One possible application is to organize two sessions around a decision that learners can discuss using information from their surroundings. In the first session, each learner explains which space at their institution they would recommend for a cultural activity. The question prompts learners to recall how they have used the space, identify its features, and establish criteria such as capacity, accessibility, and availability. An initial one-minute speaking sample provides a record of how fully learners develop their reasons and what linguistic resources they use to connect them. The teacher presents a model exchange in which one person recommends a location, another raises an objection, and the first responds with an alternative. The structure of the exchange could be represented with keywords and connectives so that learners retain control over the content of their proposals (1,2).

During the interaction phase, each participant receives different information about the event constraints. The exchange has a clearly defined outcome. Participants must agree on a location and give two reasons for their choice. The information gap creates a need for clarification. An observer can record questions that elicit missing details and instances in which a reason needs to be rephrased. For beginners, support might include expressions for asking someone to repeat a point, justifying a preference, and comparing two options. At intermediate levels, conflicting constraints introduced to observe how learners prioritize criteria and make concessions. At both levels, the communicative purpose remains the same and linguistic complexity is matched to the learners' available repertoire (3,4).

Revision might focus on a short excerpt. If the listener understood the choice but misinterpreted a condition, the learner is able to listen to the excerpt, identify the ambiguity, and rephrase that part of the response. If the difficulty arose when responding to a complaint, the revision could compare a response that merely repeats the proposal with one that acknowledges the problem and offers an alternative. A second performance of the same task allows the adjustment to be observed. Recording the feedback, how it was interpreted, and the subsequent reformulation captures aspects of the process that an overall score may miss. Feedback should be limited to a number of points that gives each learner enough time to practice the changes (8,12,17,18).

In the second session, a new scenario retains the need to propose, justify, and negotiate while changing the setting and audience. For example, the learner can advise a visiting group that must choose a meeting place subject to scheduling or mobility constraints. A brief rubric could help to assess whether the proposal is comprehensible, whether the reasons address the constraints, and whether the response takes up the objection raised. To examine speech rate, the teacher can

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record the timing of the speech samples and keep planning time constant. This helps distinguish speaking for longer from speaking at a faster rate. The follow-up task is informative to the extent that it makes comparable demands while requiring learners to select expressions in a different context (3,4,8,10,11).

The delayed assessment use a third, parallel scenario, with the elapsed interval reported. If a learner continues to speak clearly on the rehearsed task, there is evidence that this level of performance has been maintained. An appropriate response to a new interlocutor provides additional evidence of transfer within that family of tasks. A decline on the new version may reflect reliance on vocabulary from the original context, limited resources for repairing misunderstandings, or a more demanding task prompt. Comparing performance records helps identify the most plausible explanation and determine what needs further practice.

In classrooms with access to devices, individual recordings or an initial conversation with an agent, provide additional opportunities for rehearsal. Records can capture the number of spoken contributions actually made and document the feedback received. In settings with limited resources, the same sequence is implemented using information cards, rotating pairs, and teacher observation. In either setting, a participation measure should indicate how much each learner contributed, especially when the group shares responsibility for the final product. The sequence illustrates an application derived from the synthesis, and its indicators would require validation if used as research instruments (14–16,19–23).

DISCUSSION

Recent evidence supports the use of meaningful learning as a framework for designing and interpreting speaking practice. Work on prior knowledge and content organization (1,2), together with studies on fluency, repetition, and feedback (3,4,8,10–12,17,18), suggests several plausible mechanisms. Activating prior knowledge may help learners select content. A second performance may reduce the cognitive demands of organizing ideas. Feedback followed by another attempt allows learners to focus on identified difficulties. Testing each mechanism requires study designs that collect evidence about the learning process and isolate the contribution of the main components.

The findings of Duong et al. (10) and Zhong et al. (16) help clarify how the results should be interpreted. Additional exposure and a second performance yielded no significant differences in the first study. The second study documented advantages on selected measures after a 12-week project-based intervention. The studies differed in duration, intensity, population, task, and instruments. These differences prevent the discrepancy from being attributed to any single factor. They suggest that the estimated benefit depends on the outcome assessed and the

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structure of the intervention. An overall estimate of effectiveness reveals less about learning than examining which aspects of speech improve, under what conditions, and on which assessments.

Research on conversational agents describes opportunities to respond and to practice outside the classroom (19–22,24,25). Evaluating the benefits requires documenting time spent using the agent, actual spoken output, feedback quality, and the relationship between agent-supported practice and activities involving other people. If one group practices for longer than another, the comparison estimates the effect of the intervention as implemented. A study seeking to isolate the contribution of the agent should balance practice time across conditions and specify which features of the interaction differ. It could also compare conversation with the agent and performance on a subsequent task with human interlocutors to determine whether learners can adapt their linguistic repertoire to less predictable turns and questions.

In settings with limited resources, speaking activities sequenced by using locally available materials, short models, and opportunities to revise in pairs. Mobile phones, video, and simulation allow expanding opportunities for practice where access is sufficient (14–16,23). Resources should be selected according to what they contribute to the speaking activity and its assessment. An equitable distribution of speaking turns is particularly important in group projects. Learners can produce a sophisticated group product even when some members have few opportunities to speak. A record of individual contributions or an individual oral defense can help determine how speaking opportunities were distributed.

The review is limited by purposive selection, uneven access to full texts, and methodological heterogeneity. The text may over represent technology based on interventions and university settings in certain countries. Because the search was not exhaustive, the proportion of studies that yielded favorable or null results cannot be estimated. A future study could compare activities with equivalent practice time and different levels of prior knowledge activation, assess the quality of the connections made in oral explanations, and examine whether these gains persist on a delayed assessment. The design could also incorporate independent ratings of comprehensibility and interactions with different listeners. This approach would help determine which aspects of progress are specific tasks and which extend to other communicative purposes.

CONCLUSIONS

Meaningful learning in English speaking instruction involves connecting prior knowledge with new linguistic resources, organizing content around a communicative purpose, and revising spoken output in light of evidence about how well it was understood. Familiarity with the topic supports preparation when it helps learners make connections that they can explain and adapt. Repetition is valuable when incorporates targeted adjustments and culminates in an opportunity to reuse the same resources in a different situation.

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The reviewed studies documented selective benefits for fluency, pronunciation, syntactic complexity, and speaking performance, as well as favorable outcomes on participation measures in some settings. Null results were also reported for specific measures. This variability warrants describing the activity, the outcome studied, and the assessment conditions separately. Projects, digital storytelling, task repetition, and assisted conversation offer opportunities to connect content and oral expression. The available evidence provides a stronger basis for estimating the effects of complete interventions than for attributing those effects to an isolated mechanism.

A speaking intervention evaluated more precisely when it includes a baseline sample, a task with an explicit communicative demand, opportunities for feedback, and a follow-up assessment that changes either the topic or the interlocutor. Comparing practiced and novel tasks helps establish the extent of transfer. Designs that include delayed assessment, comparable practice time, and measures of both spoken production and interaction can clarify how long the benefits last and how widely they apply across educational settings.

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