

BUILD CONFIDENCE AMONG YOUNG FILIPINO SPEAKERS

by:

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For many Filipino youth, English can feel like a mountain to climb. From worrying about grammar mistakes to fearing judgment for accents, young speakers often hesitate to use the language openly. Yet, English is not meant to intimidate; it is a tool for connection, creativity, and self-expression. Building confidence in English is not only possible but essential in helping Filipino youth participate fully in school, work, and global conversations.

Fear of speaking English often stems from high expectations set in classrooms. Students are taught to focus on correctness, which can lead to anxiety when communicating naturally. Social media, peer interactions, and even family expectations sometimes reinforce the idea that mistakes are unacceptable. This fear can prevent young people from practicing English, which ironically is the very thing that improves fluency. Confidence, therefore, becomes the bridge between knowledge and real-world use.

One of the most effective ways to overcome fear is through practice in safe and supportive environments. Activities like reading aloud, storytelling, role-playing, and casual conversations allow young speakers to experiment with English without pressure. Teachers and parents play a vital role by providing encouragement and positive feedback instead of only correcting errors. Even online platforms, when used thoughtfully, can serve as spaces for students to write, speak, and connect in English with peers, fostering confidence through repeated use.

Another powerful strategy is reframing mistakes as opportunities to learn rather than failures. Every mispronounced word or grammatical slip can become a stepping stone toward improvement. Filipino youth, in particular, can leverage bilingual skills,

blending English with Filipino to ease communication while gradually increasing proficiency. Code-switching, once viewed as a flaw, can now be seen as a bridge to fluency allowing learners to express themselves clearly while practicing English structures and vocabulary.

Engaging in real-life communication is equally important. Participating in debates, writing contests, recording vlogs, or joining English-speaking clubs helps young Filipinos apply language skills in meaningful ways. These experiences teach not only vocabulary and grammar but also the courage to express opinions, share stories, and connect with others globally. Over time, confidence grows naturally, and English stops feeling like an obstacle and becomes a medium of empowerment.

Finally, building confidence in English requires a shift in perspective. It is not about perfection but about communication, self-expression, and growth. Filipino youth who learn to embrace mistakes, practice consistently, and use English in real contexts discover that the language is not something to fear, it is something to exercise. With support, encouragement, and persistence, young speakers can transform English from a source of anxiety into a tool of opportunity, creativity, and self-assurance.

English without fear is English that is lived, spoken, and enjoyed. For Filipino youth, it opens doors to education, global dialogue, and personal growth. It empowers them to share their stories, voice their opinions, and engage confidently in the world. One word at a time.

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