

# Reinforcing the Development of Foreign Oral Competence of the Students of Higher Education

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**Abstract:** *The oral competence of the person is the indicator which shows the socio-psychological, cultural and educational background of the individual in the case of not only his foreign language but also his mother tongue. As how a person defines his attitudes towards the exterior life has already become an independent study and today more people began to be interested in the nature of speech trying to upgrade oratory skills. This explains why perfecting the speaking comprehension in both native and foreign language is so demanded than any other language skills. Being one of the four major language skills, speaking comprehension is interrelated with every of them (listening, reading, writing) and has special tasks and aims of scope which are more significant and sensible than any other. The reason is that, without the ability to express our mind, the other skills as writing a letter, reading a text or listening to a tape, might lose their essence or just turn into useless one. It should be noted that, there are some obstacles related to psychological, methodical and target language experiences which bother students from interacting in the foreign language. Thus the following work is aimed at analyzing the process of developing the speaking skill of English as a second language of the students of Higher Education; detecting the existing problem areas; providing real solutions considering the learners' needs. As a content matter we chose the students of non-linguistic departments of Higher Education. Choosing non-linguistic sphere is explained with the frequency of language learning barriers which face the very students of this area more than usual. Thus the work analyzes the process; identifies the existing problem areas and the learners' weak-points; includes experimental researches with solutions and gives expedient results clarifying the main standpoints.*

**Index Terms:** *Language Skills, Learning Strategies, Interaction Patterns, Non-native Students, Collaborative Learning.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

From the early time when the child begins to acquire his native language initially, there is an enormous chance to begin learning a second one at the same time. This acknowledgement raises social adaptation in the real world and helps to realize future prospects. Furthermore, every device of the language is connected with each other, the speaking competence is also interrelated with other language skills which are required to be developed together to meet the requirements of language learning. If we review the process of learning a foreign language in Higher Education Institutions, the students who are graduated without attaining the foreign language skills are faced up with more difficulties in possessing their place in the society which is globalizing day to day. The issues of developing speaking skills of English as a second language of the students of non-philological institutions and the problems in this process are being of more importance and are demanding new strategies in the

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modern methodology. Existing handbooks, manuals and carried researches in this field are not in the requisite level, a few of them are qualitative and not every of the subject specialities are covered and needs more linguistic investigations. Taking into consideration the following conditions and criteria we try to renew the strategies of the following issues and also to develop solutions and include suggestions in this research work.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part covers two main sections: the main points of the speaking skill as well as the related researches and task-based learning strategies for EFL students.

### A. The Main Points of the Speaking Skill and the Related Researches

There are a number of factors relating to speaking skills to be considered for effective English speaking performance. As points out Tam [1], Pronunciation, vocabulary, and collocations are singled out as important factors to be emphasized in building fluency for EFL speakers. Providing students with a variety of situations and frequent speaking tasks plays a significant role in the improvement of students' fluency when speaking. Osborn clarifies that effective oral communication usually creates a number of benefits for both speakers and business organizations. For example, effective speaking skills result in achievements during ceremonial speaking activities, job training activities, job interviews, and many other business purposes [2]. As for Bailey and Songsiri, the confidence and competence in speaking could be developed from appropriate syllabus design, methods of teaching, and sufficient tasks and materials [3,4]. Lucas stated out that, when a speech involving an audience is taken into consideration, the act of speaking is considered to be more complicated than general everyday conversation and a number of other skills are therefore included in the speaking delivery process, e.g. choosing topics, organizing thoughts, tailoring the message, and adapting to listener feedback [5].

### B. Task-based learning strategies for EFL students

Zhang mentioned for several times that students who study English as a foreign language (EFL) usually have limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom and also limited exposure to English speakers or members of the international community [6]. Here, Patil clarifies the importance of building the learner's confidence to eliminate fear of making errors was a priority that the teacher should consider in order to make the learner feel comfortable with their language use [7].

There are some elements for effectiveness of speaking including listening skills, sociocultural factors,



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affective factors, and other linguistic and sociolinguistic competence such as grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence as stated Shumin [8]. For instance, Kamonpan Boonkit reflects Thai context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), in which instructors regularly ask the question why the majority of undergraduate students are unable to speak English confidently, especially for communication in real situations with international speakers [9]. A task-based learning approach was employed for the findings of the two main research questions conducted with the course participants. The 1<sup>st</sup> -What factors help EFL learners to improve/develop their speaking skills? And the 2<sup>nd</sup> -What are EFL learners' strengths and weaknesses in speaking English for special communication? [10]

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The analysis was provided by collecting data during an academic year. The results were subdivided into small sections to classify the main points. Students' oral performances were recorded to identify their strong and weak points during the lesson. Meanwhile, we tried to detect their preferred learning styles and learning strategies to come over the education obstacles. In order to complete this research work some investigating methods and teaching strategies were used. They are classified into 3 subgroups:

**1. Research framework.** Classifying the main points of the matter, we conducted the research guiding this step by step formulation:

a) Analyzing the process of developing the oral proficiency of EFL of the students of non-philological departments of High Education;

b) Main part – revolving the existing problems with the proposed methods and actions (e.g. using collaborative learning technology);

c) Identify the results.

**2. Research Instrument.** Different types of two-structured interview questions, recording participants' oral performances, data collection and analyzing experimental groups were carried out and used as research instruments of this investigation. The data were collected through the full course of an academic year. It began with identifying the start level of the participants and observing the next stages by using selective methods such as collaborative learning. During the observation the students were put to different questionnaires in order to clarify the barriers in the process of oral communication and choose the needed learning styles and teaching strategies. We tried to consolidate the participants' learning weak points with their preferred learning choices using different types of individual work and different interactive teaching methods.

## IV. THE MAIN POINT. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As we know language skills are divided into two main parts: the productive -speaking and writing; and the receptive: listening and reading. Each of these skills is integrated with each other. Consequently, listening and speaking are correlated as skills requiring quick response, so the development of these skills is enhanced supporting each

other. Here we want to mention the importance of considering student's psychological background and social attitudes which have been a key-attribute in enhancing speaking skills of non-native students. Among them are: the educational environment in the learner's family, student's motivation in learning a foreign language, self-confidence, ability to make a speech in front of the majority, ambitions to lead the group and etc. The results of the research were accomplished relying on the above mentioned tasks and objects. In each section the existent issues were questioned and the corresponding methods were used in this area, then the suggested analyses were held in order to confirm the results. Thus, we classified the basic points of the research results into several subdivisions.

**A. The problem issues of developing oral comprehension.** In this section we will go through some obstacles that we came across during the research which are in need of further deep analysis. The analysis shows the following barriers that usually face non-native students of High Education while interacting in a second language. They are:

A.1. *Phonetic disfunctions* – it occurs while mispronouncing the words, putting the stress, intonation and etc;

A.2. *Grammar tendencies* – the inadequacy of native and foreign language: as for the comparison of Uzbek and English – the absence of articles, usage of different grammatic categories, composing the relative clauses and so on;

A.3. *Vocabulary range* – having no copious vocabulary, deficient number of word funds related to the speciality and the ones that prompt a longer conversation and requires critical thinking.

A.4. *Psycho-social factors* – feeling overexcited, lack of self-confidence, family background. This area is as essential as educational one. Family atmosphere is the first matter affecting the next ongoing stages of education. Unless the learner is self-confident and feels relaxed in the class, development of any skill is unavailable.

A.5. *Location or the areal matters* - English language learners from the central Asia are really in need of real time conversations and authentic situations in their daily routine with native speakers of English which would enhance the development of authentic oral comprehension.

Considering the learners' needs and other teaching strategies may be an apposite way if produced correctly by a skillful as well as experienced teacher and be received by motivated students.

**B. Expedient mediums to enhance the development of oral proficiency of EFL student.** Furthermore, here are we propose the chief criteria approaches to accomplish the above mentioned poser tasks:

B.1. *Coincidence of the language skills.* As it is stated above speaking can not be reinforced separately and the required skill to be maintained equally is listening comprehension. When we balance both of these skills in the process of developing oral competence the results are double accelerated. Meanwhile, there are other fundamental supplements as grammar competence, vocabulary range, phonetic ability which plays a magnificent role in enhancing the speaking skill.



*B.2. The proportionality of psycho-social factors.* Creating the free atmosphere and friendly environment in the class means absolute success in the foreign language class. Unless the student feels motivated he will not be able to join in the discussion, interpret his attitudes towards any situation neither in the second language nor in his mother tongue. So how to make the learner feel motivated? Of course, only if the teacher/conductor creates, an amicable, sincere and seething surrounding where every member of the team feels his responsibility and has an equal chance to put his efforts in the success.

*c) Practical basis.* Fluent speech in any sense, requires previous experiences of potential grammar in the level of composing tenses, relative clauses, and using articles, in order to be able to produce and receive the conversation as well; active vocabulary reserve to make the speech meaningful and colorful and to avoid extra pauses; phonetic supply to avoid misunderstandings, differentiate between the words giving two or more meanings, to fasten the translation and etc.

*d) Planning for a really productive lesson.* One of the crucial element of enhancing the students' speaking is planning beforehand and organizing the lesson considering the learners' needs, their educational and psychological -social characteristics, and using any of their preferred learning styles and strategies.

*e) Evading the commonness.* Educational games, interactive methods, and other up-to-date techniques of the lesson are very familiar to us but the asserted objectives in this field. Different kinds of simulations, problem solving, role-playing and interactive tasks, types of dictation, TV interviews and many more other dodges that we know already - are quite helpful and fruitful than we think. To approve the results of the research, we implemented "collective learning" technique and analyzed the process of the foreign classes during a full course. The results showed that, the method helped the participants to solve the given tasks together in a small team-works (which is more interesting and productive) interacting with each other in the foreign language, consequently, developing their personality at the same time: they practiced how to work in a community conducting their own ideas and opposing them, being more responsible, and test themselves as a leader or a member of a collective which is significant in their future career and role in the society.

*f) Authenticity.* Here we propose advantaging more reality in and out of the lesson while developing oral communication in the second language. It's required that foreign language learner was faced with real life situations not only during the class but out of it to keep the progress. As using the newest reality TV show in the class is more beneficial than listening to any dialogue by a tape-recorder. On the circumstances that, the learner practices the authentic foreign language intensively in daily routines, talking to a friend on the phone, watching TV programs, listening to some music, and at last surfing the net-which means he handles the language everywhere- the outcome is successful as never before! The learner should "carry" the language with him anywhere he goes and via everything he does as he spends most part of his day out of the class.

## V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The following research work was devoted to analyze the process of enforcing oral competence of English of

non-native students of High Education. Provided analyses showed the obstacles and the ways to solve the questions and problem issues in this process. It should be initially noted that although, speaking is a crucial instrument of an oral communication, the acquisition of the foreign language should be maintained with the other related skills as listening writing and reading comprehension. Therefore, we propose that oral competence should be developed in the complex process involving all of these macro-skills. As shows the analysis, in order to fill the needs of the students` to acquire the language practically the hours of the foreign language lessons per week should be proportional to the demands of the learners. For instance, the students who have 3 to 5 hours per week are more successful than those who have it 1 to 2 hours per week. Especially the classes practicing oral comprehension must be doubled to twice plus the extra-lessons out of the class. We emphasized phonetic and grammatic aspects of the language as a problem issues which should be developed intensively further. Therefore, we define them as problem areas which usually prevent students from oral interaction. Individual approach is required in this issue.

Consequently, selecting authentic materials, creating friendly atmosphere motivating the students to active conversations, consolidating their self-confidence, organizing the foreign language classes considering different learning styles, students' needs and as well as their weak points with suitable teaching strategies, providing the lessons with modern hi-techs and with a wide range of interesting methods – here are the most essential factors which make the language learning and oral practice more productive, thus, the process is completed in a shorter period of time than usual, which benefits in quality as it showed the following research work.

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## Reinforcing the Development of Foreign Oral Competence of the Students of Higher Education

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