

## **TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP L2 SPEAKING SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

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### **Abstract**

Speaking is the primary way to communicate with others in the social community. The success in acquiring a new language at first can be seen from the skill to speak that language. It is very hefty to speak target language, especially English for learners to speak. This paper aims at exploring the factors that affect speaking English and it revealed that psychological factors like fear, shyness lack of motivation, non-confidence in speaking and embarrassment that affects the language acquisition of the students. In addition to the factors like poor vocabulary, absence of supplementary materials and the mother-tongue influence hinder target learners from attaining speaking skills. The paper also suggests different techniques like picture-cued technique, story-telling, role-play, group-discussion, and also problem-solving enhance the ability of speaking skills in English.

**Keywords:** Speaking skills, Affective factors, Target language, Effective communication, Language competence.

### **Introduction**

Speaking skill is one of the four macro skills for the growth of effective communication especially in target language. Speaking skills have to be developed with all other skills for the non-native speakers of English. In every walk of life language, which one conveys with others is very much important. In the present world, speaking English is not mere political but scientific and technological. English is used as a link language in India which is a nation with people speaking multilingual language. English has been prevailing as the colloquial language even after the British sovereign quit India. Graddol states “the English language has been turned as a commanding weapon for transform in India”.

## **Review of Literature**

1. ShaikRiyaz Ahmad, in his article, “Importance of English Communication skills,’ portrays the need of communication skill in English particularly in India. In every walk of life, communication is very much important. Most of the students in India lack effective communication and because of that, they are not industry ready. This paper claims that in India, effective communication training is not imparted to the students who are poor at communication, and the prominence is given only to the technical skills, so that they lack confidence to attend the interviews. For obtaining employment, communication skills hold the first place among all other skills. So the author says that one must acquire the skill of effective speaking to achieve desired success in professional and also in all walks of life. Thus, today the compulsion of English is no longer political, but it sustains the growth and development in employment.

### **Role of effective communication**

Speaking is considered to be the most prominent of all four skills. Having good speaking skill is pivotal for habitual routine and job opportunities. English has opened the platform of opportunities almost in all fields as it is the measuring rod in most of the jobs. Many graduates are unemployed due to their lack of competency in English. According to Baker and Westrup (2003)

“More and more educators, government, ministry of education and employers need people who can speak English well. Companies and organisations need staff who can speak English well in order to communicate within the international market place. Students who speak English well may have a good opportunity of higher education, of searching job and gaining promotion.”

This shows the prominence and dominant role of speaking skills in the society in general and in educational organisation and the ministry of education in particular.

### **Characteristics of speaking skill**

The followings are the characteristics of speaking skills.

#### **a) Fluency**

The first characteristics of speaking skills is fluency and it is one of the main aims in teaching speaking skills by teachers. When conveying messages to the listener, the speakers have to avoid misunderstanding to convey the messages delivered clearly. Harmer(2007)states that it is important to know the appropriate situation to speak fluently by the speaker. Speaking fluency is described as the speakers’ skills to convey the ideas constantly. It is the skill of the speaker to speak confidently and understandably to create interest of the listeners. Hedge(2000) argued that fluency is the ability to response relevantly by uniting words and phrases, pronouncing the sound distinctly, by applying stress and intonation.

#### **b) Accuracy**

Accuracy is the second characteristics in speaking which needs to sway the structure that speakers used. Learners have to be fluent in the second language. Hence, teacher has to encourage accuracy among learners in their teaching process. Mazouzi (2003) states that function of accuracy shows the speaker potentially to select the right pattern of sentence acquired from conversation condition. Learners have to pay enough attention to the

appropriateness in the form of language that includes grammatical structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation while speaking.

### **Factors affecting the speaking skills**

As students are from different social background, improper language training and also due to influence from mother tongue, they are facing the following problems in learning to speak the target language.

1. Psychological factors
2. Lack of vocabularies and grammatical competence
3. Mother tongue influence
4. Absence of supplementary speaking materials

#### **1. Psychological factors**

Psychological factors that affect students speaking skills are:

- i. Fear of making mistakes
- ii. Shyness
- iii. Embarrassment
- iv. Non-confidence
- v. Lack of motivation

#### **i. Fear of making mistakes**

Many theorists Tsui, Nunan, Yi argued that the students feel reluctant to speak inside the class because of the fear of making mistakes. Middleton (2009), argued that the target language learners are scared to try to speak in the target language though they have learned it. He further says that learners are not willing to be foolish inside the classroom. In order to overcome this fear of making mistakes, Zua, suggests that students have to create strong emotional bonding with the teachers. By promoting and supporting the learning atmosphere, the teachers have to enhance students' concentration. So it is important to create a friendly environment to eradicate the fear of the students.

#### **ii. Shyness**

Shyness drives the students mind in vacuum and they forget what is in their mind to say and they come across with one of the top common phobias that is speaking in front of the audience. Robby (2010) argues that students who are very quiet by nature are affected by this shyness and they lack confidence and tend to find very terrifying while they speak English in front of their peers and teachers. To overcome this problem of shyness, Pesce (2011) suggests that it is important to create a friendly classroom environment by teachers to make them feel comfortable of making errors in their learning process. Shy students are no longer worried with their wrong pronunciation and grammar; consequently they built the confidence to speak in front of the classroom.

#### **iii. Embarrassment**

Afraid of being embarrassed or criticised in front of teachers and friends was also a factor that perturbs students' speaking skills. As a result, the students remain silent and they avoid oral participation to prevent criticising and embarrassing situation. Tanveer (2007) opines that

students talk in low voices because of their consciousness of their limitations in target language as a result they remain silent inside the classroom. As a means to get rid of the feeling of embarrassment in students, the teacher has to acknowledge the feeling of students so that they can be skilful in managing strengths and weakness of the students. Tsui (1999) suggests that teachers have to accept the variety of answers from the reluctant students to make them feel more confident in responding to the questions and thereby take part in all the activities.

#### **iv. Non-confidence**

Self-confidence is a sense of accomplishment and efficiency which distinguishes capability to deal efficiently from various situations. Confidence arrives from the feelings of welfare, and trust in one's own ability, skills and experience. To overcome the non-confidence among students, teachers have to provide regular opportunities and regular exposure to the target language for practicing the proper intonation and pronunciation to chat freely, so that teachers can build the friendly environment where the students are encouraged to speak the English language freely.

#### **v. Lack of motivation**

Motivation is one of the key factors that affects student's role in effective speaking. As Gardiner argues uninspired teaching, lack of study materials, boredom, not having any set of goals is the cause for lack of students' motivation. Teachers have to motivate students to raise the passion and interest among the students in learning the target language. Liu and Huang (2010) suggests that to overcome the lack of motivation among students, teachers have to enhance the awareness about the importance of target language to create their interest in English.

#### **c) Lack of vocabulary and grammatical competence**

As students' bank of vocabulary is very little, it causes them to understand the content of conversation and makes them feel difficulty in speaking. Baker and Westrup (2003) says that it is difficult for the learners to react to the teachers when they ask to speak something in English as they have limited vocabulary to use and also they do not know to grammar accurately.

#### **d) Mother-tongue influence**

Harmer (1991) cites the following reasons for mother-tongue influence in class. Firstly, when the teacher asks to speak about the topic that is unfamiliar to them, they try to speak in vernacular language. Secondly, the use of mother-tongue is very natural to the students and if the teacher is not strict they automatically speak in their mother-tongue with their classmates. Finally, the students use mother-tongue if the teacher uses it regularly inside the classroom.

#### **e) Absence of supplementary speaking materials**

Due to shortage or un-availability of supplementary speaking materials like books, audio-visual aids and the language laboratory equipment will affect the speaking skills of the students as it is very important for the betterment of practicing speaking skills in English. Brown (2000) states that teachers should use suitable materials for teaching and learning. Good teaching materials should be realistic, interesting and motivating. Teachers have to make more tasks based activities applied in speaking while teaching.

#### **Some effective techniques to improve speaking skills**

There are many techniques like picture-cued technique, story-telling, role-play, group-discussion, debates used to enhance the speaking proficiency of the students. By applying the

appropriate techniques inside the classroom, students' oral skills get developed and they become interested in learning a new language.

### **1. Picture-cued technique**

Picture-cued technique actively encourages students' interest in target language learning. It gives the perceived panorama for the students. Brown(2004) claimed that picture-cued technique is regarded as the foremost and powerful technique to raise students speaking skills at intensive and extensive levels. He also suggests that to begin the class by describing pictures is an ideal way on focussing the content. This technique actively encourages students' interest in target language. Wright (1989) states that in language learning pictures motivate and stimulate the students. The students' imagination power widens and stimulates the learners' discussion and reframing of the particular topic enables the students to speak more inside the classroom. By using this technique, teacher acquires the chance to identify the learners' problems and thereby rectifies the students' needs.

### **2. Cooperative story-telling strategy**

Peck(1989), states that by applying co-operative story-telling method students are unveiled to new vocabulary, genuine content, asseverations and pronunciation that aid to enhancing their speaking skill. Story-telling technique provokes curiosity, imagination, and vocabulary of the students. It is an interactive process for verbal expression and practicing language learning. This cooperative story telling strategy escorts the language trainersto apply customized stories to the learners in their target language and hence to improve proficiency of the speaking skill, this strategy has been implemented by the language teachers worldwide.

### **3. Group-Discussion**

Group-discussion is one of the teaching techniques used by the teachers especially for speaking activity. It elevates the speaking activities of the students by eliminating boredom and non-confidence. Besides, it improves the vocabulary of the learners. Oinntein (2000) describes through group-discussion, the students get more opportunities to participate actively by dividing them into small groups so that teacher gets a chance to monitor the students' progress better. Also social skills and student's cooperation get improved by engaging group-discussion.

### **4. Role-play**

Role-play is an important activity to encourage learners in learning the target language as it provides lots of opportunities to the students and thereby makes the learning process enjoyable. Nunan (2003) states that in role play activity, students exposed to practice particular roles in the target language before they do in a real life environment. Ladousse, suggests that role play activities improve the self-confidence, speaking competence and also for a better relationship with the peers. He further asserts that role-play should be related to the prescribed language learning syllabus.

### **5. Problem-solving**

Problem-solving is one of the techniques used in teaching a new language by motivating and encouraging the target learners. Moore(2005) suggests that problem solving techniques help the leaners to clear the doubts regarding their learning. Kolenik (1976) states that problem solving aids the students to reach their goals by overcoming their obstacles.

## Conclusion

This paper reviews the importance of speaking skills in English, the factors that affect the speaking proficiency and some of the techniques used in learning a target language. The teacher has to identify the students' weakness and their strong points to apply the suitable methods for the efficiency of language learning. Imparting self-confidence and motivating the learner helps the students to eradicate the shyness and fear over the target language. In addition to that, English language teachers bring their extreme endeavour to overthrow the obstacles and avail to upgrade the speaking competencies.

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