

# Enhancing the Oral Communication Skill Using Effective Activities

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**Abstract**— This paper presents and focuses on the enhancing the oral communication skill of the students at the Universities of Computer Studies. Enhancing the oral communication skill is mainly important for the fourth year and final year students at the Universities of Computer Studies, as oral speaking is the main concern for communication. It also intends to guide the language teachers to take effective activities in their teaching specifically and thus facilitate their students to overcome their speaking tests. For this purpose, firstly data was gathered from language teachers of Universities of Computer Studies (Taunggyi) to know the students' speaking skill. In order to produce a good speech, the students need to have fluency in the language. Moreover, vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation are components of language in speaking skill. Therefore, this study is conducted some under graduate students from Universities of Computer Studies, 2018-2019 Academic Year. There were one hundred (100) randomly selected the students. To achieve this aim, the needs survey, is done through questionnaires for the students and teachers.

**Keywords**— Enhancing, Oral Communication, Speaking, Components, Effective, activities

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to develop the oral communication skill of the students. Language is the most important communicative tool of mankind, and English is an important tool for today's international communication. To catch up with other developed countries, students need to be competent in English. The students have been taught English for more than ten years and English is prescribed as compulsory subject for them. In the Universities of Computer Studies, the students are taught two English text books: Grammar for IELTS and IELTS.

Among four skills, reading and writing are the two skills which are mainly taught in the Universities of Computer Studies. The students are taught the speaking tasks involved in the textbooks. Traditionally, the students are mainly tested writing skill rather than the oral skill in the exam. Most of the students' first priority is to pass the exam. Therefore, their efforts on the communication skill become less and less although they want to be able to speak English fluently.

Nowadays, all of the Computer Universities are using the modern language lab and multimedia to enhance the student's speaking skills. Some of the students are lack confidence and they need to do a lot of practice and to have language exposures. And to enhance the speaking skill, the students need the interaction skills too. So, more emphasis on the oral communication skills has been written in this research report to meet the needs of the students.

Some tasks included in this research report are designed to give the students skill practice and strategies

which are needed both for educational function and real-life situation. If this research is helpful for students to improve and enhance their oral communication skill, then the aim of this paper will have been fulfilled. Therefore, it is hoped that the students will be skilful in the oral communication by following skills, strategies and some suggested activities are provided in this paper.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Oral communication is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. Speaking is a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions. To be proficient in speaking skill, it depends on grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

Oral speaking requires that students not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary "Linguistic Competence", but also that they understand when, why, and what ways to produce language "sociolinguistic Competence". Speaking usually involves two or more people who use the language for interactional or transactional purposes. For many students, learning to speak competently in English is their first priority. They may need oral communication skill for a variety of reasons, for example to keep up rapport in relationships, influence people, and win or lose negotiations. Students need to develop at the same time knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, functional language and communicative skills.

### C. Speaking as a process

Some special features of speaking are considered to result from two sets of conditions under which people speak: processing and reciprocity. In terms of processing, speaking requires simultaneous action: 'the words are being spoken as they are being decided and as they are being understood'. Reciprocity conditions mean that speakers have to adapt to their listeners and adjust what they say according to the listeners' reactions.

### D. The Importance of Pronunciation

Pronunciation teaching deals with two interrelated skills: recognition or understanding the flow of speech and production or fluency in the spoken language. Pronunciation (also known as phonology) includes the role of individual sounds segments that is, features at the segmental level, as well as suprasegmentally features such as stress, rhythm and intonation.

### E. The Significance of Voice and Speech

Stress, rhythm and intonation are vocal features of the English language. It is said that a word of a syllable is

stressed when greater force or loudness is used in pronouncing it so as to give it more important than the surrounding syllables and to make it stand out among them. Rhythm is the time interval between stresses. Intonation is the rise and fall of the speaker's voice. Of three vocal features, stress is the most important.

#### *F. Stress, Rhythm, Intonation Patterns, Phrasing and Pausing*

Stress, rhythm, intonation patterns, phrasing and pausing are very important in communication skill. All words are made up of sounds, and speakers of a language need to know sounds if they are to understand what is said and be understood in turn.

#### *G. Fluency and Coherence*

Fluency is the quality of being able to speak easily, without too many pauses and hesitations. The teacher is listening to see if the students can speak continuously and at a normal conversational speed. Coherence refers to the logical arrangement of sentences that students says on the topic and indicates that it is used clearly to express the feelings of speakers, so the listener can follow the student's ideas easily. The student should use cohesive devices like conjunctions, pronouns and connections within and between sentences.

### III. THE ROLES OF THE TEACHER IN ENHANCING THE STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION SKILL

Teachers need to play a number of different roles during the speaking activities in the classroom. The teachers are responsible for the roles of controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor and investigator. Among these skills, the important roles of the teacher are controller and organiser.

#### *H. The Teacher acts as a Controller*

When teachers act as controllers, they are the main responsible persons for the class. They control not only what the students do, but also when they speak and what language they use. Sometimes they appear to be natural leaders and performers, while some are quieter and feel happier when students are not involving the speaking activities. Teachers are ready to help when students need some helps, teacher is not to perform the controlling role and this has both advantages and disadvantages. When teachers are acting as controllers, they tend to do a lot of the talking, and the teacher may feel uneasy about this topic has on the possibilities of changing another topic.

#### *I. The teacher acts as an Organiser*

The teacher has to play as an organiser, in this role each teacher may perhaps be the most important and difficult role respectively. Many successful activities are depends on teacher's good organisation and the students' knowledge of what they are to do.

A lot of time can be wasted if the teacher omits to give students vital information or gives conflicting and confusing instructions. The main aim of the teacher when

organising an activity is to tell the students what they are going to talk about, give clear instructions about what exactly their task is, get the activity going, and then organise feedback when it is over. The organisation of an activity and the instructions the teacher gives are of vital importance since if the students have not understood clearly what they are to do they will not be able to perform their task satisfactorily.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

This research was carried out based on questionnaires to know information about the students and language teachers. Questionnaires are given to the fourth-year and final year of computer universities students who are attending the University of Computer Studies, (Taunggyi). There are all together one hundred students. And also, questionnaires are given to five language teachers from Language Department. According to the result of questionnaires, most of students might in a situation of shyness and chose to remain silent in the classroom because they knew they will be failed or nearly fail to speak English well such as UCS (Taunggyi). Similarly, students there also show low oral skills of English language as it is the absence of reliable situation of language learning whether outside or inside the classroom.

#### *A. Research Questions for the Students*

The aim of this research is to investigate students' attitude on their oral communication ability. Total (100) students were selected to answer these questions at the University of Computer Studies (Taunggyi) with the fourth year and final year students. The research designed to find out answers to the research questions as follows:

1. Do you feel very self-conscious about speaking English in classroom or out of classroom?
2. Do you prefer to use English or Bilingual method by doing activities in the classroom?
3. Is there enough practice for enhancing your oral skills in this 2018-2019 academic year?
4. Do you think doing communicative activities for enhancing the oral communication skill is essential in class?
5. Do you feel confident to participate in speaking contests?

#### *B. Research Questions for the Language Teachers*

This research was based on interview of language teachers who have over three years teaching experience with good attitudes and achievements in their academic lives. The research search for answers to the research questions as follows:

1. Do you think the roles of the teacher are important to enhance the oral skill in the classroom?
2. Do you assign activities in the class to enhance the oral communication skill of the students?
3. Do you think that teaching of English helps your students in studying their specialized subjects?
4. Do you agree that successful English teachers usually speak English in the class?

### C. Results for the students' Data

I assigned Yes or No questions in this research to answer the students. In Question number 1, 100% of students were answered that Yes. The reasons they gave that teachers are very important to create oral skill environment. 30% of students were using the English to English but 65% were using the Bilingual method to do the activities in their classroom. Questions Number 3 and No.4 for all of the students they were answered Yes about 100%.

And then Question Number 5 for the students they were responded that 60% was Yes and 40% was No. Although the teacher gave their students enough practice to do oral communication activities, 50% of the students cannot do well. According to the students' feedback to the questionnaires, most of the fourth year and fifth year students long to do more communicative activities that would really make them interesting, that would make them get and effective communication.

### D. Results for the teachers' Data

According to the language teachers' responses to the questionnaires, they thought that some students are fair in the speaking and most are poor. Research questions gave Yes or No sentences. It is shown that 20% were good and 30% were fair but 50% were poor. Most of the students were interested in learning English and then 100% of the language teachers were answered that Yes in Question Number 1. So the roles of the teachers as an organiser and controller are very important to do activities. There, they found that the students' lack of having good articulation and lack of vocabulary hinder them from taking part in oral interaction in the classroom. Furthermore, they assign many activities to enhance the communication, 75% were very happy and acting enthusiastically. But others 25% were talkative and not interested. Questions 3 and 4 all of the teachers accepted that English is very important to encounter other subjects and students' specialization subjects. Thus, they were proud of successful language teacher in their academic life and they usually speak English in the classroom at the UCS (Taunggyi) teachers.

### E. Findings and Suggestions

According to the data collected by the questionnaires, half of the students regarded themselves to be poor in the speaking skill and the rest fair. However, no one identifies himself as a good speaker. The students want to speak fluently. But most of the students keep still silent in class. The survey also shows that between 75 and 90 percent of class time was applied for the teacher talk. This means that the teacher plays an active role and the students religiously listen and take down notes, playing the passive role. There is no chance for the students to present their knowledge and opinion, to ask the teachers alternative expressions to be explained and used. Therefore, the teachers should create classroom activities such as role play, group discussions and group activities for students to develop their oral communication skill. And then, the teachers should make students listen to real conversation of native speakers to improve their speaking

skill by using language laboratory occasionally. After listening to the native speakers' conversation, they should encourage them to practice communicative activities with each other. Even though they are computer students, they actively participate in debate and impromptu talk. The significant feature of doing activities is that they are interested in listening in the lab and watching speaking conversation and sample videos with overhead projector. EFL teachers should use teaching aids to be effective on his or her teaching and always to keep up rapport in today's technology.

### V. SUGGESTIONS FOR ELT TEACHERS IN TEACHING ORAL COMMUNICATION

There are some suggestions for English language teachers for teaching oral language and for creating active situations.

- Focus on improving students' language learning and try to create interactive teaching techniques
- Provide students with activities whether to be carried out in pair or groups
- Try to involve each student in every speaking activity
- Walk circle around the classroom to ensure that students are on the right speech and strictly signing students from using English language
- Correct grammatically and guide carefully by the teacher after getting the responses from the students in the classroom.

#### A. Creating Activities to Enhance Communication Skill

According to the study of under graduate students from the University of Computer Studies, Taunggyi. ELT teachers find that students still lack of appropriate words and grammar during the speaking practices, and the teachers' role as the facilitator, the guide and the corrector of the students' weakness in oral communication. At first, teachers do not give difficult activities. So, teachers start with the relevant topic to the student's level and then they raise the level of step-by-step. Language teachers from UCST motivate their students by giving a drill or practices as the following sample activities.

#### Sample Activity 1

Time : 20-25 minutes  
 Language links : Correct tenses (Present, Past and "going to" future)  
 Aim : To practice expressing feelings in everyday situations  
 Preparation : Flashcards, an A-4 sheet  
 Organisation : Pairs  
 Procedure : (1) Draw it (or ask a friend who can draw to do it for you) onto flashcards so you can use it again and again. Show them one at a time to students and stand them up on the board. Draw it straight onto the board if you have got the time and confidence.

(2) Then to act the responses of this story. Ask the students to supply a funny name for the character to make attractive or lovable them to him.  
 (3) Repeat this procedure once more in the future when you present going to. Next Monday (Skinny) is going to get up at seven o’ clock. Then he is going to go to the bathroom and have a shower.



Fig 1. Activities for Making Dialog at Daily Procedure

Sample Activity 2

Level : Elementary to Advanced  
 Time : 15\_ 20 minutes  
 Language/ Skill Practice : Reviewing grammar  
 Aim : To train the students to make a group work  
 Procedure : (1) Organise groups of four students.  
 (2) Explain the rules of game. Two members of the team will walk around the classroom and read four sentences that are written on separate pieces of paper, marked A, B, C, and D. These two members have to remember the sentences (no writing is allowed), then report back to the other two team members, who will write the sentences down.  
 (3) Put up a student Roles Table (see Table 1) and allow a few minutes for team discussion.  
 (4) Tell students to close their eyes. Put the sentences then ask students to open their eyes. (Large classes might have to place several copies of each sentence around the room.)  
 (5) Tell the class that the winning team is the group that finishes first, with no mistakes. Then start the activity.

TABLE1  
 STUDENT ROLES TABLE

ROLES	
Student 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a task to search an advantage or find a hidden advantage</li> <li>• Cut down of the time</li> <li>• Check the writing</li> </ul>
Student 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the first two sentences. (Students try to write their own sentences. If they face difficulties of using vocabulary or grammar, can ask their leader.</li> </ul>
Student 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the next and last two sentences.</li> </ul>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together to form a conversation.</li> <li>• Decide who writes sentences with appropriate condition</li> <li>• Make up your mind you want to write first and then edit, or if you want to edit carefully</li> <li>• Gather group to check grammar and spelling together.</li> </ul>

TABLE2.  
 SPEAKING COMPETENCE OBSERVATION AFTER MAKING ACTIVITIES

Speaking Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The finding after the Observations</li> </ul>
Grammatical Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor of the students’ activities found it hard to use grammatical rules correctly</li> </ul>
The importance of Pronunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students could not pronounce correctly for most of the session.</li> <li>• Some words were not appropriately used</li> <li>• Some lexical reference was not used properly during activities</li> </ul>
The significance of Voice and Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students were seen to use appropriate phrases to express their task activities because they understand the objectives of the activity.</li> </ul>
Fluency and Coherence Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not in a good level</li> <li>• Students take too much time to respond and pausing too much while acting the oral communication</li> </ul>

VI. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research is to help the students to a better understanding in enhancing oral communication. Today, language laboratories have already been set in all Universities of Computer Studies to promote listening and speaking skills for communicative competence. In fact, students will feel delighted to confirm that they have improved all language skills because they have the

chance to listen and speak. Therefore, students need to have oral fluency in English. And then, teachers should focus not on a single skill, but on all four skills. And then teachers need to be interested in pronunciation teaching in the language laboratories. Having correct pronunciation is also very important in the speaking skill as it mainly affects listening comprehension.

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