

# The Role of Classroom Interactions in Enhancing Speaking Skills in English

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## ABSTRACT

The English language, with its status as a global language, has the power to connect nations while retaining the value of the individual institutions and organizations of the nations. Competency in the language with effective transactional abilities can be the only best way to ensure their development and sustenance. The world-renowned psychologists and language experts strongly point out that language learning is a social process. With classrooms being prominent workshops for language learning across the globe, they emphasize that these learning rooms should employ social learning approaches and strategies involving collaborative methods. Only such collaborative arenas can certainly promote effective learning of language skills (LSRW), especially speaking.

**Keywords-** Intricate process, language proficiency, interconnectedness, collaborative approach, language learning scenario, classroom interaction, empathetic listening, contextual illustrations, dynamic learning mode, inclusive learning atmosphere, innovative teaching, technology integration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The status of English in today's world is beyond debate as English has evolved to be an all-powerful global language. Universities, corporates, industries and business sectors of almost every country greatly rely on and revolve around English. Competency in English promotes growth, connects people and boosts respect. A competent user of the language is sure to find ample lucrative opportunities than someone without a good proficiency. Considering it as the future language of the globe for all sorts of communication purposes, mastering the skills of the language has become very essential. Of all the four skills of English – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, speaking skill is the most crucial one.

Speaking is not a mere mechanical activity. It is rather a planned process that involves perceiving, processing and producing before giving out any meaningful expressions of one's thoughts and ideas. A perfect mastery of the skill cannot certainly take place without proper training. It definitely demands intensified communication abilities and consistent immersion in intellectual challenges. To a greater degree, the abode of English language learning in a country like India is certainly the classroom. And it is a well-known fact that an inspiring and supportive class environment is the best platform to enrich the verbal skills of the new learners. It can be said that attaining excellence in a language, relies majorly on the effectiveness of the interactions in the language classrooms.

## **II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND – A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION**

Attaining language proficiency and developing communication abilities are unquestionably intricate processes and hence they have even been expansively studied in connection with other fields like phonetics, linguistics, psychology and education. The renowned linguist Noam Chomsky, proposed the theory on the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that evolved out of linguistic theory known as the nativist theory. According to him, LAD is a hypothetical tool in the brain of every human and this innate ability is inherent with definite syntactic constructions which are common to every language. He explains that it is this device that enables the children to easily acquire any language and communication skills just with the exposure in their environment and even with very less formal training.

Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, in his sociocultural theory of cognitive development, highlights that language learning is certainly a social process and not an individual endeavour. According to him, language has close interconnection with the thoughts of a person. A child's learning ability is strengthened through social interaction with other 'knowledgeable members' such as the members of the family, peers and teachers. They construct new language guided and mediated by their social interactions which in turn correlate with the cultural and historical experience of the learner.

The American psychologist Seamour Papert explains learning as the construction of the knowledge patterns by internalizing one's actions. The learning happens in an exceptionally prolific and appropriate manner when the learner, based on the constructed patterns, consciously involves in creating a tangible object. His theory also conveys the view that the ideas get effectively transformed and find clear expression to get portrayed in specific contexts when conveyed through varied channels. Papert's logic, lays more stress on the working of the individual mind than on the regular cognitive understanding.

Many of the pedagogical theories had their evolution based on the above approaches. They signify collaborative learning methods like communicative language teaching (CLT) experiential learning, cooperative learning, reciprocal teaching etc. CLT is a learner centered approach where the activities are focused on and driven by the learners themselves. It specifies interaction in target language as both the goals and the means for the development of communication skills. This also attends to the need for the individualized

learning experience of the students. The real-life activities like brainstorming, think-pair-share, role-play and case study enable the learner's engrossed learning thereby resulting in effective communication development.

Approaches like collaborative learning aim at actively involving the learners in the acts of processing and synthesizing information and perceptions. It emphasizes collaborative working of the learners in small groups that ensures the participation of everyone involved. Careful and appropriate planning and structuring of activities lead to enormous benefits to the learners. The working together brings in cooperation, sharing of ideas, witnessing multiple perspectives, better oral communication, problem-solving and higher order thinking abilities.

On the whole the theories proposed on language learning help in understanding the needs of the diverse groups of learners. They highlight learner interaction, effective communication and collaborative activities as the essential means for enhancing communication skills in a classroom. The empirical outcome of many researches highlights that students who are actively involved in class room interactions mark significant improvement in their overall academic performance.

## **III. PERVASIVE IMPACT OF POOR COMMUNICATION - CLASSROOM STRUGGLES TO CAREER LIMITATIONS**

Students with communication challenges face difficulty in understanding concepts and have limited learning opportunities. Inability to express ideas during classroom activities result in less engagement and poor interactive learning experience. Lack of clarity in thought and expression may also affect peer relationship leading to insufficient collaborative study and social isolation. Poor communication skills also impact performance in examinations due to shortcomings like inadequate vocabulary, deficient comprehension, misinterpretation of questions, lack of cohesion and coherence, want of spontaneity, weak construction of answers etc. The bearing of these challenges in communication of the young learners continue even beyond, adversely affecting their professional opportunities. Unproductive team work, inefficient client relations, futile managerial activities etc. will certainly hinder their professional growth and limit their career progression. While effective communication builds credibility and positive professional reputation, inadequate communication skills result in perception of incompetence regardless of actual skills or knowledge.

#### IV. CLASSROOM DYNAMICS: A CATALYST FOR ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILLS

In today's language learning scenario, classroom interaction is widely recognized by both teachers and learners as a valuable tool for enhancing speaking skills. These interactions provide the learners with unlimited opportunities to listen to others, receive various perspectives, observe multiple usages, practice the perceived structures and patterns and involve in meaningful conversations. Through these ponderings and deliberations, the learners acquire the ability to convey their ideas vividly, stand by their viewpoints confidently and think logically and critically. In classrooms, students receive ample motivation to express their views, share ideas with peers and learn from each other. It is hence the responsibility of every conscientious language teacher to create such a conducive class room atmosphere.

Teachers' actions in the classroom are of importance, including the way they promote student interactions, their methods of instructional delivery and their support for SE (student Engagement (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, Citation 2012)). On the whole, classroom interaction is an effective means for students to learn, progress and advance in their speaking ability.

#### V. CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS: KEY BENEFITS

##### 1. *Strengthening of Listening Skills*

The involvement of the learners in the classroom discussions not only benefit their speaking ability but also strengthens their listening skills. During the discussions they eagerly listen to their peers, grasp their point of view and give thoughtful responses. This process enables their active listening skills which is critical for grasping of complex ideas. They also develop empathetic listening that involves their mental and emotional disciplines to make appropriate responses in their conversation.

##### 2. *Enhancing Verbal Expressions*

Regular participation in the interactive activities of the classroom enable students to develop clarity of thought and produce verbal expressions with confidence. The exposure to various aspects of the spoken language through the activities in class enables the expansion of the vocabulary of the learners, refines their pronunciation skill and supports in the strengthening of grammatical constructions with appropriate contextual illustrations. This also promotes the development of interactional skills.

##### 3. *Improving Motivation and Reducing Anxiety*

In a heterogenous classroom, it is quite common that some students do not gain the confidence to respond to the teacher's questions or come forward to express themselves even when they have lofty ideas and interesting arguments to present. Their inhibition or alleged fear of criticism grips them from communicating in the class. But when the interaction takes place among the peers, the playful and relaxed attitude greatly brings down their anxiety level. Waiting for their turn for response gives the anxious learners more time for preparation of the involved activity resulting in their improved confidence. They get to talk more, take more chances, instinctively experiment with the language and learn by making mistakes.

##### 4. *Organising and Controlling Learning*

Class room deliberations facilitate students to express their thoughts with much coherence and understanding. By dynamically involving in interactions, the learners get trained in effectively articulating their thoughts and ideas to the others through well-structured sentences. Keeping students engaged helps them in constructing and organising relevant responses necessitating them to acclimatize to a dynamic learning mode. They learn to arrange the ideas logically and to plan and construct the information in a well-organized manner that impacts the listeners in an striking manner.

##### 5. *Promoting Diverse Perspectives*

The verbal activities of the class facilitate the learners with various viewpoints to improve their knowledge as they interact with students from various educational and social backgrounds. This improves the understanding of their surrounding and widens their perspective of the all things and matters around them. It also enables better social interactions cultivating compassion, acceptance, neutrality and broadmindedness promoting a more positive and inclusive learning atmosphere.

##### 6. *Building Critical Thinking*

When the students take part in class room activities, they are motivated to assess, evaluate and construct ideas and opinions. The discussions, debates, collaborative speaking activities and response to queries, create opportunities for perceiving things in varied points of view driving them towards critical thinking and problem-solving attitude. They learn to build convincing responses and well-informed conclusions.

#### VI. REQUISITES FOR ACCOMPLISHING INSIGHTFUL CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

1. **Inclusive Atmosphere:** Fostering comfortable and motivational atmosphere for the participation of every student of the class.

**2. Creative and Facilitating Teacher:** Mentoring, modelling, guiding and facilitating the classroom activities to optimize language development.

**3. Interactive Methods:** Framing stimulating questions that arouse innovative and thought-provoking responses.

**4. Technology Integration:** Utilization of electronic devices and applications or enabling self-paced, flipped learning situations.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Classroom interaction is a vital tool for enhancing the speaking skills of the young learners. It benefits the learners by strengthening their listening skills, enhancing their verbal expressions, improving their motivation and reducing anxiety, organising and controlling their learning methodology, promoting diverse perspectives of learning and building critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. By creating an inclusive atmosphere, involving a creative and innovative teacher, adopting innovative questioning methods and by incorporating relevant technology integration, a classroom can enhance the students' interaction and can become an appropriate place for the development of speaking skills.

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