



## DEVELOPING ORAL SPEECH COMPETENCE OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS OF NON-PHILOLOGICAL DEPARTMENTS

Nurjamol Normatovna Nomatova

Phd In Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor Samarkand State Institute Of Foreign Languages Samarkand City, Uzbekistan

### ABSTRACT

The following research work focuses on the process of developing oral speech competency of English as a foreign language of Higher Education students of non- linguistic departments. It is aimed to analyze the existing obstacles and barriers which are preventing the learners from foreign oral communication and find the appropriate solutions to these problems. There has been an attempt to create more suitable teaching strategies of teaching English as a Foreign Language for the students of non-linguistic profiles. We propose renewed and a complex set of teaching strategies involving special interactive activities and using innovative technologies to be implemented in EFL classes.

We organized different surveys using questionnaires, open discussions with the students; provided research-analyses, case-studies and observations with foreign language teachers in order to investigate the problems in this area and held experiment lessons, out-of-class trainings considering the learners' needs, their preferences in organizing the foreign lessons, their week-points and other crucial features described below in this article. The results and conclusions are presented at the end of the work. The research considers different types of methods and means of developing speaking skills of a foreign language of the students of non-linguistic educational institutions taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of these tools equally, thus, trying to determine the most effective and suitable ones among them. It considers some specific interaction patterns, communicative activities, and other educational methods and tools as major components of successful teaching both in educational and psychological aspects.

**KEYWORDS:-** Oral speech; Higher Education students; Speech Situations; Interaction Patterns; Interactive teaching strategies.

### INTRODUCTION

Language, native or foreign, serves as a means of communication, allowing people to interact with each other, to influence each other in the natural conditions of social life. The culture of communication is a complex multifaceted and multifaceted education. The culture of communication is formed in the process of upbringing and continues uninterruptedly throughout the life of a person. The High school plays an important role not only in education,

but also in the education of a common culture, and individual formation of the person.

The aim of developing oral speech competency of English language is to develop a foreign interactive competence in the aggregate of all its components - speaking, language, sociocultural, compensatory, educational and cognitive. It should be noted the importance of nurturing student's need to use a foreign language as a means of communication, cognition, self-realization and social adaptation. If we talk about the educational role of learning a foreign



language, it is important here - the education of the qualities as a part of the society; development of national self-awareness, aspirations for mutual understanding between people of different communities; tolerant attitude to the manifestations of a different culture. Each stage of teaching a foreign language, including English, involves the implementation of narrower goals. In the Higher education level they include:

1. Expansion of students' communicative vocabulary, activation of communicatively meaningful grammatical constructions;
2. Improving the skills of speech interaction;
3. Expansion of subjects, spheres and situations of communication for active use of English;
4. Deepening of linguistic-cultural and socio-cultural knowledge by means of their actual inclusion in "live" communication;
5. Creation of motivation for further improvement of the English language [14].

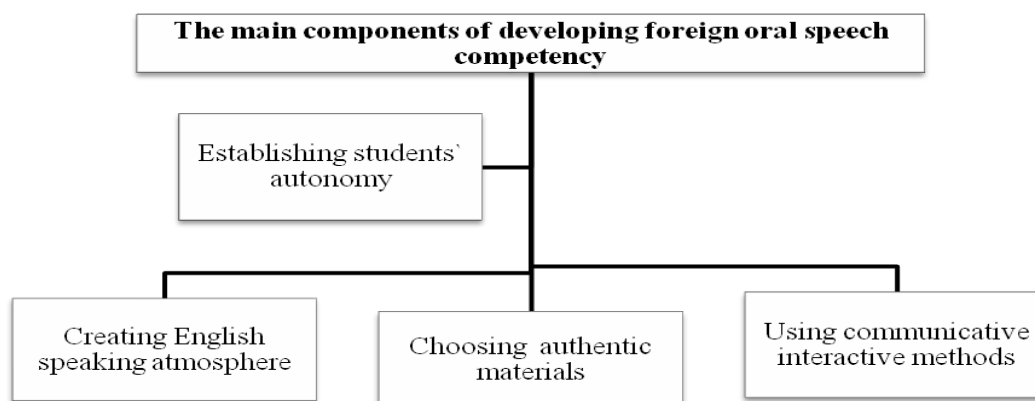
This system of work assumes the following main methodological conditions that ensure the

effectiveness of the learning process:

- a) person-oriented communication;
- b) collective interaction;
- c) role-based organization of the educational process;
- d) use of computer educational programs;
- e) multi-functionality of exercises.

The problem of educating a person and fostering a culture of communication in particular is one of the significant at this stage of the High education system. English, as the language of international communication, acts as an instrument of communication in the dialogue of all cultures of the modern world and presupposes the acquisition by students of a foreign communicative competence [13]. Here we highlight the most important components of developing oral comprehension as proposed in our study and subdivide them into several stages; we highlight they keep different linguistic tasks to scaffold the process meanwhile they are interrelated to each other and couldn't be supported in isolated form.

**Figure 1. Main components of the process of developing oral speech competency of High Education students**





The focus of teaching English for specific purposes at the stage of higher education is to develop the personality of the future professionals who are able and willing to participate in intercultural communication in the language of study and independently develop in the speech activity that he learns in another language. Oral speech is the most natural, and at first and the most accessible way of communication, which allows students to plunge into the atmosphere of the language, to feel its originality. The oral basis of training presupposes the mastery of the students' knowledge of the understanding of speech by ear from the very beginning of teaching English. The most difficult thing is to form the basic methods of teaching activity in students, both general and specific. In this sense, the most important and at the same time the most favorable is the concentration to the components in which the students' needs meets with the teachers' to established the successful language learning.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the complex and highly controversial aspects of reinforcing the oral speech competency, is the question of the nature of the exercises and the place of their execution. Orientation to modern target and substantive aspects of teaching foreign language (FL) dictates the necessity of accepting, as the main criterion for the typology of exercises, the category of "communication" and the stages of its organization in the educational process. Foreign language competence implies "awareness of the general and specific rules of speech behavior in the studied areas of domestic and socially significant communication, as well as the operational knowledge of these rules, generate and vary foreign language speech and communicatively correctly interpret the content

of authentic speech in foreign language" [19].

The term "competence" may mean knowledge, skills, abilities, possession of FL. Some authors identify competence and competency, others distinguish them. A number of authors consider competence (knowledge of their own language) and competence (use, actual use of the language) as a dichotomy of language - speech. While V.V. Safonova considers this concept as "a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities and qualities (personal and professionally significant), as well as the ability to appropriate new knowledge and experience and readiness to put them into practice" [19], A.V. Khutorski defines competency foreign language competency "as a set of interconnected qualities of a personality, set in relation to a certain circle of objects and processes" [20].

In his activation method, the oral speech of FL should be based on communicative activities. Component structure of the communicative exercise reflects the two-way nature of the learning process - training and learning, and includes three activity plans: orienting, executive and controlling. The first component - the communicative task - contains a motivation-target plan for solving the communicative task. The second component - the communicative task - involves an execution plan for its solution. The third mandatory component of each exercise is the exercise of control or self-control.

C. Goh interprets oral speech competence as "knowledge-based, intellectually, and personality-driven social and professional life activity of a person" [8]. A peculiarity of the speaking skill in FL is that the task itself is organically included in the context of personal communication between the teacher and the group.



Thus, oral speech competency is often understood as the totality of professional skills necessary to carry out a certain type of activity, and competence is considered as a personality quality that reflects its ability to perform one or another activity.

## METHODOLOGY

The participants of the study were 199 students of the course entitled, 'Listening and Speaking for Special Communication'. They enrolled on this elective course for English for specific purposes of the curriculum of Economics department of Higher Education Institutions in three different regions of Uzbekistan. A total of 20 different communicative activities with the use of interactive methods were implemented in the full course considering the main criterias mentioned in the research paper. There was no requirement regarding the type, or coverage of students' abilities but their role and contributions to activity were formulated and set by the conductor or the teacher.

The needed data was collected to answer the research questions. We used a different kind of surveys, self-evaluation works; special questionnaires; open-ended statements; open-discussions; project works and various testing assessment. While the speaking comprehension of the participants were explicitly developed in the requested level, the degree of the tasks continued to be upgraded from easy to the difficult ones. Periodical reflections were organized of the research outcomes. The two main types of research instrument used to acquire data for the findings of the study were as follows:

### Two structured interview questions

In order to find answers to the first research question – What factors help EFL learners to improve/develop their speaking skills? – two interview questions were used: 1) What factors

helped you to develop your speaking for special communication?, and 2) What suggestions would you make for the improvement of Thai EFL students' speaking competence?

Recordings of the participants' speaking performance

One of the speaking tasks was selected to be recorded and analyzed because the information in the task was considered to be particularly useful in the search for answers to the second research question – What are EFL learners' strengths and weaknesses in speaking English for special communication?

### Data collection and analysis

The data was collected during the 15 weeks of the course. 'Strength and weakness' sheets were used to record the participants' speaking performance in every task, which covered comments from classmates and the instructor. Then the participants were invited to answer the interview questions relating to factors enhancing the development of their speaking, which became the findings for the first research question. For the answers to the second research.

Further work was carried out according to the education scheme of the universities. As an example we can revise the investigation of the dialogical speech. Here is reliance on a prepared dialogue sample between two students: speaking to the students with a prepared dialogue, they treat the comrades who must respond to them. Then a similar dialogue is made by other students. Unsupported conversation in groups based on replicas of a specially prepared student: the student as a homework receives a card, through which he prepares stimulant replicas. Then in class, this student organizes a conversation in the classroom. Next class continues dialogue initiated by the teacher and in pairs. Unprepared conversation in the group,



related to the solution of the feasible question on the topic under study

## RESULTS

The analysis of data showed that the new teaching and learning practices implemented in this study helped students to become aware of their potentials as a person and as a student, and how they could contribute to their group, class, school, and family. These potentials were developed by working together, experiencing democratic practices in the classroom, and having the opportunity to be responsible for their own classwork. In the critical pedagogy view taken in this study, the process where the students gain self-development is called empowerment. It is understood as the process that gives students the capacity to be in charge of their individual and group work and improve their own and group performances.

Findings show that students' empowerment was an ongoing process that involved both personal development and speaking awareness. These were fostered by students' active participation in the classroom, team members' support, constant reflection, and dialogical interactions. Being autonomous means to be independent of external authority, but it does not mean

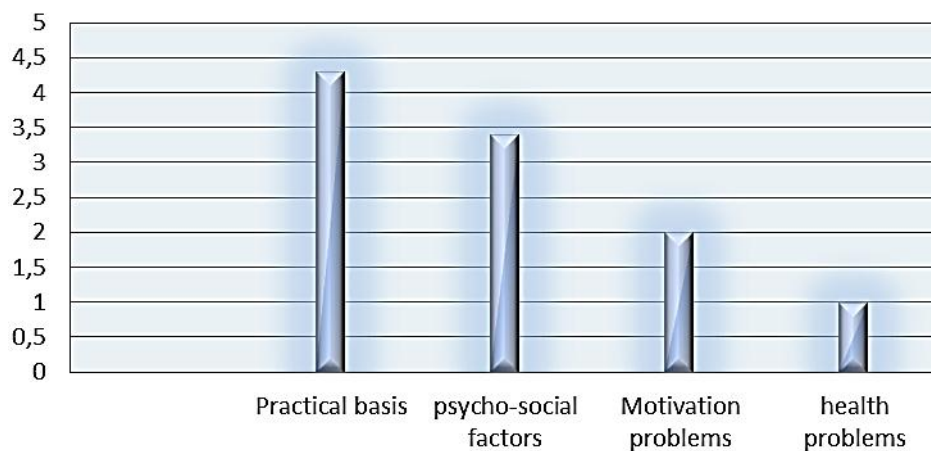
individualism. Through dialogical collaborative learning, students learned that all the decisions and choices were made by the group members, and it implies the notion of interdependence, being able to cooperate with others.

The results of studies in developing competency of oral speech of English as a FL shows that although receptive and expressive forms of communication are clearly separated in lingual-psychological works, sometimes the components of the listening and speaking are not taken into account in teaching practice. The receptive types of speech activity include listening (listening comprehension) and reading, but listening cannot be considered part of reading and teaching listening through reading. Despite close ties with other language skills, listening is a completely independent and specific type but undivided part of speech activity.

Here we consider the results of the analyses provided for Higher education students of the 1st course of non-linguistic departments. The analysis highlights the main factors which effect the process of foreign oral competency. We used different types of questionnaires, observations and open discussions to prove the quality of the analysis.

**Figure 2. The results of the survey on the analysis of the factors affecting the process of reinforcing oral competency of English as a foreign language among the High Education students**





According to the students' answers, the first obstacle which can prevent the learners from the process of developing their oral speech competency is the practical basis: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and etc; second of barrier is psycho-social factors: unwillingness, self-confidence, being afraid of making mistakes, environment of the classes and others; the last factors are connected with health problems as the motivation to communicate is directly connected with the well-being of the language learners'.

As an effective form of organizing exercises for teaching foreign speaking we observed dialogue speech. Dialogized exercises acted as a means of forming and improving skills, as a means of developing the mind of dialogical speech, the sameness of these processes. This is the possession of a student a set of speech actions that allows him to participate in the educational work of communications in the volume of one dialogical unity. The Data showed that when students engaged in group work, they were less reliant on the teacher because they were in charge of their work and became more responsible. Along with the development of

autonomy students also developed self-control. The main activating device at this stage was the reception of mutual stimulation, when each student, working in pairs, should make up not only a reactive replica, but also a stimulating one. This stage was characterized by an increase in the volume of speech behavior of students due to:

- 1) the expansion of replicas;
- 2) increasing the number of dialogical unity;
- 3) mastering of trinomial dialogical unities;
- 4) increasing the degree of independence of trainees;
- 5) depth and expansion of the content structure of replicas.

The debates and discussions, as they were academic, required participants to have a lot of mental stress, especially when conducted with professional topics. Participants were not only be able to formulate their point of view and substantiate it, but first of all they were able to listen and understand the judgments of partners, see the similarities and differences of opinions. It is obligatory that the teacher pay attention not only to the correctness of the students' speech or



its lexical and grammatical content, but also to the content of speakers and the correctness of understanding it by other participants.

It was necessary to give the opportunity for the students to individualize their speech at the expense of an independent choice of the right word or expression from a whole set of language tools offered by the teacher. Collective interaction pattern is of the most importance in conducting modern and interesting sessions not only in foreign language classes [4]. Students worked in pairs, in small subgroups or in a whole class, while solving a common collective task. For example, the "interview" game which could be conducted by studying various topics and at different stages of training. Topics chosen for any discussion were relevant to life and cognitive interests of students. Lessons of home reading also played an important role in the development of oral speech skills. They helped to accomplish a number of tasks: choose the right answer, approve or disprove, find the necessary information with these words, build suggestions in the right order for the content and etc.

The research considers that it's impossible to achieve a qualitatively new level of speaking without the ability to see an object or phenomenon not in isolation, but in the system of existing connections, analogs, or comparisons. Therefore, we should actualize their use and range of vocabulary. For instance, when students returned to the same topic several times the conversation were carried out at a qualitatively new level. This level was achieved due to the constant repetition of vocabulary, its inclusion in new situations. By taking any topic, we could easily trace its points of contact with all other topics. Hence, there is a potential possibility of combining them. Every year of the study the circle of students' interests can be broadened, the understanding of the subject - deeper, and therefore the speech gets richer.

## DISCUSSION

It is known that any method is focused on teaching a specific language function, which is based on a certain system of knowledge and skills. Language as a universal sign system performing different functions implies that foreign language learning system should assume the complex use of various structurally oriented methods aimed at development of certain pronunciation skills, the selection of lexical material and the grammatical formulation of the utterance. This does not preclude, however, the possibility of nominating individual methods as leading ones. The search for the best forms and methods of developing oral speech competency for the High school students in teaching ESP has been conducted earlier and is currently being carried out by many educators, psychologists and scientists [10, 14, 18]. To coordinate the following process firstly foreign language teachers should consider the basic principles of teaching English for non-philological departments:

- Communicative, personality-activity and systematic approach to teaching (personality-activity approach makes the student the central figure of the educational process. The systematization of the linguistic knowledge underlying the communicative activity of students contributes to an increase in the overall level of their speech comprehension and relates it to their future professional sphere);
- Realization of the personality of the student through the study of the English language;
- Maximum motivation of the learning situations (the success of the training is ensured by the fact that any of the simulated situations is vitally important for the student);
- Positive emotional saturation of all



components of learning [17].

Using the elements of developmental learning, controlling tasks, taking into account the psychological features of the education, the teacher tries to develop the cognitive activity, to create conditions for the development of creative possibilities, carefully selecting the forms and methods of instruction. These are lesson-travels, lesson-games, lesson-theatre, lessons-discussions, etc. If the student needs to perform any kind of speech action to achieve success in the game, then it is mastered almost effortlessly [12]. The game creates excellent natural conditions for mastering the language, it helps the mastery of the language at any knowledge level. In addition, participation in the game increases the participants interests in learning English, they have a desire to improve their knowledge of the subject, overcoming the psychological barrier - fear. All students, and even the weakest, take part in the game, and this is a great success if there is not a single indifferent, passive student in the class.

One of the way of developing oral speech competence is the use of a lesson-excursion: in our time, when the ties between different countries and peoples are developing more and more widely, acquaintance with the other nation's culture becomes an essential element of the learning process of a foreign oral competence. The student should be able to conduct a tour of the city, tell foreign guests about the identity of own culture, etc. The principle of dialogue of cultures assumes the use of cultural material about the native country which allows to develop culture of representation of the native country, and also to form representations about culture of the countries of a studied language.

To master the communicative competence in English without being in the country of the studied language is very difficult, therefore the

important task of the teacher is to create real and imaginary situations of communication in a foreign language class using various methods of work [11]. Authentic materials, including video films, are of great importance for this purpose. The use of the video helps also the development of various aspects of the mental activity of students, especially attention and memory.

A productive and productive form of education is a lesson-performance. Preparation of the play is a creative work that contributes to the development of the speaking skill of the students and the disclosure of their individual creative abilities. This type of work activates the learners' thinking and speech activity, develops their interest in literature, serves to better assimilate the culture of the country of the studied language, and also deepens the knowledge of the language, as this process of memorizing vocabulary takes place.

Development of oral speech competence in foreign language lessons should be carried out through the system of exercises speaking activity. The basic elements of the system of exercises should be educational and speech situations and gaming technology. Game technologies include a large group of techniques and methods for organizing the pedagogical process. The game is a way of communication [5]. Game moments in the lessons help to intensify the desire of students to contact each other and the teacher.

The type of "Interview lessons" is usually conducted to organize and stimulate team work in the classroom, the principle of life orientation is necessary. The choice of educational topics, methods of work, the nature of tasks in accordance with this principle reflect the life experience of students. We believe that students must learn not only some colloquial formulas, but also sociolinguistic variants of linguistic means. It is impossible, for example, to use the





same formula of greetings, congratulations, not taking into account the age of the interlocutor, his social position, location. It is important that students understand that there are different options for implementing speech actions in appropriate situations.

Furthermore, involving students in the problematic discussion today is considered an obligatory component of the learning process of a foreign language and the development of oral communication skills. In accordance with this provision, the problem is one of the ways to organize educational, material, the same as the plot of role-playing game, texts for reading or listening, a written task. In the lesson, students face a problem, the students get acquainted with the various ways of solving it, at the same time they practice oral communication, learn the appropriate speech materials, take part in the discussion and make conclusions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Concluding all above we can say that the use of educational tools as well as psychological details increases the possibility of a good acquisition of a material by the student as creating an atmosphere of trust, mutual understanding and cooperation. Therefore, students themselves with great pleasure conduct organizational conversations at the beginning of the lesson, physical culture, minutia, political information, actively participate in language and speech games, in group and pair forms of work, make dialogues and messages.

In the development of oral speech the leading role today is given to the formation and development of linguistic, speech and socio-cultural competencies in order:

- to upbringing the ability and readiness for independent and continuous learning of the English language for further self-education;

- to form the necessary skills in one or another form of speech activity, as well as language competence, thus active oral practice is necessary for each student;

- to enhance oral competence it is not enough to enrich the lesson with communicative exercises. It is important to provide students with the opportunity to think freely, to solve any problems that give rise to thought, to reason about the various possibilities for solving these problems, so that students focus their attention on the content of their statement, that the focus is on thought, and the language should be in its direct function - the formation and formulation of these thoughts;

- that students perceive language as a means of intercultural interaction, it is necessary to search for ways of including them in an active dialogue of cultures so that they can in practice know the features of the functioning of language in a new culture for them.

At the same time, the priority use of a communicative-oriented method based on the development of oral speech seems to be the most logical and justified, since the leading role of the communicative function of language is indisputable. All its other functions (expression and formation, storage of information, etc.) lose their meaning, if there is no objective need for the transmission of any information or for the exchange of thoughts in this particular language. So, the communicative task is the most important, the main spring of any oral communication.

Whilst creating a speech situation the teacher should clearly define the speech task: what to ask, what to learn from the following lesson, what to tell, what to prove, specify or disprove; provided specific linguistic and speech material and necessary information when performing the task; stimulate the motivation for teaching, encourage students to take an interest in the task



and the desire to fulfill it.

The key to success is a good relationship of language skills in the lessons of a foreign language. The use and the range of teaching methods and their suitability for the student's level should be taken into consideration while motivating students to speak in the foreign language. Well-balanced psychological factors and the educational goals are all the main components of a good lesson considered into developing oral skills.

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