

Impact of Modification to Interactive Lessons on Improving Students' Speaking Skill

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Abstract

Students' speaking skill development plays an important role in order to promote their communicative skill and social skill. In our country, as students are long-term exposures of rote learning to get good marks in the exam test, almost all of engineering students did not focus on promoting speaking ability. In order to raise students' involvement in speaking activities, the most effective teaching and learning strategies need to be applied in the classroom. Pre-test and Post-test are used in this paper to determine students' progress in speaking skill as well as to discover their opinions about current teaching methods and their future needs with regard to English language. In this paper, questionnaires are collected from fourth year students in Technological University (Sagaing) to highlight the results of modifying lesson. This research paper reveals that creating interactive classroom environment such as students' autonomy during the classroom activity and modifying lessons from the textbook make the students' oral skill (speaking skill) enhance.

Keyword: *Interactive Lesson, Autonomy, Modifying Lesson*

1. Introduction

Speaking skill is trainable skill is trainable skill and so practicing frequent speaking activity or task and supportive teacher's modifying lesson can enhance their speaking ability. The ability of a student to make a communicative skill with target language is determined by his ability of speaking (Usman,AH, 2015). It is very important for students to get opportunity to talk in the classroom and not to sit silence by following teacher's lecture. Students need to get time to talk in the classroom. To give opportunities to the students for talking enough time, teacher must create interactive learning environment and modifying lessons to participate actively. Lesson modification means that the activity in the textbook are adjusted to students' culture and real life situation in order to promote students/ interest and motivation.

As the students are engineering students (not language learners), they have not taken much time for speaking fluency tasks in self-study because they have much of their time to study other sophisticated engineering subjects. Therefore, language teacher applies interactive teaching and learning technique to

stimulate their desire and to participate in the classroom speaking activity. Students' autonomy means that students are given opportunities to choose the topic for speaking task, to make group as they want, to distribute the duties to each group member and to do peer discussion without teacher's control.

Students' autonomy is used as a tool to promote students' collaboration and interactive communication through group competition with speaking performance. According to my classroom observation, students felt bored easily in sitting and listening teacher's lecture at the whole lecture time. Moreover, they are unwilling to do speaking tasks under too much control of teacher. Similarly, when the topic teacher arranged is unfamiliar with their real life situation or unrelated to their culture, they got lost idea or creativity for their speaking performance. Consequently, lessons need to be modified accord with their background knowledge and their language acquisition level. Furthermore, all English textbooks are from foreign country and so activities and lessons are based on foreign culture. Therefore, lessons should be modified in order to take part in speaking activities actively.

The objectives of this research paper are:

- ✓ To be able to participate the speaking activities actively in the classroom
- ✓ To enhance students' communicative competency and social skill through classroom speaking activities
- ✓ To build a habit of critical thinking, group discussion and self-reliance through oral skill performance

Interactive learning situation makes students comfortable and confident via practicing speaking activities.

2. Theoretical Background

Interactive approach helps students to achieve success in the main purpose of language learning to improve students' communicative competency and to exchange their idea. Interactive approach is the heart of communication because communication is driven from interaction (Farzana Naheed, 2015). Interactive classroom environment focus on open communication tasks through students' participation. The implementation of an interactive approach to classroom instruction is an effective way for student to understand

learning goals. Interactive learning environment encourages students to give feedback to the tasks and interact with others. Interactive classroom instruction is a valuable approach when designing, developing, and delivering the basic public speaking course (Mino Many & Marilynn Butler, 1995).

There are two types of classroom interaction namely learner-learner interaction and teacher-learner interaction. In the learner-learner interaction, the role of teacher is monitor and the role of students is key player. Therefore, students can learn and teach to each other by doing activities or tasks freely. In teacher-learner interaction, teacher asks the students questions that can be warm-up activities question or leading questions.

3. Creating Interactive Learning Environment

The teachers give opportunities to their students to speak in classroom in order to make them more interactive in the classroom because the learners are considered as the central part in the learning process (taous, B. 2013). Interaction is defined as exchange of thought, feelings and ideas between two people or groups. Classroom interaction refers to face-to-face action including eye contact, facial expression, gesturing and body movement or performance. Two types of interaction are verbal interaction and non-verbal interaction. Oral Interaction is similar to speaking skill development (Herny, 2010) that students interact directly with other students by questioning and answering questions in a form of discussion. Some speaking tasks are problem-solving tasks, discussion tasks and dialogue (question & answer tasks). In the classroom interaction situation, students can learn and teach among them by sharing their responsibility, discussing different understandings and helping to each other.

3.1 Giving Students Autonomy in the Classroom during Classroom Activity

According to Ali Alghamdi and Alsolami (2019) suggested that teacher should engage the students to work collaboratively such as problem-solving tasks and role play tasks to improve their critical thinking and speaking skill. Therefore, Students' autonomy is giving students opportunities to create the task (topic for speaking) and to do the activities independently by discussing and working together with classmates (pair or group). Although there are two types of classroom interaction such as learner-to-learner interaction and teacher-to-learner interaction, in this research, learner-to-learner interaction technique is first priority to create students' autonomy. They can create the topic that needs to be related to the previous reading passage or lesson for speaking tasks (for 1 or 2 minutes talk).

According to my classroom observation, level of students (fluency and accuracy) can be analyzed through classroom performance. Especially, they can reduce their reliance on teacher and they participate actively in the classroom activities. Student-to-student interaction makes them both group work and pair work enthusiastically. As they have opportunity to do free flow of their idea, feeling, emotion, knowledge, attitude and experience, they can frankly discuss and share their knowledge. In teacher-to-students interactive learning, tasks and activities are prepared or planned by teacher and so there is limitation to give feedback on the tasks. When students have autonomy in language learning for classroom activity, they can create or imagine the story or event without teacher's limited topic. But, teacher plays the supporter, motivator and helper if the students get lost the way on speaking task like lack of vocabulary and mental problems faced by students during speaking.

3.2. Lesson Modification

Lesson modification means that the lesson is to be adjusted, altered, changed and revised to make it more appropriate and achievable for an individual or group (Herny C. Link, 1010year). Some linguistics proposed that teachers have to modified or prepared warm-up activities and questions to help the students to get the idea for their tasks. Sometimes, they cannot catch up with the lesson or task in the textbook as it is unrelated to their knowledge and real life situation. According to classroom observation, when the students do not have the idea or knowledge about the lesson or task, they can easily bored in the class. This leads that the teacher faced the difficulty to create interactive learning environment.

Lesson from textbook (Blueprint C1 (Advanced Level)) "List jobs you would like to do. Pick one of jobs. Find more Information about the job, including its salary and responsibilities. Is that a job you would like to have? Why or Why not? Share your findings with the class." (Leah Douglass. Ali Simpson, 2019).

Some students have no work experience because they are students and according to our culture, parents rarely let their children to make money outside. The above topic from the textbook is not covered for all students to get idea and to prepare the talk in from of the class. Therefore, teacher modified the lesson from the task as the following.

"When you do practical tasks during internships, you have much experience. Fine the differences between the task in the school and internship experience. Share your benefits and problems you faced at that work"

After lesson had modified, they significantly decreased their problems encountered in the previous topic because they have opportunities to show their feeling and experience.

4. Finding and Results

The data were collected with the following questionnaire.

Table 1. Percentage of Students Responded to Each Question

Which skill in language learning is the most difficult for you?	a. Reading (8%) b. Writing (15%) c. Speaking (65%) d. Listening (12%)
Do you prefer discussing or interacting the speaking task with classmate to with teacher	classmate (85%) teacher (15%)
What kind of topic for speaking activity do you like most?	a. the topic related to your culture (92%) b. the topic unrelated to your culture (8%)
Do you like interactive learning in the classroom	Yes (82%) No (18%)
Do you think lesson modification helps you improve your critical thinking?	Yes (78%) No (22%)

In this research, the participants are fourth year engineering students at the Technological University (Sagaing). The numbers of students are 42 Electronic Engineering students and 56 Electrical Power Engineering students. They have been studying English for over 14 years.

According to questionnaire result, the weakest skill among four skills is speaking skill. Moreover, all of students are eager to do the speaking task with their classroom rather than teacher. It is found that students are less interested in the lesson that is unrelated to their culture or real life situation.

Students were faced with difficulties when the speaking activities or topics were unfamiliar with them. In that situation, teacher’s quality and ability can be shown by modifying the lesson or topic. Through lesson modification, students become interested in speaking activity.

4.1. Research Design

In this paper, the writer collected the data twice before and after applying interactive approach (before and after creating interactive classroom environment). The results are shown in a form of both quantitative value and qualitative research value. This study employed pre, post -tests design which was aimed to find out whether or not interactive learning technique improved students’ speaking skill.

For qualitative research, the research data were carried out before and after treatment. The numbers of

students who faced with problems and difficulties in speaking activity before and after treatment with interactive approach was presented in table 2.

Almost all of students were weak in accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and clarity and the percentage of those were 78.5%, 88.77%, 24.48%, 61.2% and 75.5% respectively before treatment with interactive learning. However, after treatment, they improved their oral skill. Their problems encountered in speaking activities decreased by 58%, 74%, 9.18%, 52% and 58%.

Table 2. Scores Obtained by Students in post-test

	excellent	very good	good	fairly good	fair	poor	very poor	total
A	0	0	2	19	11	39	27	98
F	0	0	1	11	13	42	31	98
V	1	18	2	17	24	0	0	98
	2		7					
P	5	6	1	15	27	8	25	98
			2					
C	0	0	6	18	32	15	27	98

Table 3. Scores Obtained by Students in post-test

	excellent	very good	good	fairly good	fair	poor	very poor	total
A	12	28	22	17	12	5	2	98
F	8	30	31	15	8	3	3	98
V	20	24	21	18	7	8	0	98
P	12	24	25	28	5	3	1	98
C	15	17	20	29	8	7	2	98

A=accuracy/ F=fluency/ V=vocabulary/ P=pronunciation/ C=clarity
 Excellent= 80-88 marks/ Very good= 70-78 marks/
 Good= 60-68 marks/ Fairly Good= 50-58 marks/ Fair= 40-48/
 Poor= 30-38 and Very Poor= 20-28 marks
 Table 2 and table 3 show the score of students’ speaking test. Students’ group speaking tasks and individual tasks done during first semester were recorded with mobile phone. According to our

university standard, fair (40-48 marks), poor(30-38 marks) and very poor(20-18 marks) level are regarded as unqualified levels.

Table 4. Improvement of students' speaking skill after treatment

problems for speaking activity & oral test	number of students		Improvement
	pre-test	post-test	
accuracy	77	19	58
fluency	87	14	73
vocabulary	24	15	9
pronunciation	60	9	51
clarity	74	17	57

6. Conclusions

As the students got motivation from classroom environment by teacher's instruction with target and student-to-student interaction, they improved their oral abilities. They have the main source to develop their speaking ability from interactive classroom environment through classroom autonomy and teacher's lesson modification.

Creating Interactive Classroom Environment helps the students not only oral skill improvement (speaking skill) but also communicative skill. They are able to do peer-discussion and peer-review and build their reliance.

To improve students' speaking development, there are many other integrative teaching and learning strategies. Teacher should take into account of students' level and their language acquisition skill. Moreover, data collection should be wider than this.

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