

# Operational Techniques Utilized by EFL Faculty Members for Bettering English Oral Communication Skills of EFL University Students

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## Abstract

This study aims to find out the most effective techniques used by EFL faculty members to enhance students' English oral communication skills of EFL university students at Prince Sattam bin Abdul-Aziz University. 29 faculty members participated in answering the questions of the questionnaire. The data was gathered employing a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and, it was scrutinized linguistically and statistically by applying the SPSS program. The findings reveal that applying some useful techniques has a positive influence on students' learning outcomes, especially English oral communication skills. The study recommends EFL instructors should vary teaching method techniques to engage students and minimize the amount of hesitation to speak in class. Also, EFL teachers should receive continuous and professional training sessions to help them cope with the updated and useful techniques of effective teaching methods.

**Keywords:** oral communication skills, EFL faculty members, EFL students, techniques, CLT

## 1. Introduction

In today's world, English is an essential language in all aspects of life. This global language is broadly utilized and has many purposes in any domain one wishes to pursue. For this reason, oral communication skills in English are crucial in this increasingly interconnected and shrinking globe of ours. To fully participate in all the activities in this sophisticated and international world, you must be able to communicate in this language (Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit, 2009). The globe has become a village because of the technological advancements that have occurred in the twenty-first century. To accomplish their objectives and goals, people must effectively communicate with those who live all over the world. So, developing strong oral communication skills is necessary for everyone. Since the tutorial room is the epitome setting for the development of oral communication abilities, EFL teachers are crucial in improving the communication abilities of EFL students.

The EFL teachers of English use innovative methods including project-based learning, table talk, role-plays, group discussions, presentations, group work, pair work, and more to help their students improve their oral communication abilities. The EFL students should take advantage of the chances and engage in classroom activities with greater attention and passion to improve their oral communication abilities. Also, EFL instructors should always animate their students to participate in group projects by selecting topics that are interesting to them. They should also provide assignments to their students using game-based learning techniques. Also, teachers ought to push and urge students more strongly to complete the tasks given. As a result, EFL learners will improve their spoken communication skills (Haji & Jejo, 2020).

A great demand for oral communication skills is needed from EFL learners to achieve numerous oral communication tasks ranging from pitch, emphasis, and intonation, gestures, body language, and facial expressions can be used to convey messages. This study will be of great value in investigating learners' main challenges in English oral communication skills of EFL university students in Saudi Arabia. Even more intriguing are the plans of upcoming scholars who hope to investigate this topic and offer solutions specifically to Saudi Arabia. The dearth of research on the oral English communication abilities of EFL university students, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia, makes it necessary to conduct this investigation. It may also favorably coincide with similar future studies and be given priority by Saudi Arabian colleges and universities.

## 2. Literature Review

Oral communication skills are generally understood to be the procedure of conveying information from the one providing it to another receiving it utilizing both verbal and non-verbal cues. Verbal communication uses a particular language and is most frequently a two-way mechanism with comments on the message received. The switch of information, thoughts, and views for a defined purpose is another aspect of communication. In addition to spoken communication, symbols or signals can be used to transmit information. Another definition of communication is the concurrent involvement and imparting of sense via symbolic exchanges (Seiler & Beall, 2005). Some theories state that communication starts when a piece of information is forwarded via a tool or channel from the sender (the writer or speaker) to the recipient (the listener or reader), and then the recipient responds by deciphering and figuring out the information (Sulaiman, 1997). Per these

definitions, communication consists of the information provider, the information, and the recipient's reaction; knowledge is acquired through repeating these processes.

Although there are many kinds of communication skills, they often entail both spoken and written abilities. According to Mohd (2005), there are three different styles of communication: interpersonal, management (or group) communication, and public communication (speech-making). The speaker, the receiver, the communication mode, and feedback are the four main components that make up the communication route. According to some academics, communication includes spoken, written, nonverbal, listening, and giving and receiving feedback (Najmuddin, 2010). In addition, Rodiah (2010) suggests that verbal communication skills include giving criticism, outlining ideas both orally and in writing, delivering presentations, and haggling over terms of agreement or support. University learners are required to learn communication skills in many cultural contexts due to our increasingly international society (Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit, 2009).

Three main forms of communication can take place: verbal, nonverbal, and visual. Communication is something that people frequently take for granted. Information is continually being exchanged by communicators, and it seems that everyone is either receiving or imparting information at any given time. In commercial and professional settings, it is crucial to comprehend the various information exchange techniques. To make sure they have effective communication skills in a cutthroat employment market, many individuals have decided to return to school and earn a communication degree online (Rajendra, 2015).

Among all the numerous methods of communication, verbal communication seems to be the most straightforward. It makes use of spoken language, either in-person or over the phone. Although most encounters need verbal communication, other nonverbal indicators can add to the meaning of the words themselves. Combining spoken and nonverbal communication yields a more sophisticated message (Wenbin, 2008).

One needs to have fundamental English communication abilities in today's world. Nonetheless, many people struggle with an inferiority feeling because they find it difficult to communicate in English. Due to their poor oral communication abilities, they frequently fail to advance in their careers and fall behind others in this cutthroat environment. They frequently avoid key discussions and gatherings, which prevents them from advancing their careers.

In oral communication skills, comprehension comes first, then reading, writing, and finally presenting. If you avoid engaging in English conversations or avoiding intelligent English speakers, you need to improve your oral communication abilities right now. Avoid letting your inability to communicate in English become a serious obstacle to your advancement. By honing the following abilities, you can get past your aversion to, fear of, and ignorance of this lovely and fascinating language.

Abubaker (2021) conducted a study to determine the efficacy of utilizing the communicative mode and its techniques in teaching EFL by EFL university instructors in the Saudi context. The researcher employed a descriptive strategy. A questionnaire was given to eleven EFL university instructors to see whether they effectively applied communicative language teaching methods in their regular classes. The findings revealed that EFL university instructors could successfully conduct CLT techniques in the classroom as CLT is packed with numerous and diverse techniques and activities that make it easier to manage the process of teaching and learning the English language and enhance its four skills. Also, CLT fosters meaningful and genuine communication at all levels. Also, it places a stronger emphasis on skills than systems, lessons are more student-centered, and the use of authentic resources has a positive impact on how EFL university learners interact with CLT techniques.

A study was undertaken by Haji and Jejo (2020) to determine why some young language learners find it extremely challenging to communicate and interact in English. The observed and studied articles demonstrated that some students do not engage with one another because English teachers frequently place an excessive emphasis on reading and writing skills rather than speaking abilities. Also, students commonly spoke in their first language in class since teachers frequently did so. This makes some learners less motivated and confident when speaking English. This study offers instructional methods and exercises that teachers might employ to boost their students' motivation and self-assurance when speaking English. The implementation of Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory, according to the results, helped include every student in real-world communication tasks and created a positive communication environment.

The goal of Hussein et. al (2019) was to find out what strategies Sudanese secondary school teachers were using to help students communicate more effectively in English orally. A questionnaire was employed to gather data. The subjects were chosen from some Sudanese Secondary Schools. The findings reflect that employing some techniques to improve oral communication shows a helpful impact on the students' language enactment. The study also recommends that students should apply some drills to enhance their attitudes towards and train faculty members to implement the useful techniques professionally and effectively.

According to Taous (2013), classroom interaction helps students' speaking abilities. This study aims to promote open communication among students in the classroom, help teachers foster a positive learning environment during interactions, and offer some pedagogical advice for both teachers and students. According to the study's overall findings, classroom engagement is a crucial approach for learners to use to develop their speaking ability, as shown by both classroom observation results and teachers' interviews.

In (2019) Rao conducted a study to determine how EFL/ESL students in Saudi Arabia could improve excellent oral communication abilities. This study proposes strategies for improving oral communication abilities in ESL/EFL students. The results demonstrate that improving different oral communication tactics among ESL/EFL learners can be accomplished by using these abilities in one's future

employment. The report also makes several important recommendations to EFL teachers and English as a foreign language student.

### 3. Statement of the Problem

As operational oral communication necessitates the capacity to utilize the English language effectively in societal circumstances, learning English orally can be challenging for foreign language learners, particularly among EFL university learners. In addition to verbal communication, oral communication also includes paralinguistic components of speeches like pitch, emphasis, and intonation. Furthermore, to speech, nonlinguistic aspects including gestures, body language, and facial expressions can be used to convey messages. EFL university students are below mediocre in oral English, due to insufficient exposure to the target language and absence of engagement with the local source, particularly concerning fluency, control of idiomatic terminologies, and sympathy of cultural context. A small number of learners can master oral communication skills at the level of a native. There are delays and hesitation because it is challenging to find linguistic sources that accurately describe ideas and notions. Typically, their performance suffers from a glaring lack of pronunciation. As a result, there are two issues the study seeks to investigate:

1. The ways to ameliorate the oral proficiency of EFL University learners.
2. The necessity of using efficient techniques to enhance the student's English oral communication abilities.

The researcher will center on oral communication techniques, such as pair work, group collaboration, complaisant learning, gap activities, and problem-solving exercises, to get responses to the research questions:

1. What techniques may faculties utilize to assist their EFL university learners in upgrading their English oral communication skills?
2. What is the impact of teaching English to learners via speaking procedures or oral communication development strategies?

### 4. Methodology

The method utilized in this investigation was a descriptive one. A questionnaire was created by the researcher and distributed to Prince Sattam University's EFL faculty members. The efficiency of certain teaching methods employed by EFL university lecturers when introducing students to oral communication in English was examined using a questionnaire. To determine the best practices used by EFL faculties in boosting students' spoken English communication abilities, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to (29) faculties. The questionnaire aims to obtain perceptions and opinions on the aspects of spoken English communication that students find most appealing.

### 5. The Significance of the Study

A variety of essential components with particular areas of concentration are covered in English oral communication courses. Fundamental speaking and listening abilities are the main focus of communication, in addition to supra-segmental aspects like stress, pitch, and intonation, and how they can be implemented in specific sounds. The biggest problem, though, is that there aren't any useful speaking and listening grids that allow students to review and improve their oral communication. The researcher's experience teaching at Prince Sattam ibn Abdulaziz University indicates that EFL University learners typically struggle the most with listening, speaking, and other forms of communication in English. Due to their inability to communicate, many students lose interest in studying the English language. Some assert that they enjoy the language but lack the skills necessary for effective communication. This study will investigate these issues and try to produce some workable solutions.

### 6. Results

Although there are numerous strategies to enhance one's spoken English abilities, only a few of them are both extremely effective and work. The following list includes some proven methods for enhancing your spoken English ability. Understanding the fundamentals of communication is crucial if you want to enhance your oral communication abilities in real life. Don't let your fear of making mistakes and looking foolish keep you from practicing English oral communication. Making mistakes is a fundamental component of learning. You might experience difficulties at first, but with practice and the right direction, you will undoubtedly get better.

The main obstacle to oral communication is the inability to organize one's thoughts and communicate them verbally. Thus, speak your truth and share your opinions with boldness and conviction. It doesn't matter if you can't put the words together correctly or construct a phrase. Exercise more! The biggest anxiety that approximately everyone, notably non-native English speakers, experiences is hesitating and worrying about how other people will judge you if you make mistakes when speaking. Nevertheless, until you start paying attention to it, this fear will follow you throughout the rest of your life. These ways of thinking shouldn't be obstacles on the path to mastering great oral communication.

The fundamental method of learning is practice! If you don't engage in more social interaction, you can't increase your oral communication abilities. You should speak English with your family, friends, and coworkers to improve your abilities and eloquence in speaking.

Naturally, you cannot turn out to be an expert communicator in English in a single day. The learning process needs to be commenced from scratch and finished magnificently. You'll get better at speaking English fast if you enjoy doing so. By engaging in conversations voluntarily and practicing your English speaking, you may overcome all your anxieties and fears.

Reading is regarded as the paramount activity that helps improve fundamental spoken communication abilities. Reading fiction, books, newspapers, and periodicals written in English helps with vocabulary skills. Also, this will help you improve your ability to think critically and sharpen your ability to organize and articulate ideas in English.

With its synonyms, definitions, adjectives, and noun forms, the dictionary is a magician of new words. Also, the dictionary provides a thorough explanation of the word along with an illustration to help the readers understand how to use it. You can always search for some uncommon words in dictionaries to learn their definitions and pronunciation in your spare time.

Another exercise you may do to prepare for oral communication is listening because most of the words will be unfamiliar to you and you might not be able to process everything at once, your attention will first be diverted from the listening. Furthermore, if you find it difficult to understand the tone and accent of a fluent English speaker's spoken words and sentences, their accent can be unintelligible. You will, however, eventually pick up new skills, but you will need a lot of patience and persistence to do so. You will benefit greatly from viewing movies, listening to slow English music, speeches, presentations, news, and debates. Your oral communication abilities can be greatly improved with commitment!

You frequently run into words that are challenging to spell when reading. It is simpler to notice and correctly spell such terms when writing. Also, writing teaches you the basics of sentence structure, which will come in handy while you're conversing.

Yes, reading is a great practice that you should continue. But mumbling won't assist you overcome your spoken communication barriers. Read aloud to yourself so that you can hear your voice and identify any errors. The best advice for improving communication skills is to say every phrase aloud and clearly. Read everything you can, whether it's a shredded page from a book or a newspaper column.

You can immediately resolve communication issues if you chat with an English-fluent teacher or guide. Getting rid of any lingering grammar and sentence-construction questions can go a long way toward enhancing your oral communication abilities.

You can get help answering your questions from Google, the best resource for online learners. If you're bothered by a particular pronunciation, check the word into Google Translate and choose the acoustic option to hear the accent as it originally sounds.

You can use the Oxford online e-dictionary or other well-known dictionaries in addition to Google Translator. These dictionaries offer an audio version in addition to a large selection of terms and their definitions. There is an audio version of each word available for you to practice on your own by listening to. Additionally, you will learn each phrase's phonetic transcription, which will aid in your comprehension of each word's accent and intonation.

A skilled speaker has fresh terms in his or her repertoire and thoughtfully employs them. To improve your oral communication abilities, you must also increase your vocabulary. Every day, strive to learn at least one new term that you can use the following day.

You are fortunate if your preferred pastime is viewing English-language movies. Your hobby will aid in the development of your communication abilities. You can improve your sentence structure and acquire a better accent by watching high-quality films. This effective approach also boosts your confidence. The accent is easier to make out in the subtitle section.

Consider devoting an evening to participating in a debate in your community. In your neighborhood's community halls or auditoriums, there can be a lot of activities going on, especially on weekends. Attend them without a doubt but go there to learn rather than merely to go.

There are many discussion clubs in the city where you can take special classes to get better at speaking. You may get a good idea about these seminars through your local newspaper or the Internet. Join today and reap the benefits of speaking English.

To assist a few of your enthusiastic well-wishers in developing their oral English communication skills, organize a discussion session. Ask them about their viewpoints and share your thoughts and opinions with them. Sharing and learning will surely be aided by a nutritious and stimulating session once or twice a week.

Keep away from textbooks that promise you can pick up English in five days or something like that! These are nothing more than a series of ineffective bluffs. You can improve your oral communication abilities by buying some of the motivational English learning books that are now on the market.

Nobody is surprised by the way curiosity aids in developing oral communication abilities in English. Curiosity fuels the desire to acquire new vocabulary, take on challenges, and improve communication abilities. Without a desire to learn new things, it is impossible to grow in knowledge and confidence.

You now need to understand how to put the abilities you learned into practice after learning about the strategies. Friendly communication always proves to be more effective than formal communication. Involve your audience as much as you can with your words. Get straight to the point! Remain focused on the problem you want to solve throughout the conversation. Be succinct and emphasize your main ideas because speeches that are overly long and drawn out tend to get boring and lose their focus. Try using some facial and hand gestures in your speech to assist make your idea clearer. By improving the speaker's understanding, gestures frequently have a positive effect on both the audience and the speaker. When communicating verbally, your body language will often be more persuasive than your words. While crossed arms and slumped shoulders give the impression that you're unwilling to communicate, respectable and approachable body language draws audiences.

An optimistic mindset has a big impact on spoken communication. Maintaining composure shows that you are tolerant, sincere, respectful, truthful, and appreciative of the work at hand. You should practice a few strategies that will improve your verbal communication abilities and offer you a command of language, such as:

- When speaking, choose the appropriate words.
- Make use of words you know well.
- Speak clearly and without murmuring.
- Pronounce the words clearly (know the actual pronunciation of the words).
- To avoid repeating yourself, make sure the audience understands you the first time.
- When necessary, speak more slowly and get back to your previous cadence.

When speaking, you should make good use of your skills and refrain from switching up accents. Additionally, take care not to confuse the audience with the message you want to get across. In addition to exercising patience, you should focus on speaking with greater modesty. Humility is among the best attributes that listeners cherish. As a result, your oral English communication skills have improved.

You now know how to enhance your oral communication abilities. You may experience several difficulties as a beginner, but keep going with patience, commitment, and calmness! You can achieve greater heights and one day become an English orator if you put in a lot of practice.

Speaking was given more weight in the communicative method, and oral communication now includes speech in situations where students are expected to converse verbally with others. Also, the amount of instructor discourse will decrease, meaning that students will have more opportunities to speak up in class. According to Ur (2000), speaking appears to be the most important of the four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language experts are called "speakers" of their language, as though speaking encompassed all other forms of knowledge. Nowadays, most EFL/SL students prioritize their development of speaking skills because they can only improve or master them. They will then be regarded as having mastered every other linguistic skill. Moreover, the main query frequently asked of EFL learners is "Do you speak English?" rather than "Do you write English?" We are aware that most students equate to speaking and understanding a language. Meanwhile, speaking is the most fundamental form of human communication, "the capacity to speak a language is equivalent to knowing that language for most individuals," as stated by Celce-Murcia (2001, p. 103). Everyone needs to be able to communicate well because it's how we share thoughts and opinions with others around us and exchange information. Many genres of communication exist as follows:

- Verbal (sounds, words, and voice intonation)
- Auditory (hearing and listening)
- Nonverbal cues, such as posture, body language, and facial expressions
- Written correspondence (messages, blogs, emails, and journals)
- Visual (pictures, signs, and symbols)

## 7. Discussion

Throughout the research questionnaire and in correlation with the first research question, the research findings show that the EFL university teachers employ different effective techniques to help EFL university students fostering English oral communication skills. The aim of the study was to explore What techniques may faculties utilize to assist their EFL university learners to improve their English oral communication skills. Some previous studies related to the current research indicate that university EFL students perform relatively poorly in oral English communication, especially when it comes to fluency, idiomatic expression control, and cultural context awareness. Other factors that may contribute to this poor performance include limited exposure to the target language and limited interaction with the native speaker, the use of the first language, a lack of opportunities for communication, a focus on writing and reading, and the absence of communication tactics instruction from instructors. That why the present study suggested to the most effective techniques to promote English oral communication skills of the EFL university learners for more engagement and decrease the amount of anxiety regarding speaking and interaction.

Some studies over the present research show several teaching procedures that develop enthusiasm and communication skills in the EFL tutorial room. The use of songs, games, and stories that involve repeating words and phrases improves students' verbal dexterity in addition to their knowledge of grammar structure and pronunciation. The use of vocabulary related to tasks by EFL learners is motivated by theme-based and task-based learning, as confirmed by Janssem (2019) and Perez (2016). The incorporation of the learners' past experiences, passions, and pastimes fosters a forward-thinking approach to running errands. Task-based learning helps students acquire vocabulary because it gives them a realistic sense of the language and encourages them to cram it. As it allows learners to continue speaking despite their learning levels and linguistic errors, intentional correction is beneficial. Small talk, semi-communicative tasks, and lead-in performance of duties in target language can help making a communicative schoolroom as a part of communicative language teaching (CLT). As stated in the introduction, several EFL University learners wriggle with speaking expertise; consequently, these tactics would be practical in the learning setting. By becoming accustomed to the recognized stratagems and modes in the EFL University learner's schoolroom, a communication-based learning milieu would be reputable among EFL students.

Several of the strategies discussed are based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which holds that the secret to accomplishing speaking and communication in the target language is interaction between students and teachers. Furthermore, acclimating songs, stories, and games gave

students the opportunity to use the language as a crutch in place of studying it (Chou, 2014). As a result, the learning process became more consequential and led to authentic learning where the students' interests and hobbies were connected to the institute's duties (Peréz, 2016). Although a communicative environment benefits low-proficiency students, it also provides opportunities for high-proficiency students to help them with complex phrases and words. The use of subject- and task-based learning encompassed innovative and stimulating group projects that linked to students' prior knowledge. This made it possible to repeat vocabulary and words. Students who behave in this way advance in their area of proximal growth, or their cramming route.

Since the strategies and methods under examination are relevant to the learning outcomes of the program, they were helpful for Saudi Arabian EFL University students studying communication. Techniques like offering a communicative environment inspire students to improve their overall communication dexterities and give them the confidence to speak English. In this mode, working in pairs and groups helps students develop strategies to identify and defend themselves when their language skills are insufficient. Viewpoints, sensations, and involvements as well as "Language strategies to understand and make oneself understood when language skills are lacking, such as through reformulations" are raised by learners through this mechanism (Skolverket, 2011, p. 33-34). It is the responsibility of EFL teachers to provide every student with ample chances to enhance their progress in all four skills, embracing speaking and interaction. While some students talk a lot, others choose not to engage with others. For faculties, this presents a challenge. According to the study's findings, there is a drawback in the EFL schoolroom because several students are not interacting with one another. As such, the procedures that have been presented will help the instructors address the problem and encourage every student to speak, regardless of the reason they choose not to. Moreover, findings suggest that teachers' pedagogical decisions about lessons, methods, exercises, and procedures may be the first step toward causing anxiety. As a result, future educators can build on the accepted and successful teaching methods, approaches, and exercises for improving speaking and interaction. It's critical to identify the causes of some students' social anxiety when speaking and interacting. To provide learners the best chance to succeed in improving their speaking, teachers must be accessible and adept at utilizing a range of instructional modalities and innovative strategies.

## 8. Conclusion

In the meantime, oral communication skills play a fundamental role in promoting English oral communication skills of EFL university learners, the EFL instructor must give more focus on these skills in the class. To boost the English verbal communication skills of EFL students, the instructors should always attempt to employ some effective techniques that increase students' engagement and help to communicate smoothly. Also, it's the teacher's responsibility to choose the most influential techniques and materials according to the student's needs and interests to get them initiative-taking and involved. Moreover, the instructor should always adopt some new classroom procedures to assist EFL learners in interacting with speaking tasks.

The EFL instructors should eternally engage the students in group actions by utilizing a variety of teaching techniques so that EFL learners can quickly and dramatically develop their spoken English communication abilities. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to incorporate activities such as guessing games, icebreakers, brainstorming, picture-strip storytelling, Table Talk, project-based learning, PechaKucha, JAMs, role plays, group discussions, debates, and oral presentations in their tutorial rooms to give students the best chance to engage in these activities actively. In turn, the EFL students should maximize their schoolroom period properly and contribute to all the schoolroom activities with more attentiveness, dedication, and envelopment so that they would increasingly grow their English verbal communication abilities successfully.

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## Authors' contributions

Abubaker Suleiman Abdelmajid Yousif was responsible for study design and revising. He also was responsible for data collection. He drafted the manuscript and revised it. He read and approved the final manuscript.

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No additional data are available.

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