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**Use of Effective Teaching Strategies for Improving Spoken English of
Students at Graduate Level in Public Universities**



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Abstract

The aim of this research was to determine the effective teaching methodology to improve English speaking skills at the graduate level, as the modern world is a global village and the communities of the world are getting closer to each other. The study focused on the adoption of appropriate methods, approaches, and techniques to teach the English subject at the graduate level. Two questionnaires were developed for this purpose, one for teachers and one for students. The results of this study showed various problems being faced in the English language teaching classes in public institutions, which included as: The teachers having not attended any pre-service training course, the non-existence of any special training for the teachers to manage large-sized ELT classes, discipline, lack of proper teaching aids, the school administration's indifferent attitude, unsuitable curriculum, the impossibility of checking home assignments, a faulty examination system, etc. The study recommended maintaining discipline, providing teachers with pre-service and in-service training, giving individual attention especially to weak students, implementing an effective evaluation system, and adopting modern teaching aids to improve learners' speaking skills. The researcher gave some recommendations for future research as well.

Keywords: Spoken English Skills, Communication Skills, English Language Teaching, English as a Global Language, Language Learning Challenges, Effective Teaching Strategies

Introduction

Communication skill is the ability to use language and express information. It is a process of transforming information from one entity to another. Communication is commonly defined as “the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs.” While interviewing candidates, most interviewers judge them based on the way they communicate. They think skills can be learned on the job, but good communication is vital since all employees represent the company. While defining communication skills, we can say, “Communication skills are the set of skills that enables a person to convey information so that it is received and understood. Communication skills refer to the repertoire of behaviors that serve to convey information for the individual.” Language refers to an individual’s competence; it occurs in the form of discourse. Language can be defined as “the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow.”

There are many languages in the world, but in this computer and modern era, English is the most popular and famous language, which is spoken and understandable in every part of the world. English has become the actual universal language without a doubt, as the English language has recently been branded as the first emerging global lingua franca (a language used widely beyond the population of its native speakers). English has a dominant position in science, technology, medicine, transitional business, trade, aviation, and international organizations. One of the main reasons for English language dominance is the use of English in the field of education by universities and other institutes. In the current situation, English is an important

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requirement in most government and private jobs. Spoken English is a vital constituent of the English language arts curriculum, which provides the base for growth in English reading, writing, and listening abilities. As learning and applying the skills of Spoken English are so closely related, the classroom should be a place where the use of spoken language is sensitively supported and where active listening is developed and valued. Communication builds connections among students and makes them realize what they know and what they are learning.

Fries (1998) described that speech is the most important aim of language teaching and a means of communicating thought and feeling with voice and body to secure a desired response. A teacher should prepare himself to begin speech training of his students in the lower classes. the ability to speak English fluently has become a necessity now. It is no more a matter of status or fashion, but it is of utmost necessity for a good job and to prosper in one's career. Communicating in English does not mean leaving an impression of smartness, but it is required to communicate one's important points in a smart manner. English is an international language, and we (Pakistanis) have been learning it since the birth of Pakistan. We opened many institutions to learn English. We blame our education system. We blame our teachers. We pass metric and learn how to translate Urdu into English, but we can't speak English in daily life. On asking, we say that our teachers did not teach us how to speak English; we blame our teachers courageously and learn the same English again in intermediate but can't speak English yet. On asking, the answer is the same. Who is at fault: our teachers or students? Our students are at fault. After passing a class, we never try to read our books. Same case is after Intermediate. I do not say that we should be good English speakers. We become the student of B.A. after spending 12 years learning English. After 5th we start learning parts of speech and tenses, and up to 12th we keep learning. But after getting the honor to be a student of B.A., we can't define parts of speech except for Noun, Pronoun, and Verb.

In the modern age, the importance of the English language is very wide. Being an international language, it has become the language of media, which is used in every part of the world. In our country, its significance is growing rapidly. Till 1985, the English language was confined to private schools, but now the Pakistani government is striving much for the progress of the English language. Many institutions have been organized where English is being taught as a compulsory subject. English has become our official language, so for the improvement of the English language, more and more institutions should be developed in urban areas. Today every profession demands English. It has become an ideal language. People prefer to use it in exchanging ideas, views, concepts, and visions with others. In the current situation, the English language is a powerful learning tool through which a person is able to understand the other person's culture and tradition. It develops the positive values of learners as well as being a source to maintain friendly relationships among people. English-speaking skills are essential in the global community, and no one can deny it. The world has converted into a global village; it's not easy to have access to this community hence language supports are needed to build a connection with each other. The English language is the connecting link that enables various nations to join hands on affordable tasks. The English language program is a vital component of the B.A. it is considered a core subject in our educational institutions. The act of speaking enables students to make connections between what they know and what they are learning, and listening helps them to acquire knowledge and explore ideas.

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The English language plays a crucial role in developing challenging qualities among learners like critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and innovation. It provides them opportunities to extend their knowledge and experience of other people's culture for personal and intellectual development. Solid groundwork with impressive strategies must be laid to enable the learners to meet the challenges of the English language. It is the need of time for higher study in a rapidly changing society. In this study, an attempt was made to recognize the skills and methodology needed in a teaching style and present the strategies for application of them. The main concern of this study is to develop some practical guidelines for designing effective strategies for B.A. programs in English language teaching.

Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview regarding the significance of the English language and its status in the public educational system. It focuses on oral communication, speaking ability, interaction among learners, and teaching methodology. Afterwards, the need for improvement in teaching methodology is also suggested at the graduate level. This fact has been acknowledged universally: English deserves to be regarded as a world language. It is the first language of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the United States of America. English is spoken so widely that it has become a common means of communication among various nations. Keen observation of media shows that almost 50% of the world's newspapers, 55% of the world's scientific and technical periodicals, and even 60% of the world's radio stations use the English language as a medium of communication. All these facts conclude that English is an international language. It interlinks the people of various nations. The purpose of this literature review is to examine related theory and research that has addressed what constitutes effective pedagogy for the acquisition of a second language (L2) in a classroom context. In other words, the review finds the answer to the question: How can instructions best ensure successful language learning? No doubt, English is attaining importance day by day all over the world. The continuing expansion of English is very much influenced by the historical aspects that resulted in its critical place today.

Crystal outlines the history of the spread of English along these lines: In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, English was the language of the leading colonial nation, Britain. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was the language of the leader of the industrial revolution—also Britain. In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, it was the language of the leading economic power—the USA. As a result, when new technologies brought new linguistic opportunities, English emerged as a first-rank language in industries, which affected all aspects of society—the press, advertising, broadcasting, motion pictures, sound recording, transport, and communications (Crystal, 1997, pp. 110-111). In the same way, as stated by Toker (1999), the English language has become more common among world communities, especially since World War II, and accepted for international communication. In addition, it is not possible to neglect the effect of colonization in the course of this immense expansion. English had its role as an international language by means of scientific developments and cultural exports, too. Apart from its supremacy in the United States, the English language yielded a notable dignity in European countries as well. English occupies a place of prestige in our country, even after more than four decades. No indigenous language, however, has come up to replace English, either as

a medium of communication or as an official language.

Quaid-i-Azam declared in the first All Pakistan Educational Conference that “Urdu would be the national language, but he never ignored the importance of English.” Research describes the fact that the number of English speakers is increasing tremendously, and it will be higher than the number of native speakers in the future. Research into the English language at the graduate level and the application of the English language as a medium of instruction, as well as the teaching of English as a target language, highlights that no doubt the present has a great demand for English language instruction, and this demand will continue to grow in the future situation. Graduate education involves advanced scholarly inquiry and research to enable students to master a specialized field. Graduate education requires students to develop advanced communication, interaction, and collaboration skills, using a range of communication technologies. English is the language of interaction and instruction in graduate programs. Proficiency in English consists of a broad, complex set of skills in the areas of reading, speaking, and writing. It is the student’s responsibility to be proficient in both written and spoken English at the graduate level.

The age of globalization is a reason for using English extensively. Language skills help people to connect. It is running ahead in its race to achieve global supremacy. Generally, it can be said that the most popular language in the world is English. It is the language that every person can understand. It has become an ideal language for the transmission of emotions. All international graduate students whose native language is not English must fulfill an English proficiency requirement through either English Proficiency Verification or English Proficiency Certification. This proficiency requirement should be met early in a student’s program, and it must be completed before scheduling either the final examination for the master’s degree or the preliminary examination for the doctoral degree.

Research Methodology

The research is conducted to develop the use of effective teaching strategies for improving the spoken English of students at the graduate level in public universities. The nature of the study is quantitative as well as qualitative. The type of the research is descriptive. Two questionnaires consisting of 20 statements were developed for students and teachers with the help of language and research experts. These were distributed to 60 students and teachers. Teachers and Students of graduate level from public institutions were selected by the researcher as the population. Total number of people was 120 equally divided among students and teachers. It is very difficult for the researcher to collect from the whole population; that is why the researcher collected data from the sample of 60 students and 60 teachers from the population. The researcher used a convenient sampling technique.

Questionnaires were chosen as a research tool. The research tool used in this study is the questionnaire, which serves as the primary instrument for data collection. This chapter is devoted to the analysis of data collected through the questionnaires distributed to 60 students and teachers. Responses to the various questions had been presented in the tabulated form, and percentages had been calculated. For each category, separate tables were made that indicate the respective opinions of respondents. Direct contact is always useful for the collection of data. Researchers can explain the purpose and significance of the study to motivate the respondents to answer the questions carefully and truthfully.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The English language is widely acknowledged as the language of modern times; it is an international language for communication and education and is one of the three key elements in the global context: English serves as an international language for communication and education. The universal beat of pop music; the application of science and technology has reached even the most remote corners of the world. In today's globalized world, English serves as a universal language, being taught in every corner of the globe (Sarwar, 2001)

The educational system of Pakistan is based on various wonderful ideas and techniques, but these ideas or techniques have not given any fruitful results so far. As a result, the researcher, being an apprentice of applied linguistics, decided to participate practically in the teaching and learning process as well as the syllabus special reference with the English subject for the B.A. students in Pakistan who, after studying English for so many years, cannot get the competence to speak in English. The major aim of the study was to find out the speaking skill, objectives, shortcomings, obstacles, and teaching methodology with reference to the English language.

Another objective was to make the teachers aware of the communication problems faced by the students, the reasons, and the use of effective teaching strategies. There were useful recommendations that would help to take proper steps to improve spoken power and interaction among learners. Researcher selected this specific topic because of the existing lack of communication power and interaction between students and teachers. Researcher collected theoretical material about the background knowledge of the English language and the syllabus of English at the graduate level from various books and dictionaries. That is why the first part of the study was theoretical.

The second part of the study was of a practical nature; that is why the researcher made two questionnaires, one for students and one for teachers, and they were filled out by students and teachers. Each questionnaire consisted of twenty statements. This was a qualitative type of research because the researcher conducted the analysis of the opinions given by students and teachers.

Data Analysis

Data is collected in the form of a sample of 60 students and teachers. The data is collected through two questionnaires. Data is interpreted in the form of tables. To analyze data, the percentage method is used. Data is presented in two parts. First part refers to the students' responses, while the second part deals with the teachers' responses.

Student's Perception

Following observation is collected after analyzing the questionnaires of the students.

Table 1: *Students' Perception of Their Own English Language Skills*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	Students can read and understand an English text (Newspaper, stories, and academic textbooks).	40	66	20	33
2	Students can write English easily.	49	82	11	18

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3	Students speak and use English during discussions.	18	30	42	70
4	Students find writing in English easier than speaking in English.	39	65	21	35
5	Students find grammar practice (tenses, voice, narration etc.) more interesting than spoken and	45	75	15	25

The above table shows that sixty-six percent students answered that they can read and understand English text, newspapers, stories and academic textbooks at graduate level while thirty three percent students find difficulty. Eighty-two percent students agree that they can write English easily while eighteen percent students find difficulty even in writing English language. Eighteen percent students take part and speak English during discussion while seventy percent students are unable to speak. Sixty-five percent students find writing in English easier than speaking in English while thirty-five percent students take English subject tough. Seventy-five percent students find grammar practice (tenses, voice, narration etc.) more interesting than spoken and communicating tasks.

Table 2: *Students' Perceptions of the English Language Course and Curriculum*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	Students believe that teachers and curriculum should concentrate more on spoken English.	52	86	08	14
2	Students find English tough in syllabus of graduation.	38	63	22	37
3	Students think to pass English in graduation exams.	20	33	40	67
4	Students have improved their writing skills and grammar during graduation.	41	68	19	32
5	Students understand that present English course is making their communication in English.	15	25	45	75

Table 2 shows that eighty-six percent students believe that teachers and curriculum should concentrate more on spoken English. Sixty-three percent students find tough English subject at graduate level. Only thirty-three percent students think to pass English in graduation. Sixty-eight percent students understand that they have improved their writing skills and grammar during graduation while thirty-two percent students disagreed. Merely twenty-five think that present English course is making their communication in English while seventy-five percent students are not satisfied.

Table 3: *Students' Perceptions on Curriculum Reform and Desired Changes in English Course*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	Students demand that activities should be arranged to enhance spoken/communication skill.	49	82	11	18

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2	Students think that course of English subject is contributing in developing their creativity.	20	33	40	67
3	At the end of this course, students would be able to communicate in English language effectively.	27	45	33	55
4	The curriculum of English should be changed now at graduate level.	51	85	09	15
5	The ratio of literature in English A paper should be decreased.	39	65	21	35

Table 3 shows that eighty-two percent students demand that activities should be arranged to enhance spoken/communication skill. Only thirty-three percent students agree that course of English subject is contributing in developing their creativity while sixty-seven percent students disagreed. Forty-five percent students think that at the end of this course they would be able to communicate in English language effectively while Fifty-five percent students are not sure. Eighty-five percent students answered that curriculum of English should be changed now at graduate level. Sixty-five percent students want that ratio of literature in English A-paper should be decreased.

Table 4: *Students' Preferences for Teaching Methods and Classroom Activities to Improve English*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	There should be a complete unit of tenses in the grammar part.	46	77	14	23
2	There should be an emphasis on the speaking skills of the students.	53	88	07	12
3	The students should be made to give presentations so as to enhance their speaking skills.	46	77	14	23
4	The teachers should give tasks like group discussions and dialogues in English.	42	70	18	30
5	Students like to participate in the class during	35	58	25	42

Table 4 shows that seventy-seven percent students desire that there should be a complete unit of Tenses in the grammar part to improve communication skills. Eighty-eight percent students want the emphasis on their spoken power. Seventy-seven percent students think that they should be made to give presentations to enhance their speaking skills. Seventy percent students want that teachers should give tasks like group discussions and dialogues in English Fifty-eight percent students like to participate in the class during discussions.

Teacher's Perception

Table 5: *Teachers' Perceptions of Current English Teaching Practices and Needed Improvements*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	Teachers should start lectures through brainstorming the students.	31	52	29	48

2	Teachers believe in starting the class with their lecture	29	48	31	52
3	They find the English syllabus too long to be covered efficiently.	20	33	40	67
4	The rote learning while learning English language syllabus should be decreased.	42	70	18	30
5	There should be proper trained teachers for developing the speaking skills of the students.	52	87	10	13

Analysis of Table 5 highlights that Fifty-two percent teachers responded that they should start lectures through brainstorming the students. Forty-eight percent teachers believe in starting the class with their lecture only while fifty-two percent teachers disagreed. Thirty-three percent teachers find the English syllabus too long to be covered efficiently while sixty-seven percent not agreed. Seventy percent teachers answered that rote learning while learning English language syllabus should be decreased. Eighty-seven percent teachers want proper training to develop the speaking skills of the learners.

Table 6: *Teachers' Recommendations for Reforming the English Syllabus and Teaching Practices*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	The English A syllabus should be decreased and there should be increased emphasis on increasing the grammatical competence of the students.	42	70	18	30
2	Teachers should engage students in group discussions.	47	77	13	22
3	They think that students at graduation level should be assessed through presentations as well.	41	68	19	32
4	Advance technology regarding A-V aids should use in classroom activities.	50	83	10	17
5	Teachers should be aware of various teaching methods.	49	82	11	18

Table 6 shows that seventy percent teachers agree that English A syllabus should be decreased and there should be increased emphasis on increasing the grammatical competence of the students. Seventy-seven percent teachers want involvement of students in classroom discussion. Sixty-eight percent students believe that students at graduation level should be assessed through presentations as well. Eighty-three percent teachers long for advance technology regarding A.V aids should use in classroom activities. Eighty-two percent teachers agree to be aware of various teaching methods.

Table 7: *Teachers' Perceptions on Evaluation System, Student Performance, and the Need for Curriculum Revision*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%

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1	They find the present evaluation system satisfactory.	28	47	32	53
2	The students at graduation level should be eloquent in their speaking skills.	52	87	08	13
3	The lengthy syllabus and the evaluation system is the biggest reason of poor performance of the students.	45	75	15	25
4	The students lack in their grammatical competence.	49	82	11	18
5	The curriculum of English should be revised.	53	88	07	12

Table 7 shows that forty-seven percent teachers agreed that present evaluation system satisfactory while fifty-Three percent teachers disagreed. Seventy-five percent teachers think that the lengthy syllabus and the evaluation system is the biggest reason of poor performance of the students. Eighty two percent teachers consider that students lack in their grammatical competence. Eighty-eight percent teachers suggest that the curriculum of English should be revised.

Table 8: *Teachers' Views on English Curriculum Reform and Training*

Sr.#	Statement	Yes		No	
		Total	%	Total	%
1	Teachers should be given training workshops to equip them with the modern teaching techniques.	48	80	12	20
2	The present curriculum of English has not been able to accomplish its goals.	53	88	07	12
3	The present curriculum needs to be changed to meet the modern needs.	50	83	20	33
4	Government should facilitate the teachers and institutes with the modern technological aids for teaching.	52	87	08	13
5	Teachers are satisfied with the growth of students under this curriculum.	25	42	35	58

Table 8 shows that eighty percent of teachers responded that they should be given training to equip them with the modern teaching techniques Eighty-eight percent of teachers said that the present curriculum of English has not been able to accomplish its goals. Eighty-three percent of teachers agreed that the present curriculum needs to be changed to meet the modern needs. Almost all teachers agreed that the government should provide modern technological aids to both teachers and educational institutions to enhance teaching. Only forty-two percent of teachers are satisfied with the growth of students under this Curriculum

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the urgent need for reform in English language teaching at the graduate level in Pakistani public institutions. Despite advancements in education globally, many students still struggle to express themselves fluently in English. This is largely due to outdated, teacher-centered approaches that prioritize rote memorization over meaningful communication. The current system places the teacher in a dominant

role, with students passively receiving information, which hinders their ability to develop language proficiency. Improving spoken English requires more than classroom instruction; it demands systemic changes within the broader social and educational context. The findings suggest that effective English teaching strategies must be student-centered and interactive, focusing on practical language use rather than theoretical knowledge alone. Teachers must be equipped with modern pedagogical skills and adopt approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to foster language acquisition. Furthermore, institutions must support this shift by providing access to quality resources, encouraging continuous teacher training, and valuing student feedback. Only by addressing these structural issues can we expect to see meaningful progress in English language fluency among graduate students in Pakistan. This research offers a foundation for further exploration and implementation of strategies that align with the communicative needs of 21st-century learners.

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