

## IMPROVING SPEAKING PROFICIENCY THROUGH INTERACTIVE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Zukhra Ashirboyeva

Teacher at Uzbek State World Languages University

### **Abstract**

*This study explores the effectiveness of interactive classroom activities in improving students' speaking proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Speaking is often considered one of the most challenging skills for language learners due to lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and insufficient practice opportunities. The research employed a mixed-method approach, including questionnaires and classroom observations, to evaluate students' progress. The findings indicate that interactive activities significantly enhance learners' fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The study concludes with practical implications for language teach*

**Keywords:** *speaking proficiency, interactive activities, EFL learners, communicative competence, classroom interactioners.*

### **Introduction**

Speaking is often considered one of the most challenging skills for language learners to master. Unlike reading or writing, speaking requires real-time processing, spontaneous production, and effective communication. According to Brown (2007), speaking involves not only grammatical competence but also sociolinguistic and strategic competence.

In many traditional classrooms, teaching methods are teacher-centered, limiting students' opportunities to actively use the language. As a result, learners may possess theoretical knowledge of grammar but lack the ability to communicate effectively. This gap between knowledge and performance highlights the need for interactive teaching approaches. Interactive classroom activities, such as role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks, encourage learners to actively participate and use language in



meaningful contexts. This study aims to investigate how such activities contribute to improving speaking proficiency.

## **Literature Review**

### **Speaking Proficiency in Language Learning**

Speaking proficiency refers to the ability to express ideas clearly, fluently, and appropriately in different contexts. It includes components such as pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary use (Levelt, 1989).

Canale and Swain (1980) introduced the concept of communicative competence, which emphasizes that effective communication involves more than grammatical knowledge. It includes discourse competence and strategic competence, both of which are developed through interaction.

### **The Role of Interaction in Language Learning**

Interaction plays a central role in second language acquisition. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language more effectively through meaningful communication and negotiation of meaning.

Similarly, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory highlights the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. Through collaborative activities, learners can operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), improving their language skills with support from peers and teachers.

### **Interactive Classroom Activities**

Interactive activities are learner-centered tasks that promote communication and collaboration. Examples include:

- Pair work and group discussions
- Role-plays and simulations
- Information gap activities
- Task-based learning



According to Harmer (2007), such activities increase student talking time and create opportunities for authentic language use. Moreover, Nation and Newton (2009) argue that interaction-based tasks help learners develop fluency and confidence.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the effectiveness of interactive activities.

### **Participants**

The participants were 40 undergraduate EFL students at a higher education institution. Their proficiency level ranged from B1 to B2 according to CEFR.

### **Instruments**

Pre-test and post-test (speaking assessment)

Questionnaire (student perceptions)

Classroom observation

### **Procedure**

The study was conducted over eight weeks. During this period:

The control group received traditional instruction

The experimental group participated in interactive activities such as role-plays, discussions, and task-based learning

### **Results**

The results showed a noticeable improvement in the speaking proficiency of students in the experimental group.

- Fluency increased as students spoke more confidently
- Vocabulary usage became more varied
- Pronunciation and accuracy improved gradually

Questionnaire results indicated that 85% of students felt more confident speaking English after participating in interactive activities.



## Discussion

The findings confirm that interactive classroom activities play a significant role in improving speaking proficiency. These results are consistent with Long (1996), who emphasized the importance of interaction in language acquisition.

Students in the experimental group benefited from increased speaking opportunities, which helped them overcome anxiety and develop confidence. Additionally, collaborative tasks allowed learners to learn from each other, supporting Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social learning.

The study also highlights that traditional teacher-centered approaches may limit students' ability to develop communicative competence. Therefore, integrating interactive techniques is essential for effective language teaching.

## Practical Implications

Teachers should incorporate interactive activities regularly in their lessons. For example:

- Use pair and group work to maximize student participation
- Design task-based activities that reflect real-life situations
- Encourage students to express opinions and engage in discussions

Additionally, teachers should create a supportive classroom environment where students feel comfortable making mistakes and practicing speaking.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that interactive classroom activities significantly improve speaking proficiency among EFL learners. By promoting active participation and meaningful communication, these activities help learners develop fluency, confidence, and communicative competence.

Future research can explore the long-term effects of interactive teaching methods and their impact on different proficiency levels.



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