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AN ANALYSIS OF ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS: THE CASE OF PAKISTANI ESL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Since English has become an international language, it has become need of the hour to acquire English speaking proficiency. It is considered a prerequisite of success and sought for survival in the globalized discourse community of English speakers. Thus, it has become the top priority of English language learners to focus on oral presentation skill. The previous works are abundant with descriptions of ideal presentations but there exists little work on the actual presentations of the SLA students, their lacks and the role of the language teacher. This paper not only talks about the actual presentations of the language learners but also explores the role of the language teacher, needs of learners, the reasons/ factors and the possible solutions. For this purpose, the presentations of the randomly selected learners were recorded both in audio and video form and were analyzed by comparing them with the rubric developed by the researchers. The results of the present study reveal a long list of the lacks and needs of the learners' presentation skills and speaking skills. This research opens up a vast field for future research more practical in nature concerning the needs of the learners instead of defining an ideal presentation.

Keywords: Lacks, Oral proficiency, presentation skill, ESL, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Language system is divided into three components, the division includes form, content, and use. Further, each component is broken down into five levels of language. Form involves three levels which are phonology, morphology and syntax. Content involves semantics while language use concerns pragmatics. Our major concern is related to language use and there are various micro and macro skills associated with it. Language use involves different means such as speaking, writing, para-lingual features and other indirect means depending on the used medium. In EAP, discussing the macro skills, in general there are five skills we use which are reading, listening (to monologue), listening and speaking, speaking (a monologue) and writing. Among the four skills, speaking English is deemed to be most important one in ESL and EFL countries, for its status as Lingua Franca (Abbas, Aslam & Rana, 2011; Abbas, & Iqbal, 2018). Here we need to be clear about

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whether we opt for 'speaking a monologue' like 'one way communication' such as presentation in class room, seminar or 'listening and speaking' like an interactive way as used by some people for effective communication depending on the given circumstances and conditions. This paper studies 'speaking a monologue' because this is the most widely used activity that ever held in academic settings.

As stated earlier speaking skills are given most weightage out of all the four skills. It has not only become the most important criterion for determining the competency of the job applicants but also a means for determining the extent of success of the learner's language learning. Ultimately the teaching of speaking skills becomes the top-most priority of language teachers. There are multiple methods to teach language and skills such as task-based teaching, learner-centered teaching, communicative approach, cognitive and metacognitive strategies etc. Teachers should provide learners with opportunities to learn and practice speaking, discuss with them, evaluate their progress with formal and informal assessment. Teacher's role, here, can be a facilitator, advisor and provider of necessary information. The need of time is to understand the student's psyche, their problems, incompetency they face. Teachers need to be cooperative with learners in order to remove the root cause their behind ineffective presentations. Extra guidance, material notes, classroom practice sessions are essential.

Learners consider speaking as the most difficult skills for it demands great courage and preparation to speak well in a new language (Gani et al., 2015; Abbas, Aslam & Yasmeen, 2011). There is a need to create self-awareness among students to develop their skills in this respect. Self-learning is very important. Students learn more during informal learning (Abbas, Anjum & Pasha, 2019). Rajoo and Xavier (2002) asserts that students should be encouraged strongly in order to take charge of their learning process, as this will go a long way to help them, improving their presentation skills in future. Rajoo and Xavier (2002) suggested number of self-help guidelines that should be followed by students in order to improve their speaking skills i.e. read widely and explore the internet, watch video clips of various samples pertaining to oral presentation, conduct brainstorming sessions in order to decide a suitable topic and to enlist the main ideas, develop a catchy introduction to engage the audience, write short notes containing limited keywords, conduct mock presentations or rehearsals with minimum focus on notes to deliver a better presentation, use correct grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure, record and review your practice sessions to identify yours strengths and weaknesses.

There are a number of ways and tasks and strategies to improve students' speaking skills. Some of the learning strategies that were employed by highly fluent speaking students are listening to English song/audio (cognitive), watching English movies (cognitive), reading English books/novels (cognitive/ metacognitive), reciting song lyrics (cognitive/metacognitive), analyzing English articles, reviewing lessons (cognitive), practicing with friends (social/ metacognitive), talking to themselves in English (metacognitive), using English synonyms (compensation), repeating words or sentences with conversation partners to achieve better understanding (compensation). But this paper studies oral presentation as a monologue lacking the spoken

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interaction between listeners who are quite passive and the presenters who are very active displaying one man show (Gani et al., 2015). Though many problems arise for both listeners and the presenters in such a situation but still it is chosen for this study because it is the most common method used in academic settings to boost up students' confidence, to make them autonomous and better their speaking skills.

The current research focuses on providing answers to the research questions like:

i.   What are the spoken needs and necessities of ESL student?
ii.   What are the 'lacks" of ESL students in spoken skills?
iii.   How do the oral presentation skills improve English spoken skills among ESL students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Yong and Campbell (1995) claim that in China alone are over 200 million students enrolled in programs in English as a foreign language. Since the number of non- native English speakers is so rapidly increasing (Abbas, Pervaiz & Arshad, 2018), English speaking skills are made ever more easy and compulsory firstly by the 'nativisation' of English resulting into 'World Englishes'. Kachru (1998) points out "The English language is generally discussed as a language that is in Asia, but not of Asia." (p. 90). Secondly and lastly, the shift from the paradigm of native-like pronunciation to that of intelligibility criteria. "Together with questions regarding native speaker speech norms, are growing notions of "native speakerness" and of native speaker competence (Feak, 2013, p. 36). For instance, research in Aviation English suggests that native-like proficiency does not necessarily means competence. Because besides the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary the speaker must also have a clear understanding of the communicative goals and/ or speech events and familiarity with the target situation (Feak, 2013).

According to Levis' (2005) pronunciation teaching and learning has hitherto worked under two principles: nativeness principle and intelligibility principle. The former principle was a dominant paradigm in the pronunciation teaching and learning before 1960s but was "unrealistic burden" (p. 370) both on the teachers and learners. But with the development of ESP, shift from seeing language as Text as a linguistic object (TALO) to Text as a vehicle of Information (TAVI) in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the studies on age factor (Scovel, 1995) and language learning have led to the shift from eligibility principle which aims at understanding and efficient exchange of information as the ultimate goal of using English instead of native like proficiency and accent. The result is an inevitable move towards diglossia with one language used for local communication and English for more utilitarian purposes (Coleman, 2006) where English is usually of the nativized version.

In this highly globalized world, the need of being a proficient speaker is ever increasing. In addition to the shift from the paradigm 'English' to 'World Englishes' has stressed more than ever on the need of English, in general, and speaking skills in English, specifically. Not that other

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skills are not required but in most of the cases speaking skills are a head of all the working and academic credentials for job recruitment (Zaremba, 2006). Further, the extent of the success in language learning is estimated from the speaker's ability to carry out a conversation in the language (1991). McDonough and Shaw (1993) add that the competence of the speaker of a language is often judged by his/her speaking skills in place of any other skill in/of the language. Thus, speaking becomes the first and foremost priority in teaching and learning language in classroom settings. Harmer (2007) gives three reasons to make students speak in the class: firstly, it provides opportunities for rehearsals and secondly, it provides feedback for both the teachers and the students. Finally, it provides students with the opportunities to put in practice the knowledge of the language they have stored in their repertoire.

English speaking skills are counted as the most difficult skill to master by the non-native speakers Zhang (2009). Hincks (2010) says that non-native speakers of English face a "slow down effect" while using English. Their speaking rate is slowed down by 23% while speaking in English than that of when speaking in their first language (L1). Speaking in foreign language is not only trouble-some for the learners but also for the readers (Hincks, 2010). The Teachers complain about the lack of spontaneity in their lecture whereas the students complain about the quality of teachers' English (p.3).

While using L2 the cognitive demands increase resultantly regarding the speech rate which under limited time affect the quality of the content (Airey & Linder, 2006). They further say, "students asked and answered fewer questions and reported being less able to follow the lecture and take notes at the same time" (p.558). This is because the use of foreign language provokes fear and anxiety. Howartiz et al. (1986) give three reasons for anxiety resulting from speaking foreign language: first, communication apprehension, second, fear of negative evaluation finally, test anxiety. Shanmagasundaram (2013) summarizes all the factors hindering the speaking of the students under four categories. First, psychological factors such as fear of facing people, fear of being judged, inferiority complex; second, sociological factors such as financial status, employment, and living environment; third, linguistic factors like poor knowledge of grammar, lack of fluency, L1 interference and limited vocabulary; last, pedagogic factors like teaching and learning methods followed.

In ESL countries English is used throughout the education system. In most cases it starts from primary level and from secondary in some other (Evans and John). In Pakistan, an ESL country, English has the status of Second Language and official language English as their Second language. Students are taught English from primary level. Thus, Pakistani students study English for approximately twelve years yet they lack English language proficiency. The language level may, in fact, be quite high, but it has been found that may student need help with the demands made of them when they start an undergraduate course (Dudley-Evans et al., 1998, p. 37) one of the major reason traced out is the lack of exposure to the English speaking environment. Their exposure to the practical usage of English is very rare (Bashiruddin, 2003; Khan & Khattak, 2011). Moreover, English is learnt to pass the examination only (Evans and Tony). The stress of

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completing the syllabus in time and preparing students for entry-tests keeps the teachers to motivate the students to speak in English. Memon (2000) provides the evidences to prove that English is learnt for the sake of passing examination only. Thus, they have adopted "a surface approach to learning" (p. 4). The exposure (of uneducated/ less educated class) being equal to none. English remains only a sign of social prestige and the language of the elite (Rahman, 2002).

The speaking skills in English can be improved by a number of tasks and approaches. For instance, Sambath and Sethuraman (2017) use task-based approach to improve the speaking skills of engineering students. Study shows that 61% of the students showed considerable improvement in their speaking skills. Similarly, the language teachers have enacted dialogues from text on stage, arranged group and class discussions, organized debates, informal interviews and individual and group presentations. Oral presentations are the most common and difficult method used for achieving this objective. The results of the needs analysis of NNES TESOL teachers show that oral presentations are considered as the second most difficult and most important for their professional career (Keiko, 2000). Brooks and Wilson (2014) studied how properly directed oral presentations can improve the speaking skills of the Japanese students. They regard oral presentation as extremely successful in improving the learners' L2 skills and increasing their autonomy.

Using oral presentation improves the classroom interaction, cooperation among students (especially in case of group presentations), enhances students' interest, involvement and motivation. In addition, it establishes the independence and autonomy and develops critical approach of the students. It also provides a feedback to the teachers about the linguistic level of students' proficiency and gives him/ her the idea of the lacks and wants of the students. The benefits of oral presentation are not only restricted to the classroom setting only, it also fulfills the delayed needs of the students, that is, the demands of their professional setting where speaking skills holds the main office.

The sensitive nature of oral presentation as a methodology for teaching and practicing speaking skills is sometimes also emphasized. Any little mistake committed in arranging the presentation class can bring grave and long-term consequences. It can result into the loss of public face of students, their motivation and interest and loss of time and valuable content. Meloni and Thompson (1980) talk about a worst-case scenario of not guiding presenters correctly and argue that poor management and guidance on the part of the language teacher can result in students choosing irrelevant, difficult topic or that which is not of their interest. The immediate results will be a poorly prepared and delivered presentation in front of bored or even disrespectful audience. The only result of it will be the students who hate oral presentations and a teacher who believes that students gain nothing from delivering oral presentations. Oral presentations are time-consuming also. The presenters who are inexperienced lecturers fail to establish a rapport with their listeners which is extremely necessary to keep the listeners involved and attentive and keep them from being bored or inactive (Ross, 2007).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research uses quantitative method for collecting data from a sample of 20 students selected randomly from University of Sargodha. In order to obtain the data, the oral presentations of the students were recorded in the form of audio and video tape. This paper analyzed the recorded and transcribed presentations of the students of English Language and Literature. The transcribed presentations are analyzed on basis of the rubrics developed by the present researchers (See appendix). The presentations were graded according to the rubrics and then the frequency of common lacks and needs was determined. The rubrics designed for the current study were developed on Lickert scale and classified according to the requirement of a model oral presentation. The rubrics comprised of both linguistic and paralinguistic features (For details, see appendix).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

As mentioned earlier, the data was collected from a sample of 20 students selected from University of Sargodha. The oral presentations of the students were recorded and then analyzed in the light of framework developed for the current research. There are two tables that present the results and findings of the study. Table 1 reports the score of the respondents on the various dimensions of the speaking skills while table 2 presents the scores on the paralinguistic features of the oral presentation.

Table 1: Scores of students on speaking skills

Criterions	4 (better) N (%)	3 (good) N (%)	2 (normal) N (%)	1 (bad) N (%)	Total N (%)
Punctuation	3 (15%)	3(15%)	10 (50%)	4(20%)	20(100%)
Content	1(5%)	9(45%)	8(40%)	2(10%)	20(100%)
Vocabulary	1(5%)	8(40%)	9(45%)	2(10%)	20(100%)
Accuracy	2(10%)	7(35%)	6(30%)	5(25%)	20(100%)
Communication	0	6(30%)	9(45%)	5(25%)	20(100%)
Accent	0	8(40%)	8(40%)	4(20%)	20(100%)
Fluency	1(5%)	7(35%)	10(50%)	2(10%)	20(100%)
Switching	5(25%)	7(35%)	6(30%)	2(10%)	20(100%)
Use of fillers	0	2(10%)	15(75%)	3(15%)	20(100%)

Table 2: Score of students on paralinguistic features

Criteria for paralinguistic features	4 (better) N(%)	3 (good) N(%)	2 (normal) N(%)	1 (bad) N(%)	Total N(%)

Body language	1(5%)	7(35%)	11(55%)	1(5%)	20(100%)
Confidence	1(5%)	7(35%)	11(55%)	1(5%)	20(100%)
Use of hands	1(5%)	5(25%)	12(60%)	4(20%)	20(100%)
Change of position	0	3(15%)	16(80%)	1(5%)	20(100%)
Use of props	0	0	0	20(100%)	20(100%)
Use of white board	1(5%)	3(15%)	11(55%)	5(25%)	20(100%)
Eye contact	1(5%)	8(40%)	8(40%)	3(15%)	20(100%)
Use of visuals	0	0	0	20(100%)	20(100%)

From the above mentioned data, we can easily say that majority of the students are falling between normal to bad. For example, punctuation of 50% students is normal while only 3% students have better punctuation. 45% of students were having good content and only 10% of students delivered bad content. Vocabulary of 45% students was just normal, while only 35% students were accurate while giving presentation. About 90% students exhibited their accent falling from good to normal. With reference to fluency, 50% students were considered normal and only 10% students were consistently switching between mother language and English language while approximately 75% students were abundantly using fillers.

Now coming to paralinguistic features, 35% to 40% students were totally composed and were confident while 55% of student were unable to control their anxiety during presentation. About 60% students were using hands not to demonstrate things but rather to control their fretted nerves. Eye contact of majority students was in one direction while 60% students were constantly paper reading during their presentation. Not even a single student used props or visuals to demonstrate their topic.

The possible deduced interpretation of above results are:

(1) students have good content but are unable to explain it to the audience, (2) students are unable to control their anxiety during presentation due to lack of practice and fear of audience or insult from teacher's side, 3) students are not confident enough to even use white board, 4) students have their concepts clear and can explain in mother language but cannot communicate those concepts in English, 5)students use fillers excessively to gain time for words to come in their minds and they abundantly use pauses (long and short), 6) environment of the classes is not comfortable and accommodating for the students to give presentations which becomes the reason for their lack of performance, 7) teachers do not guide their students during presentation and are not instructed how to give a presentation which decreases the scope of improvement among the students, 8) students are not fluent in English language due lack of practice, less use of English while communicating, 9) students have poor grammar and broken sentence structure due to their poor practice of grammar during secondary education, 10) lack of visuals and props is obviously due lack of management of institutes.

So from above findings it can be easily explained that lacks are not only present from students side rather teacher, management of institute and government of education sector need to perform changes in the whole education system so that English becomes less of a horror and becomes more of a tool for communication.

CONCLUSION

The previous studies show that oral presentation is the most popular method used in academics to improve students' spoken English and to boost up their confidence. Unfortunately, each work focuses on what an ideal presentation instead of actual presentations and what skills are involved in a perfect presentation instead of the needs of the students regarding oral presentations. Therefore, there is no, or very little work is done on their needs and the ways to overcome them. The present study analyzed the recoded (both audio and video) presentations of the students on basis of the rubrics developed by the present researchers based on an ideal presentation. The students were themselves the students of English Language and Literature and the results deduced from the data analysis were quite disappointing. It showed how little number of students of English Language were efficient enough to use it for most common method of communication, that is, speaking and specifically delivering an oral presentation. Number of factors can be seen, for instance, restraint of time, extensive courses and the stress on theoretical nature of language instead of its practical side. The need of the hour is to make a shift from theoretical approach to language to a practical one. The course designers should add a subject making every student to come on stage and present. The research outcomes of this present study can stand as the Needs analysis of the English language students for the course designers. In additions, it can become the pre-experimental group in case of an experimental study exploring the positive impacts and obstacles in teaching oral presentation skills to the students.

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Appendix

Rubrics: Speaking Skills

Model Criterions	4 (better)	3 (good)	2 (fair)	1 (bad)	Result
Pronunciation: It involves good stress and intonation pattern in which important things are stressed and where pitch and tone are both high and low (not monotone) and no abrupt end or start of sentences.	Stress and tone pattern are quite impressive, there is no use of abrupt sentences and presentation is in flow with high and low pitch.	There are some abrupt sentences, but there is change of tone and stress is given to important things.	There is stress on words here and there but presentation overall monotone in nature with abrupt sentences.	There is no change of pitch, a monotone presentation with barely recognizable words.	
Content: It involves authentic information along with references, grip on information (required material), no repetition and whole presentation is organized.	Plenty of content is discussed along with references, presenter has total grip on topic and there is no repetition and things are completely organized.	Content is authentic with repetition here and there, but presentation is organized, references are mentioned, and presenter is efficient enough to make audience understand the topic.	Content is not satisfactory and there is no reference given, repetition is there, there is order in the topic but not enough grip on it.	Content is not authentic, scattered and not enough to satisfy the audience, repetition of material, presenter himself is unable to deliver the essence of his topic.	
Vocabulary: It involves easy words that are easily	Different adjectives are used for explanation, every	Synonyms are used for better understanding,	Vocabulary is simple but words are repeated, terminologies	Very simple vocabulary is used, same words are repeated again	

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understood by the audience, synonyms are being used for better understanding, no repetitive lexemes and every terminology is explained.	terminology is thoroughly explained with no repetition.	terminologies are explained and there is repetition here and there.	are mentioned but not explained.	and again, no terminology is even mentioned.	
Accuracy: It involves correct sentence order, no broken sentences, correct grammar and authentic information is given.	Every sentence is in order, no incomplete sentence is used, authentic information is given along with correct grammar.	There is use complete sentences, but order is missing in some sentences, correct information is given.	There is use of incomplete sentences, grammar needs to be corrected.	Incomplete sentences with poor grammar having no order and correct information is not given.	
Communication: It involves asking questions from the audience (rhetorical questions), addressing and recognizing the audience and continuity throughout the presentation.	Presenter fully involves audience in his discussion and there is an exchange of answers and questions. Everything is explained by the presenter related to the topic.	Presenter involves audience here and there by involving them in his explanation.	There is no involvement of audience, but things are elaborated on part of presenter.	There is no communication between presenter and audience and explanation of topic is very ambiguous in nature.	

Accent: It involves good spoken English not crude, easily comprehendible and correct form of English not a mixture of mother language and English	Presenter has a very good grip on English speaking, accent is very similar to that of natives.	Presenter is using good accent and words are easily comprehendible, but presenter is hesitant.	Presenter has not an annoying accent but some words he speaks are so crude that they are not easily comprehendible by the listeners.	The English language spoken by the presenter is so crude that difference of English and mother tongue is blurred, which makes difficult for audience to understand what is being said.	
Fluency: It involves how many long pauses are taken, abrupt start in start of sentences, broken sentences and speed of speaking	Presenter is absolutely, fluent with no repetition or pauses, no abrupt start and speed is just according to the need of the listeners.	There are no pauses within the sentences are not broken but there is an abrupt start of sentences due which flow is not formed.	Presenter is using short pauses and there is an abrupt start of every sentence.	Presenter uses long and short pauses within the sentences, sentences are broken and make no sense to the listeners.	
Switching: It involves flipping between mother language and English.	There is fluent use of English language.	There is no switching of English language But reference is mentioned in mother language	There is no complete switching rather words are only used from mother language.	Presenter switch to mother language after every sentence.	
Use of fillers: It involves use of (a,a\ mmm) and other fillers	There are no fillers used without any interruption	There are fillers used but there is less (a,a)	Fillers are used abundantly with (a,a).	(a,a)sounds is so abundant that it is not possible for readers to	

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like and, so, yeah, ok, that, you know etc.	of sounds (a,a, mmm).			understand the sentence.	

Rubrics for paralinguistic features

Model of paralinguistic	Better (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Bad (1)	Result
Body language: The presenter should be composed and steady.	There is discipline and seriousness in reflection of presenter's body language.	presenter knows how to control his or her anxiety and are steady on stage.	Presenter is not clumsy but is unable to control his or her anxiety.	The presenter is shivering, no control of anxiety and not steady at all.	
Confidence: Person is bold, having no stage fear and anxiety is under control.	Presenter is quite cool and bold having no hesitation at all.	Presenter is confident but somehow hesitate to open-up.	Presenter needs to improve his confidence and level of anxiety.	There is no confidence present in the presenter and is having fretted nerves.	
Use of hands: Presenter is using his or her hands for demonstrating things.	Presenter constantly uses his hands to demonstrate everything.	Presenter is using his hands here and there, but they are not shivering.	There is use of hands, but they are shivering.	There is no use of hands at all.	
Change of position: Presenter is not static and changes position.	Presenter is continuously changing position on the stage with no hesitation.	Presenter is changing position while standing.	Presenter is standing in one position without changing it.	There is no change of position, but presenter is constantly fidgeting.	

Use of props: Presenter uses some objects for demonstrating things.	Exact objects are used by presenters to give demonstration to audience. (e.g. microscope)	Dimi or artificial objects are used to give demonstration.	Picture of object is shown.	No use of props at all.	
Use of white board: Presenter uses board for demonstrating things.	Everything is explained on the white board with no use of paper reading.	Board is used along with paper reading.	Only heading of topic is mentioned on white board.	No use of white board, total paper reading.	
Eye contact: Presenter is having an eye contact in every direction without hesitation.	There is complete eye contact in every direction no paper reading.	There is paper reading here and there, eye contact is only in one direction.	There is paper reading, with eye contact here and there in one direction.	There is no eye contact with audience only presenter is looking at the piece of paper.	
Use of visuals: Presenter is using some sort of pictures, slides and videos.	Proper slides are established, and different visuals are involved related to everything mentioned in the presentation.	Different visuals are used in presentations e.g. pictures, videos and objects in real.	There is use of charts or pictures.	There is no use of visuals (of any sorts) at all.	