Chapter 38: Fostering High School Students' English-Speaking Skills through Oral Presentation

FAHAD ABDULLAH AL-SHAMMARI

Kansas State University in conjunction with KSU.

Abstract: In English as a foreign language (EFL) curriculum, students have few opportunities to practice English communication outside of the classroom. This hinders students' use of English inside the classroom. Focusing on the Saudi EFL curriculum, this paper attempts to identify the causes of Saudi students' low proficiency in English communication and provides recommendations to address these issues. It focuses on how we can improve our students' level of proficiency in English speaking skills. The paper will mention the benefits of teaching oral presentations for students in high school and make suggestions regarding the importance of creating one English class period for speaking. I will evaluate the outcomes of taking one class every week that is focused on oral presentations in two ways: either by Oral Presentation Evaluations or Oral In-class Peer Evaluation. Finally, it is hoped that the oral presentation class will contribute to the improvement of proficiency in speaking skills. It will help the students speak confidently and fluently, especially when they have presentation skills such as using physical movements and eye contact. This improvement will help students perform better in interviews, which will help them get better jobs or improved scores on the ILETS or TOEFL assessments.

1Introduction

In Saudi Arabia, very few students are given a chance to use spoken English skills in the classroom before going to university. Students usually face some problems that hamper them from speaking. These factors are lack of practice to language, deficiency of motivation, students' anxiety and lack of confidence, and limited knowledge of English. There are a lot of Saudi students in school embarrassed while they are speaking English from making mistakes in public, and I have noticed that from my experience at school. The Saudi people are very sociable, and because of that, we teach the students the skill of communicating with other people. Furthermore, there is a need for this skill to complete a job interview after high school. Moreover, there is an urgent necessity for developing speaking English through oral presentation because there are a lot of Saudi English teachers communicate by the Arabic language in English classroom, so there are fewer chances for the students to listen and speak English.

There are examples that all people in the world will need excellent speaking skills. The first example is that there is a pressing need for people to speak English well in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. If we want to achieve The Saudi vision 2030 depends on the development of language skills because it is one of the essential factors in global trade. We then should present our country to them in the right way by having good speaking skills in English confidently. The second example is that the Saudi teacher plays the central role in teaching and controls everything in the classroom environment while the students are listening for teachers, and their participation is limited in the classroom to increase their speaking level.

The impact on my target population is Saudi Arabian students. There is a lot of research that acknowledges that for English Language Learners (ELL) to acquire English, they must engage in oral language practice and take advantage of the opportunity to use language in meaningful ways for social and academic goals. Proper Language skills help students to concentrate on pronunciation. Besides, presentations also allow students to become teachers. Oral Presentations are a marvelous way for students to attain competence in all language skills

speaking, listening to communicate with English speakers in writing and reading to better the opportunity to careers; also, they build confidence. Oral Presentations is a skill that most people will need in the workforce. I find that students who are good presenters are better communicators, since they can form and express their ideas clearly, and all of these aims will be accomplished by taking one presentation class per week for High school students.

2 Literature review

English as a second language classroom is presumably the sole area for students in Saudi Arabia to practice English. It is a big issue and obstacle to attaining desired language results. For example, all English foreign learner countries, and Saudi Arabia is part of them, suffer from a deficiency of getting authentic exposure to English outside the classroom for practicing English language speaking skills. This issue raises the essential role of practicing English, which will provide the students with the chance to master speaking proficiency. We need to provide the best conditions for English Language class, and the classroom environment should be given noteworthy consideration to motivate the students to communicate in English as much as they can. Also, the students should try their best to train in English regularly so that they can improve their speaking skills inside the classroom. Consequently, the students will achieve great success because everything is encouraging and motivating for them inside the classroom to show their capabilities. (Alharbi, 2015).

There are some problems related to the rarity of students who practice English before going to university, and that is a real challenge because they will take English speaking. At the same time, they are not good enough in speaking and did not get an adequate opportunity to talk in English while they were studying English at high school (Brook & Gavin &Wilson, 2015).

In Saudi Arabia, the context of learning English as a second language (EFL), instructors often wonder why most of the undergraduate students are incapable of speaking English without hesitation, especially for communication in real situations with international speakers. Also, one of the several reasons to take into consideration could be a lack of confidence in terms of worrying about making mistakes (Boonkit, 2010).

There is a problem related to teaching English in Saudi Arabia, which is 69% of Saudi teachers speak the Arabic language in English language classrooms. They make the unacceptable excuse, which is saving classroom time to explain by using their native language and, as a result, for using Arabic is the students that will not have the chance to practice English and develop their speaking skills. That problem should be solved by the ministry of education by informing the English language teachers not to use the Arabic language in the lessons except when there is a necessity (Alharbi, 2015).

The Saudi vision has a great connection to develop the student's speaking skills because communicative forms assist persons in communicating and interpreting all through a period of time the meetings and anything else associated with job conversations as well as if the companies want to be successful in the market, they must pay great attention to the language of business (AL Zahrani, 2017).

Another issue occurring in Saudi classrooms is that some teachers play a central role in hindering student's language acquisition. Their desires, methods, and instructions control everything that happens in the classroom, and they usually lecture most of the time. Teachers are the only ones who get benefit from this situation. In contrast, teachers should simplify the

Process of knowledge in the classroom – not be transmitters. In other words, during observation, teachers should support and assist students in finding out themselves and discover their paths.

Moreover, Saudi's educational system aims must react to international needs for English language proficiency. English proficiency is no longer simply a sign of social status only. As English is now the irrefutable language of science all over the world, Saudi students need English to access an enormous variety of fields and domains. English language proficiency is also essential to success in business, international trade, and academic life and publishing as it allows speakers to keep track of the newest developments and articulate one's identity to the whole world (Al Harbi, 2015).

There are a lot of benefits to developing speaking skills for high school students. First, the students will enhance their abilities to make something clearer or easier to understand as well as they will have the capability to understand the people ideas, beliefs or images the people have for example, the students will practice another skill with speaking which is listening while their classmates are performing their presentations or practicing English in general in classroom. These skills are the primary communication factors in life and associated with the future jobs when the students need to interview when applying for a job or communicate with friends or any members in the society or even with the foreign people who will visit our country (Milner & Milner & Mitchell, 2012).

Also, learning and applying speaking skills depends on communicative methods in the process of learning language, including the role of teachers, and the interaction of teaching and learning is an effective way to increase speaking skills efficiency (Patiung, Tolla, Anshari & Dolla, 2015). There are significant advantages of storytelling to simplify EFL speaking, such as reading novels, short stories; after that, the students will summarize the events in novels through oral presentations (Hwang, Shadiev, Hsu, Huang, & Lin, 2016).

Implementation Plan

Saudi high school students have limited English Language-speaking skills because they are not given opportunities to use spoken English due to current instructional practices. Students are not able to experience giving oral presentations in their classes. The classroom atmosphere is dull, and it does not encourage the students to be creative and show their talents. The best way to motivate students to acquire English-speaking skills is by doing gaming, role-playing, and connecting oral presentations with a favorite short story or novel that will spark their interest in learning. The implementation plan will describe the curriculum on how to make this a successful program.

Goals:

   1- To foster high school student's English-speaking skills through oral presentations at AL-Hassan Al-Basri High School in Rafha City Schools.

Objectives:

   1-In the oral presentations class, I will instruct students on strategies on how to do oral presentations.
   2-I will provide students with activities that help them think critically and build their self-confidence.
   3-To help students to communicate in the community and the world place.

Objective	Activities	Roles	Timeline
1- Instruct students on how to do oral presentations.	Oral Presentation strategy of the week, which will include short videos of effective oral presentation skills as well as successful presenters to demonstrate the importance of eye contact, body language, and other skills that will enhance their presentation.	**Teacher**: Provide sources and clear instructions **Students**: Listening & reviewing the instructions	Bi-Weekly
2- Provide students with activities that help them think critically and build their self-confidence.	Story-telling, role-play picture-describing, simulation, re-enact a scene in the movie	**Teacher**: Observe and support **Students**: Applying the required tasks	Bi-weekly
3-Provide opportunities for students to communicate in their community and the world.	Students will create short videos about real-world topics and interactions in the community. Conduct interviews with community members.	**Teacher**: Act as an organizer & facilitator **Students**: Applying the required tasks	Throughout the academic year

Timeline details are demonstrated below:

Period: One year for all high school grades.

Timelines: The class will be once each week on the following schedule: Each week, we will cover a topic that will allow students to improve their communication skills. I will start each week with a demonstration. Throughout the course, one week, I will introduce a skill, and the next week I will provide students opportunities to apply the skill by doing oral presentations, role-play, picture-describing, etc.

Week 1 Skill: Eye contact

- Week 2: Applying eye contact - Making different types of conversation individually or with peers
- Week 3 Skill: Gestures
- Week 4: Applying both eye contact and gestures in discussions about their daily life experiences or other topics that interest them.

We will apply new skills each week building to the point that the students will be able to speak confidently and present their ideas to the rest of the class. Students will rehearse for a few weeks,

And at the end of the year, students will give their final presentations from their short stories that I gave them at the beginning of the year.

Evaluation Plan

The main goal of this paper is to find ways to improve Saudi students' level in English, especially speaking skills through oral presentations. To reach this goal, we need to start creating English classes once a week on oral presentations in high school, and we will apply new skills each week building to the point that the students will be able to speak confidently and present their ideas to the rest of the class and that will help Saudi students to improve their level of proficiency and foster English speaking skills particularly. To evaluate the outcomes of this project, qualitative and quantitative tools will be used.

I will use some points of the oral presentation Evaluation form after each presentation. The first oral presentation students give at the beginning of the year will serve as the pretest. I will use the Oral Presentation Evaluation Form (Appendix 1) to collect baseline data. Students presenters will receive immediate feedback, and teachable moments will become part of the schedule throughout the class. I will also use the Oral Presentation Evaluation Form (Appendix 1) as the post-test for the final oral presentation at the end of the year to collect data to show students' growth.

I will use another way that is based on Peer Assessment of performances in (Appendix 2), which can cover both content and delivery. For students giving oral presentations, peer response provides students with assistance in the following areas:

• Each student has a better idea of how effectively they reached their audience.

• Students learn from each other's presentation skills.

- Oral In-Class Peer Evaluation: -

• First, I will set up class ground rules for peer inputs. Student participation displays a shared process that allows students to feel comfortable with making and receiving more in-depth feedback. Also, set time limits and make students accountable for their responses.

• Ask the students to take notes during the oral presentation.

• After the presentation, the speaker should be the first to share. He should start with what he thinks went well, then discuss what he would do differently, and finish with what he would like to assess.

• Start class discussion, begin with reactions to the speaker's concerns.

• First, discuss what went well and then provide suggestions. Break this section into content and delivery to get enough comments on each.

When students are giving oral presentations, classmates will provide evaluations:

• Give every student a better idea of how effectively they reached their audience.

• Encourage active listening from the full class.

• Help students in learning from each other's presentation skills. (Hall, 2007).

I will let my students do oral presentations after two weeks. It is going to be about daily life or some situation that happened on weekends or any favorite things such as a football game and they will talk about it for two to three minutes. At the end of the year, they will do the final oral presentation from the short story that they have read, which I gave them at the beginning of the year, and I will evaluate them in two different ways either in Appendix 1 or Appendix 2 or use both of them. I will use the Oral Presentation Evaluation Form (Appendix1) as a pretest and as the post-test for the final oral presentation. I will use Appendix 2 once each month, allowing students to receive feedback from their peers.

To sum up, the anticipated finding of this conversion is to improve Saudi students' speaking-English skills. Saudi students need more exposure to the language to master it.

Doing oral presentations class weekly for the high school students will be a fantastic solution to become fluent in English and overcome the obstacle of having a conversation in English.

Objective	Activities	Roles	Timeline
1-Evaluate student oral communication skills	Observe students' communication skills (including body language, eye contact, spoken language, etc.)	**Teacher:** Evaluating **Students:** Presenting	Bi-Weekly
2- Students will evaluate their peers' spoken English language	Collect results from Oral In-Class Peer Evaluation Form (Appendix 2)	**Teacher:** Collecting & Analyzing the results **Students:** Evaluating their peer's performance	Bi-weekly
3- Evaluate student Pre and Post oral communication assessment (presentation, spoken language, and communication skills)	Collect results from Oral Presentation Evaluation Form (Appendix 1) to complete a comparative analysis	**Teacher & Native English Speaker:** Evaluating students' performance	Beginning and end of the academic year

Results

This paper focused on Saudi Arabia as an example of an EFL context and diagnosed the dilemma concerning Saudi students' English-speaking proficiency. It also explored ways to improve students' communication skills**.** The expected outcomes from doing an oral

presentation class weekly for high school students will promote students to become fluent in English and overcome the obstacle of having a conversation in English.

Applying this strategy will provide the students with the chance to engage in oral language practice and take advantage of the opportunity to use language in a meaningful way for social and academic goals. English is now the undisputed language of science worldwide; Saudi students hopefully have access to a wide range of fields and domains and to be successful in business, international trade, and publishing as it allows speakers to follow the latest developments and articulate one's identity to the whole world. Proper Language skills help students to concentrate on pronunciation. Additionally, presentations will also allow students to become educators. Oral Presentations are an excellent way for students to achieve proficiency in four English language skills areas: speaking and listening, successful communication with English speakers, reading and writing, and access in contribution to various careers.

Oral presentations build student confidence, help relieve anxiety, and promote critical thinking. Oral Presentations help students develop speaking skills they will need in the workforce. Students who are good presenters are better communicators since they can form and express their ideas clearly. It is hoped that most students will get a good score in speaking skills in ILETS. I expect that most of my students will improve their communication skills, such as eye contact and physical gestures, when they do an oral presentation. Implementing this project will improve students' motivation to learn English and change their attitude toward speaking a new language. I expect that the students will have the self-awareness that making mistakes should not be a scary issue for students; instead, students should see mistakes as a natural part of the learning process. Also, applying some techniques like role-playing or interviews in oral presentations classes hopefully encourages shy students to participate and discuss their opinions with their classmates instead of only with teachers.

The next step from meeting expected results is that I will inform the principal and supervisor about the success of the program. After seeing the expected results in the classroom, the program could then be extended to the rest of the classes and grades in my school, then to the rest of the schools in my district, and may be used by other content areas as well as English.

If my project does not meet these anticipated expectations, I will do a survey among my students to understand the difficulties that hinder them from doing the oral presentations. And I will meet with the teachers, principals, and supervisors to discuss other methods on how to improve this project. This researcher will conduct more research on the improvement of English-speaking skills in Saudi Arabia.

Conclusion

In Saudi Arabia, various factors contribute to the low competence of English speaking skills. Currently, students do not have enough opportunities to practice oral communication skills in the classroom, nor do they have the chance to converse with their peers to continue their dialogue of the language. The lack of speaking English hampers students' ability to be effective in the classroom. This paper recognizes the causes of Saudi students' low proficiency in English communication and provides a suggestion to solve this problem. Implementing an English language oral presentation class for high school students will enhance their English language speaking proficiency skills. To ensure that this class is useful for our students, I will

evaluate the outcomes of one class weekly that focused on oral presentations using two methods: either by Oral Presentation Evaluation form or Oral In-class Peer Evaluation.

Finally, this class will assist students in speaking confidently and fluently by applying functional communication skills. Improving English speaking skills will provide students the opportunity to score higher on assessment tests such as the ILETS or TOEFL. I also anticipate that this project will help students attain a better career after high school. They will be able to handle interviews more effectively. Overall, the goal is to improve student's attitudes towards communicating orally in English and assist them in understanding the importance of effective English communication in their daily lives.

References

[1] Boonkit, K. (2010). Enhancing the development of speaking skills for non-native speakers of English. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *2*(2), 1305-1309. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.191

[2] Brooks, G., & Wilson, J. (2014). Using oral presentations to improve students' English language skills. Kwansei Gakuin University Humanities Review, 19(1), 199-212. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324217578_Using_oral_presentations_to_improve_students'_English_language_skills

[3] Alharbi, H. A. (2015). Improving students' English speaking proficiency in Saudi public schools. International Journal of Instruction, 8(1), 105-116. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2015.818a

[4] Alzahrani, A. (2017). Markets and language policy in Saudi Arabia: how the English language can contribute to the success of the Saudi vision 2030. International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research, 5(6), 1-12. https://www.eajournals.org/journals/international-journal-of-english-language-and-linguistics-research-ijellr/vol-5-issue-6-december-2017/markets-language-policy-saudi-arabia-english-language-can-contribute-success-saudi-vision-2030/

[5] Milner, J. O., Milner, L. F., & Mitchell, J. F. (2011). Bridging English. Pearson College Division.

[6] Patiung, D., Tolla, A., Anshari, A., & Dolla, A. (2015). The study of learning speaking skills based on communicative approach. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 6(5), 1093. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0605.23

[7] Hwang, W., Shadiev, R., Hsu, J., Huang, Y., Hsu, G., & Lin, Y. (2014). Effects of storytelling to facilitate EFL speaking using web-based multimedia system. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 29(2), 215-241. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2014.927367

[8] Hall, P. (2007). How to Use and Evaluate Student Speaking & Oral Presentations in the Classroom. Speaking, Arguing & Writing Program, 538-3428. https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/saw/docs/evaluating_speaking_guidelines_spring2006.pdf .

[9] Al-Sobhi, B. M. S., & Preece, A. S. (2018). Teaching English Speaking Skills to the Arab Students in the Saudi School in Kuala Lumpur: Problems and Solutions. International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies, 6(1), 1. doi: 10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.6n.1p.1

[10] Ferlazzo, L., & Sypnieski, K. H. (2018, April 17). How to Use Oral Presentations to Help English Language Learners Succeed. Retrieved from https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/50918/how-to-use-oral-presentations-to-help-english-language-learners-succeed

Appendices

Oral Presentation Evaluation Form: - Appendix 1

Speaker_____Topic_____ Time _____

Delivery	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	N/A (Not Applicable)
Introduction clear and interesting	3	2	1	
A related topic to the audience	3	2	1	
Used standard English grammar	3	2	1	
Communicated sincerity & enthusiasm	3	2	1	
Maintained strong eye-contact	3	2	1	
Avoided distracting mannerisms	3	2	1	
Presented visual aids well	3	2	1	
Seemed knowledgeable & confident	3	2	1	
Ended on a strong note	3	2	1	
Completed speech within the time limit	3	2	1	
Content: -				
Clear thesis	3	2	1	
Main points well-organized	3	2	1	
Used supporting evidence & examples	3	2	1	
Written Work: -				
Outline well-written and complete	3	2	1	

Additional Comments: **(Instructor will add his comments) :**

Appendix 2- Peer Evaluation