

<https://doi.org/10.29013/EJEAP-23-1-23-29>

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CHALLENGES IN SPEAKING AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A CASE STUDY

Abstract. The basic purpose of SLA learners is to be proficient user in communication and the last major goal of SLA is to achieve high career in one sphere. Speaking skill is the bright example of learned a foreign language. Most of the English learners have challenges with oral language. However, they have plethora vocabulary base, their speaking level are much lower than other aspects: listening, writing, reading and grammar. It is an arduous task to develop the ability of speaking in L2. There are noticeable problems and reasons of speaking aspect and this case study discusses the most encountered problems with reasons and strategies to develop it as an example of one SLA learner.

Keywords: second language acquisition, foreign language, mother tongue, speaking, problem.

Introduction

Second language acquisition is also called sequential language acquisition. Almost every person learns L1 from infancy period. SLA is learning foreign language accept their mother tongue. Briefly explaining, SLA is learning a new language consciously paying attention to grammar, aspects, structures and use of language in various conditions after L1 acquisition. For instance, Uzbek child knows Uzbek language already and goes to Russian offered school. Humanity is eligible to learn L2 at any age. L2 learning connects people to a new atmosphere different from their living conditions.

Literature Review

Generally thinking, speaking is the most significant aspect of language. Because, language users do not need complex grammar structures, too academic vocabulary and professional writing abilities in everyday life. Such kind of formal language elements are vital for specific area of study or work. But, it is challenging to stand without communication. According to Bygate (1987), speaking is the first attention needed skill. Littlewood (1981) stated that people firstly begin to evaluate L2 knowledge according to speaking skills not from language forms. Bygate (1987) claimed the difference between language knowledge and ability to use it. Furthermore, the

concept of competence by Chomsky shows the importance of actual language in concrete conditions by speaker-hearer's knowledge.

1. Teaching speaking

The notion of Speaking ability includes not only utilization of correct grammar rules, but also more broaden skills developed sub-skills pragmatics, social interaction, functions and mechanisms. Goal of teaching shouldn't be to be eligible in communication, vice versa, lessons should be taught in communicative method. Therefore, EFL methodology used by teachers are being emphasized to improve fluency rather than accuracy in contemporary education. Teachers are not in the center of the classroom, since students-centered activities give a chance learning through experience by self-realization. Awareness raising activities, controlled activities and autonomous activities are typical classification of SLA classroom.

2. Oral language learning

Oral language can be developed in any time, anywhere. Improving orality from the beginning of SLA creates a chance to achieve fluency as well as other aspects. Students should be taught to use a foreign language in their daily use such roll call, talk with peers, distribution and collection of learning materials and so on. Results can be observed after a long time by training spontaneous. Vocabulary knowledge should

be developed and enriched consciously, from early childhood without break. Vocabulary is the key point of oral language, lack of vocabulary leads other problematic conditions in SLA. Oral language is a foundation of other aspects: reading, writing and listening.

3. Problems and their factors in speaking

Most of the foreign language learners find speaking part as the most challenging. According to investigations of 12 international students in Australia, Sawir (2005) admitted that conversation in English had considered challenging even though they were learning for years and already gained other aspects of language. Lee (2009) exemplified that graduate students who were living USA and still encountered issues in speaking, especially in the whole class discussions. Hosni (2014) claimed that despite of learner long time gained knowledge, oral language is the continuous challenge.

Lukitasari (2008) identified that vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation are the most faced barriers to be effective user of FL. These elements of speaking, plays a major role on fluency and provide self-confidence. Learners always complain bad oral language without realizing their own errors. However, they have been learning SLA for a long time, their almost all language skills are not good as they said. Lack of vocabulary, always makes people irritated due to remember appropriate word for situation. Learners often have fossilization cases, grammar knowledge of them is not enough, that's why they use L1 rules or overgeneralize one grammar structure.

Furthermore, FL learners have an inclination to have a fear doing mistakes, as a result they prefer not speak than speaking with errors in order to avoid enrolling in uncomfortable situations. It was defined by Ozkan, Bada and Genc (2011) that pronunciation is the significant ability and creates much more difficulties for non-native speakers.

Participant profile

For this case study project, I choose my nephew. His name is Muhammadazim and a 16-year-old 10th grade schoolboy. As a teenager, he can't draw atten-

tion to SLA because of phone games addiction. He has been learning English sometimes actively and sometimes passively, since 2013, however challenges in SLA is mostly related to speaking aspect. His vocabulary is enough to speak and deliver his knowledge, but they are in his passive vocabulary. He should learn to put his gained knowledge into practice. As we live together I know his knowledge in every subject and in English he knows better, but not appropriate level to his age and studying period. His level is pre-intermediate. Mostly laziness and environmental factors are slowing down participant's speed of EFL learning. More practice should be done to in speaking ability in order to correct grammar and sentence structure mistakes, burst vocabulary range, pronunciation section and to be involved in English conversations.

Actually, he knows Russian and advanced user. Although only Uzbek language is spoken in their home sphere, he has learned Russian in the street by communication style friends from childhood. In order to learn Russian language academically, his parents directed him to Russian offered school. In conclusion, he learned consciously and unconsciously.

Research design

This study is a research problem case study. Sunder (1981) stated that case studies' outcomes provide events, surveys, details to deeply understand an issue or object. Additionally, it is an ability to select extensive data to explore in specific field (Creswell, 2008). Mesec (1998) described a case study as a description and analysis of unique case in order to reach concrete notion with variables, forms, interaction between participants, performance of them. Another major point is that case study is used to highlight a progress in researching area which may be improved or forgotten depending on time and place.

This case study tried to present the second language acquisition as the category of speaking aspect. As English has already admitted as a world language, many non-native countries try to improve English knowledge, gaining good communication skills are

mostly appreciated. However, learners have been facing numerous challenges in SLA. That's why I choose to emphasize speaking skills and problems related to it. In Uzbekistan, as a learner and young English teacher, I observed continuous and difficult challenges in learners speaking ability, despite of long-term education. I tried to show some of these problems as an example of my nephew.

As research design, I chose interview design. Speaking demands longer period to improve and always, there is a question: Why my speaking ability is still unsatisfactory even though I have been learning for a long time? That's why, I wanted to analyze speaking ability with long-time learner. By interviewing, I can be aware of previous and present developmental points of participant.

In addition to this, I tried to identify problems change and I prepared check test on comparing with 2 years old knowledge of participant in English and today's. It helps to set long-term goals for EFL learners and assessment of their own action of learning process.

Data collection and Findings

The participant was interviewed with prepared questions related to English language acquisition and that helped to catch challenges on speaking skill.

Interview design questions:

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
2. You have been taught English since you were 5th grade. Is it true?
3. Do you think learning English is important in Uzbekistan?
4. Are you satisfied your English knowledge?
5. Do you think your speaking skill is good?
6. In which English skill are you good at? (listening, reading, writing)
7. In your classroom, does your teacher pay attention to improve pupil's speaking ability?
8. What do you think? What are the main reasons of poor speaking?
9. Speaking in foreign language is difficult. Do you agree?

10. Do you think culture has an effect on learning foreign languages?

11. Is it difficult to learn English in our country? If yes, why?

12. If you have a chance to learn English in real atmosphere where would you go?

Speaker 2

Okay. Mohamed, how are you?

Speaker 1

As usual.

Speaker 2

Okay, good. Now I want to give you some questions related to your study, especially English. So can I ask?

Speaker 1

Yes, of course.

Speaker 2

Can you tell me a little about yourself?

Speaker 1

Okay. My name is Rohan and I'm 16 years old. I'm learning the International House of Dashcam. I have took five points for miles and I like sports and it's my hobby and I like drawing too, doing pictures.

Speaker 2

Very good. You have been taught English since your fifth grade. Is it true?

Speaker 1

No. At school we start with English license in the fifth class, but I started to English when I was eight years old.

Speaker 2

Some understood. Okay. Do you think learning English is important in Pakistan?

Speaker 1

Yes. It's necessary in Pakistan because English communication is becoming very important nowadays. Yes, it's modern. We need it in our future also. And in my profession, I need English. It's very impossible for me to me.

Speaker 2

Okay. Are you satisfied your English knowledge?

Speaker 1

I think no.

Speaker 2

Why?

Speaker 1

Because I have a lot of problems and they wish I have a problem in my speech. And Gary and in speaking grammar is also hard.

Speaker 2

Okay. In which English skills? Are you good at listening? Reading.

Speaker 1

I'm better in listening.

Speaker 2

Understood. In your classroom. Does your teacher pay attention to improve people speaking ability?

Speaker 1

No, she doesn't give an attention because people are a lot of purpose and I'm closer and teachers one. She can't give an attention to each people. That is why we do a lot of exercise as homework.

Speaker 2

Okay. Writing, exercise or really exercise?

Speaker 1

We do only rise exercise.

Speaker 2

Okay. What do you think? What are the main reasons of for speaking.

Speaker 1

Passport speaking cause the both are because in his Vixen we don't have and English atmosphere. And as the streets people don't talk in English. The dog on whose car in the Russian.

Speaker 2

Speaking in foreign language is difficult. Do you agree?

Speaker 1

Yes, it's very difficult. But Russian is more easy for you. Yes.

Speaker 2

Okay. This encounter has an effect on learning foreign language.

Speaker 1

Maybe. No, it doesn't affect.

Speaker 2

No. Is it difficult to learn English in our country?

Speaker 1

Yes, it's very difficult.

Speaker 2

Why? Why do you think so?

Speaker 1

Now I said that we don't have an English atmosphere in Pakistan and people don't talk in English, the streets and at school we don't talk in English and teachers don't talk in English. They speak in spec or in Russian during the lesson.

Speaker 2

Okay. Wild last question. If you have a chance to learn English in real atmosphere, where would you go?

Speaker 1

I would go to the USA or United Kanban and I like to and I would like to go to the Australia.

Speaker 2

Why?

Speaker 1

Australia is a very beautiful country. In my opinion, there is where hot and I like it.

Speaker 2

You mean you like hot water conditions?

Speaker 1

No, I like rain.

Speaker 2

Okay. Otherwise you may go Korean in autumn or spring. Okay.

Speaker 1

In Korea?

Speaker 2

Yeah. Thank you. Mohammadism for your extension and answers.

According to interview, Muhammadazim has some speaking problems. Firstly, he has some listening and catching meaning challenges. In some cases, questions were not understandable at first but tried to answers at least one sentence. He has vocabulary knowledge but can not use synonyms, antonyms. He did repetitions a lot and some gram-

mar mistakes. Overall, except some difficulties, he can explain his ideas or feelings easily. The plus point is that he can realize his own mistakes and deficiencies. Mostly, his communication skills were influenced by lack of knowledge in given topics and lack of attention to details. If he practices speaking a lot, he can be good speaker. Generally

speaking, he is good learner, but he may be better EFL learner if we take years of learning into consideration.

In order to identify status of challenges in the field of speaking, I gave a table with the instruction. These methods helped to identify major problems and teacher can use it to fulfill students' challenges.

Table 1. – Linguistic factors of difficulties in English speaking. Put “+” according to your experience 2019

Challenges	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
Vocabulary			+	
Grammar		+		
Pronunciation			+	
Sentence organization				+
Influence of mother tongue		+		
Expression of ideas				+

Table 2. – Linguistic factors of difficulties in English speaking.
Put “+” according to your experience

Challenges	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
Vocabulary		+		
Grammar		+		
Pronunciation		+		
Sentence organization				+
Influence of mother tongue				+
Expression of ideas				+

Table 1 shows that Muhammadazim improved his linguistic related problems, however he still has difficulties with grammar. In the future, he should

draw attention to vocabulary and pronunciation sections in order to achieve advanced user status.

Table 3. – Psychological factors of difficulties in English speaking.
Put “+” according to your experience 2019

Challenges	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
Fear of making mistakes			+	
Peer pressure	+			
Fear of teacher penalty			+	
Anxiety	+	+		
Age related chelleng		+		
Lack of self-confidence				

Table 4. – Psychological factors of difficulties in English speaking.
Put “+” according to your experience

Challenges	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
1	2	3	4	5
Fear of making mistakes				+
Peer pressure		+		

1	2	3	4	5
Fear of teacher penalty				+
Anxiety				+
Age related chelleng				+
Lack of self-confidence				+

Table 5. – Enveronmental factors of difficulties in English seaking. Put “+” according to your experinece according fo knowlegein 2019

Challenges	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Lack of English conversation	+			
Lack of support		+		
Lack of practice	+			
Lack of lessons	+			
Insufficient recourses (text books)	+			
Low participation in class				+

Table 6. – Enveronmental factors of difficulties in English seaking. Put “+” according to your experinece according

Challenges	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Lack of English conversation			+	
Lack of support			+	
Lack of practice			+	
Lack of lessons			+	
Insufficient recourses (text books)	+			
Low participation in class				+

According to Table 1 in 2019 and 2021, we can notice that psychological factors of speaking difficulties almost improved during two years.

Table 3 clarified why speaking skill of participant still include challenges. In 2019, Muhammad-

azim has suffered from environmental factors and during two years he could overcome them nearly. Now, he does not pay attention to surrounded factors such as peers, teacher and tries to speak.

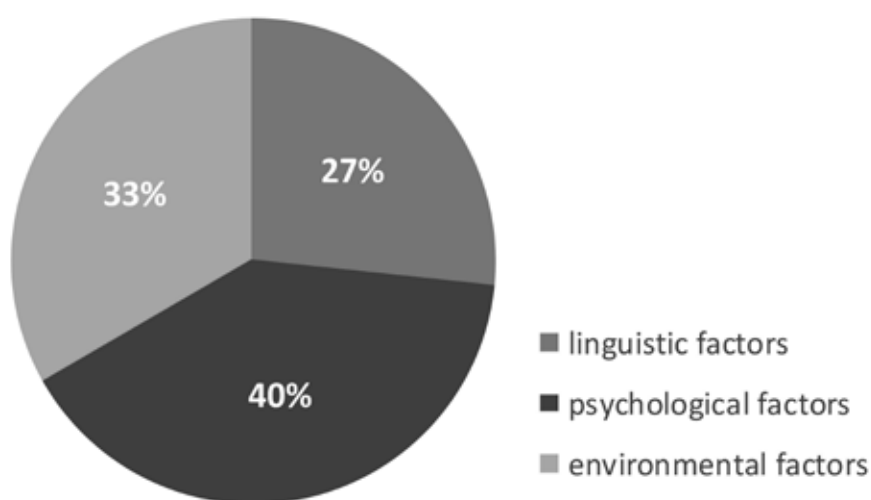


Figure 1. Percentages of 3 types of factors of speaking problems in 2019

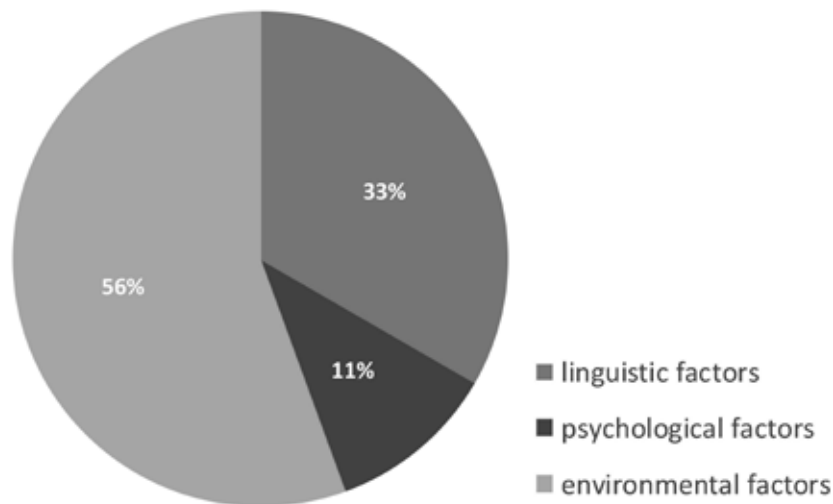


Figure 2. Percentages of 3 types of factors of speaking problems in 2021

It is clear that rather than linguistic factors, psychological and environmental factors made up the major proportions of speaking problems.

Conclusion

In this case study, problems with speaking ability and language acquisition were highlighted. According to the research findings, EFL learners face various problems in speaking.

The most ordinary problem among students is having lack of vocabulary, expressing ideas and lack of practice. Psychological and environmental factors

are main causes of problems. Also, as an example of participant, I witnessed to these conclusions.

Unfortunately, education systems are still based on written grammatical exercises. After graduating high schools, students consider speaking as a challenging and avoid to talk in English. They are not used to do communication directed tasks and understanding lecturers will be problematic. To tackle with such kind of situations, they should be taught to communicate step-by-step attempts from early teaching and learning period.

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