

Research Article

Developing Uzbek Student-Teachers' Proficiency in Speaking English at the University Level

Zafar Kholkhodjaevich Abdullaev^a, Isanova Visola^b

^aLecturer, Head of Department of Foreign Languages in Social and Humanitarian Sciences, Jizzakh State Pedagogical Institute

^bAssistant Teacher, Department of Foreign Languages in Social and Humanitarian Sciences, Jizzakh State Pedagogical Institute

Email: ^azafarabdulla@gmail.com, ^bisanovavisola@jspi.uz

Abstract

This research work is in response to the immense need for fluent and proficient English teachers in Uzbekistan. In recognition of the importance of English as a world language, it is needed that our students develop communication skills so that they can be proficient users of the target language in professional and academic fields. However, it is observed that a majority of Uzbek teachers in various schools tend to use a generous amount of Uzbek in teaching English. This in turn affects their students who, after studying English at school level and college level, cannot speak English properly and communicate effectively in real-life situations. This observation led to the assumption that something is inadequate in preparing Uzbek student-teachers.

Keywords: *Second Language Acquisition, CLT, lingua franca, intercultural competence, language awareness*

Introduction

This study aims at investigating the difficulties that influence Uzbek student teachers' proficiency in speaking English on one hand and examining the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching Approach as a means of developing their ability to speak the language confidently and fluently on the otherhand. Consequently, the study has two stages, i.e. investigation stage and interventionstage. The findings obtained from the two stages join hand in hand to providepractical implications for the teachers and student-teachers' in Higher Education of Uzbekistan.The report of this study is divided into the following areas:

- an introduction;
- a review of related literature;
- data analysis; and
- The findings and suggestions to be implemented.

This paper at first covers a discussion of second language learning, a historical overview of the various teaching methods, and issues related to the teaching of English language in Uzbekistan. The rationale for the study, its objectives, research questions, and the hypotheses are stated here. There are different definitions of the term 'second language learning', however, it can be broadly defined to include the learning of any language other than the learner's native language or mother tongue, at any level, provided only that the learning of the 'second' language takes place sometime later than the acquisition of the first language (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). For some linguists, a distinction should also be made between 'second language learning' and 'second language acquisition'. The term 'acquisition' is used to refer to picking up a second language through exposure, whereas the term 'learning' is used to refer to the conscious and planned study of that language. As a result, there has been a debate on the distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Much of that debate revolves around positions attributed to Stephen Krashen (1981). Needless to say that learning a second language has many benefits on the personal level, in terms of community, and pragmatically as well. On a personal level, learning a second language exposes people to the customs of an entirely different group of people and expands their views into a deeper understanding of how other people think. In terms of community, learning a second language will also increase understanding and compassion for other cultures. Pragmatically, with the advent of globalization, knowing a second language is almost a requirement of the job-seeking professional and sharing information and culture. New research by the UK Subject Centre for Languages (2004) has identified more than 700 reasons to study languages. It concludes that the strongest of these reasons are the personal benefits and enjoyment that people gain from learning a language. The reasons cover themes such as citizenship; communication; economic, social and political dimensions; democracy; diversity; employability; environmental sustainability; equal opportunities; globalization; identity; intercultural competence; international dimension; key skills; language awareness; mobility; multilingualism; personal and social development of the individual and values (Gallagher-Brett, 2004). However, in the context of Uzbek students it could be claimed that the reasons for learning any language other than Uzbek are summarized as follows:

- Work
- Travelling and studying abroad
- Immigration

Uzbekistan is a bilingual country in which Uzbek and Russian is the medium of study and communication. People in Uzbekistan look at English language from different perspectives. The overwhelming part of society looks at English as a foreign language that should be learnt just for specific purposes (ESP). As a result, it should be spoken only in the contexts of those purposes. Some people have hostile attitude towards languages of the West in general and English language in particular as a reflection of their economic and political beliefs. For them, such languages should be neither learnt nor spoken. It could be assumed that a few number of Uzbek people learn English for its sake, i.e. for advancement or to know the culture of other societies. One of the most widely recognized facts about second language learning is that some individuals are more successful in learning a second language than others. One might be surprised when some learners acquire a second language with relative ease and others find it difficult to master though both are exposed to the same input. As a

result, the main challenge for the concerned researchers has been to explain not just success with L2 and foreign languages but also failure. Most researchers pursuing this line of inquiry have looked at affective factors on L2 learning. These factors can be divided into language factors and non-language factors. In spite of this classification and the fact that each factor is discussed separately, it is important to realize that each of them affects the other in a dynamic process and it is impossible to come to exact conclusions about the effect of any of the factors in isolation. The following factors greatly influence the L2 learning either positively or negatively. Though Uzbek students learn English for eleven years at school level and for four years at university level, in case of those who join English departments, a majority of them cannot speak properly and communicate effectively. It is observed that a majority of the Uzbek student-teachers, though having a good knowledge of grammar and a wide vocabulary, find it difficult to speak English. One assumption is that in the course of preparing Uzbek student-teachers to become teachers of English, little attention is paid to speaking skill. As a result, when they become teachers they start using a generous amount of Uzbek in teaching English and spend most of the class time on teaching grammar, vocabulary, reading and almost ignoring speaking skills. It is also hypothesized that the failure of the Uzbek student-teachers in speaking English is due to inefficient methods of teaching in Higher Education and textbooks used in teaching speaking in the pre-service teacher preparation courses. In order to develop proficiency in speaking English and make it more effective and realistic, the problems of Uzbek student-teachers need to be extensively addressed. The present study is an attempt to account for the difficulties of Uzbek student-teachers in speaking English in order to enable the learners to speak fluently and confidently in the target language. The objectives of the study can be listed as follows:

- To identify the factors that prevent Uzbek student-teachers from using the English language orally.
- To tryout different strategies that could help the learners overcome the problems they face in speaking the target language.
- To influence and bring about a change in the attitude of the learners towards the target language to enable them speak confidently.

For the objectives to be achieved, the following research questions need to be answered in the study:

- 1) Why is the students' proficiency in speaking English low?
- 2) Can the use of Communicative Language Teaching Approach help to develop fluency in speech in English?

Literature review

In this part, some basic issues related to the nature of speaking, its importance, its relation to the other skills and the difficulties faced in learning, teaching and testing speaking are discussed in the light of the related literature. This part goes beyond the discussion of related literature to reviewing the materials used in teaching speaking in Uzbekistan and some other countries. In the literature, there is some overlap between the terms 'speaking' and 'speaking proficiency'. This overlap springs from the lack of operational definitions which determine the distinction between the two terms obviously? The term 'speaking' is used to mean different things. It means oral production if speaking is listed as one of the four language skills.

Learners of foreign languages as well as a big number of teachers if asked to give the meaning of speaking would probably say 'producing speech'. The other meaning of the word is 'oral communication' which implies both production and reception. In language testing, 'speaking' is labeled as productive and receptive but the focus is on oral production. According to Chaney & Burk (1998), speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts". The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English (2008) defines 'speaking' as "the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language". Thus, it cannot be assumed that any vocalizing is speaking and any silent, passive behavior is listening. The Speech Communication Association's (SCA) standards document clarifies the boundaries of what 'speaking' and 'listening' include as the terms are used by the speech communication discipline. So, the problem here is that a precise definition of the term 'speaking' is lacking. The definition of the term 'speaking proficiency' has the same problem. As a result of this confusion, alternative terms for 'speaking proficiency' have been used. One of those terms is 'fluency' which has two senses in the literature ... "a narrow sense" and "a broad sense". The narrow sense refers to 'fluency' as criteria of 'oral proficiency' and the broad sense is 'oral proficiency' itself (Lennon, 1990). The other term relates to the distinction between 'language usage' and 'language use'. The former refers to mastering language system whereas the latter indicates the use of language for communicative purposes. The act of speaking can be divided into genres which include:

- Formal interviews (in relation to job applications)
- Highly ritualized greetings (discussions about weather)
- Transactions (ordering around of food in a restaurant)
- Tutorials at colleges or university
- Arguments
- Chat up lines
- General social chit chat (Thompson, 2003).

If 'speaking proficiency' means how well language is used in communication, the question that arises here is how ESL/EFL learners can arrive at this stage. In answering this question, Nunan (2003) states that ESL/EFL learners should be taught to:

- produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns
- select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter
- organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence
- use language as a means of expressing values and judgments
- use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses

In connection with speaking, there are four levels in the scale: Superior, Advanced, Intermediate and Novice. The three lower levels are divided into three sub levels each: Low, Mid and High. The aim is to show progress at the levels where most foreign language learners are. The level descriptors mention the situations that the learners can cope with and the language activities they can do. They also describe the strong and weak points of their language (Luoma, 2004). On the whole, the scale is long and requires special training to use. Moreover, it is not practically stating strength and weakness in individual learners'

performances. In learning a foreign language, the ability to speak in that language is of crucial importance. It reflects our knowledge of the language and our ability to use that language to express feelings, ideas, thoughts, and knowledge of the world. The main aim of many of the target language learners is to be able to speak to friends, teachers, and visitors in that language. Many language learners and educators regard speaking as the measure of knowing a language. Nunan (1991) wrote "success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language". In addition, it is clearly observed that students who do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak in classroom may soon get demotivated and lose interest in learning. More important than that is the fact that speaking is fundamental to human communication. However, many English teachers still spend the majority of class time on teaching grammar, reading, vocabulary, and writing almost ignoring speaking and listening skills. They do so because the former areas are tested in examinations. Students may have a good knowledge of grammar and a wide vocabulary which they use to pass examinations but they find it more difficult to speak English. Several methods/approaches in language teaching have emerged during the last decades with the aim of developing the quality of language teaching. These methods/approaches differ from the point of view of their emphasis on certain language skills, techniques and procedures used in teaching, the role of teachers and learners. Among the four skills speaking is given a little attention in most of the teaching methods and approaches. Despite its importance, for many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. Speaking in traditional methodologies usually meant repeating after the teacher, memorizing a dialogue, or responding to drills, all of which reflect the sentence-based view of proficiency prevailing in the audio lingual and other drill-based or repetition-based methodologies of the 1970s (Richards, 2008). However, today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills because only in that way students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance.

Research Design

This study was conducted in order to develop a speaking strategy that could enable the learners to become orally proficient in the use of the target language. For this to be achieved, it was crucial to identify the factors that could attribute to the learners' inadequacy in speaking English. Classroom observation, student-teachers' interview, and teacher's interview were used to know such factors. Procedure of the study began with collecting data related to the effective factors influencing Uzbek student-teachers' proficiency in English. This was called investigation stage in which some classes were observed, student-teachers and teachers' interview were conducted.

Case Study

It was proposed, at the outset of the study, to conduct this study at two universities (JSPI and NU) of Higher Education in Jizzakh, Uzbekistan. However, it was found that the student-teachers in JSPI were different from those of NU in terms of educational background, entry level, attitude, and so on. Most of the students in JSPI (English Department) had teachers of

English at basic and secondary education. In addition, they had the opportunity to join private tutorials to develop their English. As a result, their exposure to English was much better than their peers in NU who come mostly from rural areas. The admitted students in this university were those who passed the secondary class with accumulative average not less than 70% whereas students with accumulative average not less than 60% are admitted in JSPI. This information was obtained from the student-teachers' interview during the investigation phase. The involvement of this college was useful in the investigation stage to show that the problems faced by the students are common. However, for the purpose of homogeneity the students of this university were excluded. Hence, the main study was conducted in JSPI.

Data collection

The following section presents an analysis of the data collected in the study as follows:

- Analysis of the materials used in teaching speaking at the selected universities
- Analysis of data from interviews
- Analysis of data from observation

The analysis of the two textbooks used in teaching speaking at the above mentioned universities during the academic year 2020/2021 revealed certain findings which could be classified under six categories: correspondence, use of aids, status of speaking skill, relevance and adequacy, emphasis of speaking tasks, and interaction and allowance of self-expression. The findings are listed below in brief as the discussion is presented in the following chapter:

1. There is no correspondence, to a great extent, between the aims stated by the syllabus and the topics in the texts used in teaching speaking at the three faculties.
2. The texts either include listening tasks but the cassettes/CDs are not available or used, or do not include any listening activity at all.
3. Speaking is almost incorporated with the other skills and language items and takes a small area.
4. Most of the tasks and activities presented are irrelevant and the relevant ones are not adequate.
5. Emphasis is given to accuracy rather than fluency.
6. The tasks/activities do not encourage interaction and do not give space to learners to express themselves.

Analysis of Data from Interviews

As stated earlier both the student-teachers and the teachers at the selected universities were interviewed. The results obtained are as follows:

Results of Student-teachers' Interviews;

Thirty student-teachers were selected from two different universities at English Departments. The selected subjects were the second level students at English Departments who are in their fourth semester. There were six girl students and the rest were boys. They were asked four questions (see Appendix I). The responses were classified into categories according to their frequency of occurrence. Then, a percentage was given to each category (tables 1.1 – 1.5) as follows:

1. Why do you study English?

This question aimed at identifying the interviewees' interests, attitudes and motivation. The responses to this question fall into three categories as shown in table 1.1.

Frequency Percentage

Frequency Percentage		
To be a teacher of English:	26	87%
To be a tourist guide:	1	3%
To communicate with English speakers:	3	10%
Total:	30	100%

Table 1.1. reveals that 90% (87%+3%) have instrumental motivation to study English language, i.e. to get a job. Only 10% have integrative motivation to study English in order to communicate with English speakers.

2. Does any member of your family speak English?

The aim of this question was to find out the family influence. It is based on the assumption that a learner who has someone in the family speaking English might get assistance or get motivated to study English. The responses to this question are shown in table 1.2. below:

Frequency Percentage		
Yes:	3	10%
No:	27	90%
Total:	30	100%

From table 1.2. It is seen clearly that 27 responses (90%) stated that no one can speak English among the family and only 3 responses (10%) stated that one member or more could speak English. Thus, the possibility of getting assistance or developing positive attitude towards English is very rare. In addition, there is no opportunity to practice speaking at home.

3. Does your family encourage you to study English?

This question aimed at exploring another related aspect that can affect the learner's attitude and motivation either positively or negatively, i.e. family's attitude towards English language and English language learning. The responses to this question are shown in table 1.3. below:

Frequency Percentage		
Yes:	28	93%
No:	2	7%
Total:	30	100%

Table 1.3. shows that a very high percentage (93%) of the responses was for the answer 'yes' and very low one (7%) was for the answer 'no'. This is a good indicator of the change in the negative attitude of the Uzbek society towards English.

4. Did you have English teachers at basic and secondary school?

The availability of English teachers at school level is the most effective factor in shaping the learners' background. This question aimed at getting a view of the learners' background and

their exposure to English. The responses to this question fall into four categories as shown in table 1.4.

Frequency Percentage		
Yes:	13	43%
Yes, but they were not specialists in English:	6	20%
We had at secondary school but not at basic:	9	30%
No, we did not have at all:	2	7%
Total:	30	100%

Table 1.4. illustrates that 43% of the respondents had teachers both at Basic and Secondary stages; 20% had teachers at the two stages but they (the teachers) were not specialists in teaching English; 30% had teachers (might be specialists or not) at Secondary stage but did not have teachers at Basic stage; and 7% did not have any teacher (whether specialist or non-specialist) at both of the stages. This means that 57% of the respondents were not exposed to English properly and that they came to college with poor background accordingly.

Results of Teachers' Interviews

The two teachers who teach spoken English at the selected universities were interviewed. They were asked five questions to find out the reasons behind the learners' low proficiency in speaking English, teachers' qualification and teaching styles, and issues related to materials selection and use of aids. A summary of the teachers' responses is presented below.

1. It is noticed that students' level in speaking English is very low. What are the reasons for that in your opinion?

In answering the first question, the responses can be summarized as follows:

- a) Speaking is a neglected skill at schools' and colleges' syllabus and examination.
- b) Students do not have motivation to speak English.
- c) Students, particularly coming from rural areas, did not study English properly or at all at schools so they have very weak background.
- d) The number of students in a given class is too large.
- e) Our society looks at English as a foreign language that shouldn't be spoken except when necessary.

2. What methods and strategies/techniques do you use in teaching speaking?

Regarding this question there was a contradiction between what has been seen by observation and student-teachers' interview and what the teachers claimed. The teachers claimed using strategies and techniques that could help learners and lead them to speak such as giving more time for learners to speak, providing them with various tasks and activities to practice, and use of some teaching aids. However, the interview with the student-teachers and classroom observation revealed that such practices did not exist. In addition, the responses revealed the dominance of the traditional methods of teaching.

3. Do you have the freedom to design/select materials for teaching speaking?

In response to this question, the teachers stated that they have the freedom to select whatever they find suitable to teach. They could also teach previously used materials. However, they did not think of designing materials.

4. Are there audio/visual aids? Do you use them?

Teachers' responses revealed that there are no audio-visual aids and if any they cannot be used or they are rarely used because of several considerations.

Analysis of Data from Observation

The aim of classroom observation was to test the hypothesis that the second cause of students' failure in speaking is the use of inefficient methods of teaching and to find out other related issues. Therefore, two classes in the selected universities have been observed. The duration of each class was one hour though the allotted time for a class is 80 minutes. The main features of the class proposed to be observed included teaching style, tasks and activities used, teacher related issues, interaction, and classroom related issues and so on. Having observed two classes in the mentioned colleges, the researcher listed the following observations briefly here.

1. The chairs and tables are fixed (cannot be moved).
2. There were a large number of students in each classroom (60-100 students).
3. All the classes were basically teacher-centered using traditional methods of teaching and multi-skill materials.
4. Objectives of teaching the course were not taken into account while selecting the materials and in the way the activities are introduced to the learners.
5. There is no variety in the tasks and activities used.
6. Concentration was on accuracy rather than fluency and too much emphasis is paid to grammar and extensive vocabulary.
7. The interaction was restricted to answering questions or reading ready dialogues. Girl students participated only if they were asked to.
8. No use of audio-visual aids though the texts included many listening tasks or no listening tasks at all.
9. Teachers usually stopped students frequently to correct their errors both in grammar and pronunciation
10. Teachers did not make appropriate use of time and did not give students equal chances.

Conclusion

In this study, a brief discussion of the principles pertaining to the study was given. Teaching English and its status in Uzbekistan in the light of the scope of second/foreign language teaching was placed in a historical perspective. The study ends with the researcher's hypotheses for the study about the failure of Uzbek student-teachers in speaking English and the possible measures to be adopted.

Further implications

What can be done in the future to gather more data on the same topic? In Uzbekistan, it is an established practice to blame the learner for failure to learn the language, not only in speaking another language but in learning as a whole, in spite of the fact that really speaking she/he is a victim. In the context of Uzbekistan, a learner is a victim of a combination of several factors as this study revealed. She/he is a victim of the lack of English teachers, lack of

exposure to the target language, inefficient methods of teaching, inappropriate materials used in teaching, social and economic influences, and wrong educational policy. It should be realized that to make teaching and learning successful a shared responsibility notion in which teachers, parents and society, and learners cooperate should come to existence and practice. In teaching speaking in particular, teachers should direct their attention to the most potential resource in developing the quality of learning- the learner. A complete knowledge of the learner including his/her interests, preferred learning style, needs and expectations, attitudes, strengths and weaknesses could help the teacher to develop suitable strategies that enhance fluency in speaking. Creating a comfortable atmosphere and motivating learners to speak in English may contribute to the success. This study has several implications for all the stakeholders to bank upon in the long run as follows:**Implications for Student-teachers**

The findings of the study pointed out that Uzbek student-teachers' background is generally weak in that they do not have adequate vocabulary, they do not practice speaking, they did not go to private institutes, and most of them do not bother to improve themselves. Furthermore, they do not have intrinsic motivation and they study English with the short-goal aim of being teachers of English thinking that all what they need is to master English grammar. This is to say that they recall the teaching strategy of their teachers at basic and secondary school who used to teach them in Uzbek. They also recall their learning strategy based on memorizing a set of words and expressions or ready dialogues for the purpose of passing examination. Uzbek student-teachers need to be aware of their present situation as learners in English Departments and their potential role as teachers. They need to build a positive attitude towards speaking English and to put in extra effort to conquer the disadvantages of their previous learning experiences. They also should realize that practice is the essence of success in learning any skill as it is the essence of perfection in doing any job, Uzbek student-teachers should bear in mind the following:

- Being able to speak English fluently and clearly is the most important characteristic of the teacher of English.
- Making errors in speech is not an indicator of their failure but an indicator of their progress in using the language.
- 'Practice makes perfect' so that they have to take each and every chance possible to practice speaking whether inside or outside the classroom paying no attention to what people might think or say.
- Improving speaking skill implies also listening to English from the available sources beginning from cassettes and ending with computer and internet.

References

- [1] Gallagher-Brett, A. 2004. Seven hundred reasons for studying languages
- [2] www.llas.ac.uk/resourcedownloads/.../700_reasons.pdf.
- [3] Krashen, S. 1981. Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning, Pergamon Press Inc.
- [4] Lennon, P. 1990. Temporal measures of fluency: automatic and manual extraction of temporal variables, Soohwan Park: Purdue University.
- [5] Luoma, S. 2004. Assessing Speaking, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- [6] Mitchel, R. & Myles, F. 2004. *Second Language Learning Theories*, London: Hodder education company.
- [7] Nunan, D. 1991. *Language teaching methodology. A textbook for teachers*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- [8] Nunan, D., 2003. *Practical English Language Teaching*. NY: McGraw-Hill.
- [9] *Pocket oxford American Dictionary 2008*. 2 nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- [10] Richards, J. 2008. *Teaching listening and speaking from theory to practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- [11] Thompson, N.2003. *Communication and Language*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Appendices:

Appendix I

Student-teachers' Interview

1. Why do you study English?
2. Does any member of your family speak English?
3. Does your family encourage you to study English?
4. Did you have English teachers at basic and secondary school?

Appendix II

Teachers' Interview

1. It is noticed that students' level in speaking English is very low. What are the reasons for that in your opinion?
2. What methods and strategies/techniques do you use in teaching speaking?
3. Do you have the freedom to design/select materials for teaching speaking?
4. Are there audio/visual aids? Do you use them?

Appendix III

Samples of Student-teachers' Responses

Two of student-teachers' responses to the interview are given below after translating them from Uzbek into English. The first one is that of a boy whereas the second presents the responses of one of the girls.

Sample I

- T. Why do you study English?
S. To be a teacher of English language.
- T. Does any member of your family speak English?
S. No. No one.
- T. Does your family encourage you to study English?
S. Yes of course.
- T. Did you have English teachers at basic and secondary school?

S. In my village there was no English teacher but when I came to study secondary school in the city there was a good teacher. I liked him and decided to be like him.

Sample II

T. Why do you study English?

S. English is very important because it is used everywhere. If you want to get a job, you should know English. English was my best subject at school. I want to be a teacher in this college.

T. Does any member of your family speak English?

S. Yes. My sister is a dentist and my brother works in a bank. Both of them speak English very well.

T. Does your family encourage you to study English?

S. Yes they do particularly my sister.

T. Did you have English teachers at basic and secondary school?

S. Yes.

Appendix IV

Teachers' Responses

Teacher I

1. It is noticed that students' level in speaking English is very low. What are the reasons for that in your opinion?

I think that one of the reasons students find the skill of speaking difficult is that the lack or absence of motivation which makes the students lose interest in it. Practicing the language also helps students master the language and enables them to use it and recall its structures more easily as they say 'practice makes perfect.' The exposure to the language encourages the students to speak more comfortably and therefore, get used to it. This, unfortunately, does not happen with the Uzbek students. A lot of students come from the countryside where they might have not studied English properly or at all. Another reason lies in the socio-cultural effect. In Uzbekistan, it is offensive to speak a different and an unknown language in front of people or outside the classroom. People think that the person who speaks in a different language is trying to show off his ability of speaking a foreign language. Thus, the use of language becomes restricted to classroom only. The last reason, which is equally important to the mentioned ones, is the teacher's beliefs about the language.

2. What methods and strategies/techniques do you use in teaching speaking?

For me, I consider speaking and teaching speaking a heavy and difficult task. Teaching speaking does not mean that the teacher has to speak and the student has to listen, it means that the teacher has to speak less and teach the student how to speak and let them speak more. In teaching speaking, I try to be selective in the nature of topics and the type of vocabulary presented to the students. The topics and vocabulary should be appropriate and fit the students' level, too. The best thing the teacher can do is to encourage the students to speak. Different tasks and activities are given to students to practice such as pair work, role play, group discussion, etc.

3. Do you have the freedom to design/select materials for teaching speaking?

The matter of designing materials for speaking is not the responsibility of the teacher. According to my experience in teaching speaking, I have the absolute freedom in choosing and selecting the material for teaching speaking. Nobody has any objection at the educational college regarding the materials I used to select for teaching speaking. The syllabus gives an outline of the course leaving the rest to the teacher. As I mentioned, I try to be selective in the nature of topics and the type of vocabulary from different sources.

4. Are there audio/visual aids? Do you use them?

To tell the truth, there are no audio-visual aids in the full meaning of the word. There is a small lab which I could not use as it is usually taken by computer students. As for any other audio aids the only thing we have are a few cassettes I could hardly provide for the students as a personal effort and I brought them from the capital city.

Teacher II

QUESTION ONE

The main reasons that hinder my students speaking English language from my perspective are as follows:

- 1- We used to have a very strong admission procedure which enabled us to choose the best candidates to join our faculty and the number of students was reasonable. We had a good number of professors, lecturers and demonstrators. But now it is all different. All students are admitted to join the faculty regardless of their backgrounds in English language and this new system has dangerous consequences nowadays.
- 2- Most of the students aren't motivated to speak English outside the gate of the Faculty. That is because they are subject to their traditions, society and their hard life after college.
- 3- Speaking is not included in tests at schools and at colleges it is tested through writing. Therefore, students do not pay attention to it. As a personal attempt I change the mid-term exam to oral interview bearing 20 marks out of 100.

QUESTION TWO

In fact, I am using the Direct Method. It refers to the use of demonstrations, gestures, mime, and action which means never translate, never explain, too much act, never make a speech ask questions, never speak too much make students speak too much. Secondly, the activities used inside the classroom move from stage to another. I sometimes use listening activities and dialogue making activities. Finally, it depends on how patient you are in conducting all this...

QUESTION THREE

Honestly, it was difficult for me to select the syllabus for students at the beginning, however after a great effort I was allowed to select. Yes, I do have the eligibility in choosing and selecting the contents of spoken courses for my students but I never thought of designing such a course because I am not up to the level.

QUESTION FOUR:

Yes, I do have some aids like tapes and posters and I use them from time to time. You know it is difficult to use them all the time because of the time limit.