

## **Interactive Approach in English Language Learning and Its Impact on Developing Language Skills**

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### **Abstract**

*English language is now an indispensable tool. It has occupied a major role as a means of international communication in official languages and has also become medium of instruction in education system in Pakistan. The focus of the research was to determine the value of interactive approach in English language and its impact on developing language skills. Experimental method was used to conduct the research. Previous achievement scores in the subject of English were obtained from the school record and also a pre-test was administered. T-test for non-independent sample was used for the analysis and interpretation of data, obtained from the school record, pre-test and through post-test. Sample of the research consisted of 90 students of 9<sup>th</sup> grade of F.G Govt Girls High School Peshawar Cantt. Topics from the text book, grammar and composition of 9<sup>th</sup> grade of Federal Board were covered. Three teachers teaching English, having equal qualifications, experience and considerably equal potential were selected and given two weeks training to teach English through interactive approach. After pre-test experimental group was given treatment using interactive approach techniques and strategies. When the treatment was over post-test was administered to experimental group. Pre-test and post test were matched by using the t-test for non-independent sample. Data was analysed through SPSS program. It was concluded that through interactive approach students out scored more than using traditional method of teaching English. It is recommended that language teacher should be given training In-set program of using interactive approach. It will be helpful in developing skills of language proficiency /fluency of language teachers as well as of the students.*

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**Keywords:** Interactive approach; Communication; Stratified sampling; Social interaction; Market competition.

### **Introduction**

The world is in a state of transition & so is language, English, for instance, has taken new form. According to Khan<sup>1</sup> support the view of experts that economic development of Pakistan depends upon the expansion of information technology, and no one can deny in recognizing the need for making the comprehension and care of English as widespread as possible. This is now an urgent public requirement. Even where information technology on this large scale is nowhere in sight, educated families, both prosperous and not so well-to-do and even poor families in many cases, have decided to opt for English medium education for their children, particularly boys. They are convinced that their boys and even girls, if a career is contemplated for them, would not be dealt with fairly in the job market when they passed out unless their education is English based.

The need for language skills in English finds no recognition in the English language curriculum at any level of instruction in Pakistan. The students have problems in English when they reach at college level although it is introduced as a compulsory subject at school level but they are unable to use the language effectively at university level. They hardly have enough vocabulary to communicate properly. As far as the government schools system is concerned; traditional method is used to teach English and there is no procedure of testing or teaching speaking skills in accordance to government prescribed syllabus. However in private sector students are well motivated towards speaking English and even it is taught and tested.

New era has created many opportunities and challenges for the development of a nation. Only as educated personnel outfitted with new and innovative skills have the ability to compete and be benefited by taking advantages of these opportunities created by globalization.

Modern trends and changes that have occurred in the current scenario are the major reasons in making the economic life competitive and demanding and also have made the development of human knowledge in different areas more significant. Only as educated personnel outfitted with new and innovative skills have the ability to compete and be beneficial by taking advantages of these opportunities created by globalization.

The future destiny of a nation depends upon the new generation's knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies. Availability of right choices in the field of education leads a country towards prosperity and progress. Practical involvement of students for the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and skills can lead them to develop their abilities and potentialities.<sup>2</sup>

For the achievement of the goals, knowledge, use of communicative and technological skills are basic requirement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The world has been shrunk into a global village and interaction/communication with other countries has become easier and approachable through internet and telecommunication. With the passage of time, advancement in communication has made it quite possible to take advantage of many modern facilities. The language learning/teaching process with no exception, since language in its strict technical sense is a means of communication.<sup>3</sup>

The main objective of foreign language learning/teaching is to facilitate the learners by keeping in mind that they are using it for social communication so it should be used both correctly and appropriately. Language is seen as a structural system whose primary function is to enable human communication to take place.<sup>4</sup>

A major need to make English functional is to train teacher, using communicative/interactive approaches, in designing English Syllabus for Pakistan (ESP) and successfully implement them.

#### *Objectives*

- i. To explore the causes of inability of students in getting proper command over English language.
- ii. To find the impact of interactive approach on the students in English Language learning.
- iii. To suggest measures for teaching language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing in an effective manner by using interactive approach

#### *Research Questions*

- i. What are the problems and difficulties faced by students in English language learning?
- ii. How is interactive approach helpful in contributing towards the development of language learning?
- iii. Is interactive approach effective for the teachers and students in improving their communicative competency?

### Literature Review

Aslam<sup>5</sup> observed that teaching one or two skills will not make students competent in communication. In traditional method, the teacher of English mainly focuses on reading and writing with the result that students never are successful in becoming competent and effective communicators.

The ultimate goal of language teaching is to cultivate students' ability to communicate information and exchange ideas. Interaction is equally important for researchers. It is at the heart of communication because 'communication derives from interaction'.

According to the *New Oxford Dictionary of English*, 'interaction' means "mutual or reciprocal action or influence ('interaction')". From the definition, we can infer the following nature of interaction:

- Main emphasize is on two way relationship,
- Co-operation and equality are valued
- Stress is more upon individuals' participation
- Personal participation and experience are required.

According to Rivers,<sup>6</sup> it is through the interactive approach, with its emphasis on playful group activities, that a simple point or group of related points can be revived and, above all, personalized. Whether we are speaking or writing we comprehend and express the meaning constantly to interact in real life communication. Straight<sup>7</sup> states that for the acquisition of a language the best way is to adopt those language skills which are required to comprehend that language. The best way to acquire a language is to acquire the skills needed to comprehend it fluently, and... everything else will follow, if not automatically, at least far more easily and effectively.<sup>8</sup>

The Education Ministry, in consultation with provincial education departments and professional bodies, will develop a future course of action to implement an English medium education policy. Salient features include:

- English should be the medium of instruction for science and mathematics from class IV onwards.
- At primary level there is option for provinces to use English/Urdu or other official regional languages for teaching of mathematics and science but after five years the teaching of these subjects shall be in English only.<sup>9</sup>

### Method

The main objective of this study was to determine the value of interactive approach in English language learning and its impact on developing four skills at secondary level.

Experimental method pre-test/post-test design was used to conduct the research. T-test for non-independent sample was used for the analyses and interpretation of data. Stratified sampling technique was used. Sample of the research were 90 students of 9<sup>th</sup> grade of F.G Govt Girls High School Peshawar Cantt. Topics from the text book ,grammar and composition of 9<sup>th</sup> grade of Federal Board were covered. Three teachers teaching English, having equal qualification, experience and considerably equal potential were selected and given two weeks training for teaching English using interactive approach. A pre-test was administered to experimental group. After pre-test experimental group was given treatment using interactive approach teaching techniques and strategies for three months. When the treatment was over post-test was administered to experimental group.

### Analysis of Data

Pre-test and post test were matched using t-test for non-independent sample through SPSS program. The significance difference was found by comparing the pre-test (conventional method) and posttest (Interactive approach) of experimental group by applying T-test for non-independent sample.

F.G Girls High Schools Peshawar Cantt Experimental Group

Table 1: Paired Samples Statistics

F.G Schools/Exp. Group	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pre-Test & Post-Test.	90	.368	.01

Table 2: Paired Samples Correlation

F.G Schools/Exp. Group	Mean	N	StD	Std. E. Mean
Conventional method Pre-test	28.6667	90	7.07425	.74569
Interactive approach Post-Test	41.9222	90	7.36562	.77640

Table 3: Paired Samples Test

F.G Schools/Exp. Group	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
	Mean	Std. Div	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
				Lower	Upper		
Paired Pre-Test Post-Test	-13.25	8.117	.855	-14.955	-11.555	-15.491	89 .01

Significant df=89 t-value at 0.01 level = 2.61

### Results

According to table1, 2 and3 pre-test/post-test of paired sample test mean, Std and t-value showing significant difference between pre-test and post-test of experimental group. Computed t-value is greater than the table value at .01 level of significance so the difference between the mean of the pre-test and post-test of experimental group is significant at 0.01 levels. This finding shows the effectiveness of interactive approach as compared to conventional method.

### Discussion

*“The spread of English language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is exceptional. The number of speakers in English has been ten folds since 1900 and rough estimate tell us that the number of speakers is in between 700 million to one hundred billion.”<sup>10</sup>*

Due to the failure of government for providing quality education to its population the trend of parents towards private school is increasing day by day in order to provide quality education. In the government schools the syllabus although is in English but the medium of instructions is Urdu or their own local languages.

According to Khan<sup>11</sup> in Pakistan half percent of people have basic understanding of English. English is dealt as compulsory subject in Pakistani educational system. Three kinds of schools exist in the country. These are:

- Private schools (for elite class)
- Government schools (for middle or classes of population)
- Madrassah (religious schools)

Teachers' main focus is on the completion of syllabus by using traditional method of teaching which turns out to be quite uninteresting and boring for the learners. For this reason they develop a negative attitude towards language.

Javed<sup>12</sup> writes to enhance the English language skills private sector is playing a pivotal role. Number of private schools is very efficient in incorporating English and thus running various courses as a much profitable business for these institutions. About such institutions, “The market for English language is huge, undoubtedly, what with the yawning gap left by the educational standards in schooling”.<sup>13</sup>

The expansion and accessibility of technology have boosted the need of people to share information in written as well as oral form and engage them in a process in which several skills are going to work simultaneously. For the enhancement of these skills it is essential to use appropriate approach that adds maximum contribution in learning of a second language.<sup>14</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Brown<sup>15</sup> stated that interaction is the at heart of communication which is an important work for language teachers and lead to the conclusion that active participation of students help in enhancing the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing and support all the research questions.

On the basis of the collected data, the results have been interpreted and discussed which are followed by conclusion from the study. Pedagogical aspect of successful teaching is the involvement of students in learning process. Experimental group retained more information by using different techniques of interactive approach.

As for as the learning of English language is concerned it must be considered as a functional Interactive approach is an effective approach of communication in learning of English language as compared to traditional method in which learning depends upon grammar translation method and also the rules and structure of sentences.

Learning through activities play a positive role in the improvement of academic achievement Interactive approach contributed a lot in developing the confidence among experimental group.

On the basis of the time consumed by the teacher, as it was more student centered based on ‘student, teacher’ and ‘student, student’ interaction; the conclusion is drawn that academically output of students was raised more in the given time.

**Recommendations**

- The prospective teachers must be encouraged to apply the interactive approach in classroom situation for teaching/ learning the English language
- Integration of the skills is required in different activities for classroom interaction.
- The techniques used in teaching of language need to be revived for developing intrinsic motivation of students
- Regular monitoring of the teachers teaching English at primary as well as secondary level is very essential.
- Co-curricular activities like debates, quiz competition, plays and drama help in enhancing the confidence of learner. Students' interaction with each other is also a source of socialization.
- Continuous assessment processes lead to achievements of objectives of learning English as a second /Foreign Language.
- Curriculum or syllabus must have an objective about developing four skills simultaneously.
- Curriculum designers through publications should inform the concerned authorities for the inculcation of interactive approach in the teaching learning process of English
- Similar study can be conducted in future about the impact of Interactive approach, for college and university level students in the learning of English.



## Notes & References

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