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DEVELOPING ORAL PROFICIENCY IN PHILOLOGY STUDENTS: IDENTIFYING BARRIERS AND IMPLEMENTING INTERACTIVE PEDAGOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Abstract. This study examines the linguistic and psychological factors that hinder the development of oral proficiency among philology students and investigates the potential of interactive teaching methods to overcome these barriers. A mixed-methods research design was employed to collect empirical data through a bilingual questionnaire administered to 53 undergraduate students majoring in English at a higher education institution in Uzbekistan. The findings indicate that, despite possessing a sufficient grammatical foundation, 43.4% of respondents experience difficulties accessing and using active vocabulary during spontaneous speech, while 30.2% report anxiety associated with making mistakes and being negatively evaluated by their peers. Furthermore, 50.9% of participants consider traditional teaching methods insufficiently effective in promoting active oral communication. Notably, 67.9% express support for incorporating interactive techniques, particularly situational role-playing and structured academic debates, to enhance speaking confidence and communicative competence. Based on these findings, the study proposes practical pedagogical recommendations aimed at transforming students’ receptive linguistic knowledge into active oral communication skills.

Keywords: oral proficiency, speaking fluency, communication barriers, foreign language anxiety, philology education, interactive pedagogy, student-centered learning.

FILOLOGIYA TALABALARINING OG‘ZAKI NUTQ KOMPETENSIYASINI RIVOJLANTIRISH: TO‘SIQLARNI ANIQLASH VA INTERAKTIV PEDAGOGIK YECHIMLARNI JORIY ETISH

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada filologiya yo‘nalishi talabalarining og‘zaki nutq kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishga to‘sqinlik qiluvchi lingvistik va psixologik omillar hamda ushbu muammolarni bartaraf etishda interaktiv ta’lim metodlarining imkoniyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Aralash tadqiqot metodologiyasi asosida O‘zbekistonning oliy ta’lim muassasalaridan birida ingliz filologiyasi yo‘nalishida tahsil olayotgan 53 nafar bakalavriat talabasi ishtirokida ikki tilli so‘rovnoma o‘tkazilib, empirik ma’lumotlar to‘plandi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatdiki, grammatik tayyorgarlik yetarli bo‘lishiga qaramay, respondentlarning 43,4 foizi spontan nutq jarayonida faol lug‘at boyligidan foydalanishda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladi, 30,2 foizi esa xato qilish va guruhdoshlari tomonidan salbiy baholanishdan xavotirlanadi. Shuningdek, ishtirokchilarning 50,9 foizi an’anaviy ta’lim metodlarini faol og‘zaki muloqotni rivojlantirishda yetarlicha samarali emas deb hisoblaydi. Respondentlarning 67,9 foizi esa nutqiy ishonch va kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirish maqsadida vaziyatli rolli o‘yinlar hamda tizimli akademik debatlar kabi interaktiv metodlarni ta’lim jarayoniga joriy etishni qo‘llab-quvvatlaydi. Olingan natijalar asosida talabalarning passiv til bilimlarini faol og‘zaki muloqot ko‘nikmalariga aylantirishga qaratilgan amaliy pedagogik tavsiyalar ishlab chiqildi.

Kalit so‘zlar: og‘zaki nutq kompetensiyasi, nutq ravonligi, kommunikativ to‘siqlar, xorijiy tilni o‘rganish xavotiri, filologik ta’lim, interaktiv pedagogika, talabaga yo‘naltirilgan ta’lim.

РАЗВИТИЕ УСТНОЙ РЕЧЕВОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ-ФИЛОЛОГОВ: ВЫЯВЛЕНИЕ БАРЬЕРОВ И ВНЕДРЕНИЕ ИНТЕРАКТИВНЫХ ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКИХ РЕШЕНИЙ

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются лингвистические и психологические факторы, препятствующие развитию устной речевой компетенции у студентов-филологов, а также анализируются возможности применения интерактивных методов обучения для преодоления данных трудностей. В рамках исследования, основанного на смешанной методологии, эмпирические данные были собраны посредством двуязычного анкетирования 53 студентов бакалавриата, обучающихся по направлению «Английская филология» в одном из высших образовательных учреждений Узбекистана. Результаты исследования показали, что, несмотря на достаточный уровень грамматической подготовки, 43,4% респондентов испытывают трудности при использовании активного словарного запаса в спонтанной речи, тогда как 30,2% испытывают тревожность, связанную с боязнью допустить ошибку и подвергнуться негативной оценке со стороны сокурсников. Кроме того, 50,9% участников считают традиционные методы обучения недостаточно эффективными для развития активного устного общения. При этом 67,9% респондентов поддерживают внедрение интерактивных методов, в частности ситуативных ролевых игр и структурированных академических дебатов, направленных на повышение уверенности в устной речи и развитие коммуникативной компетенции. На основе полученных результатов разработаны практические педагогические рекомендации, направленные на преобразование пассивных языковых знаний студентов в активные навыки устного общения.

Ключевые слова: устная речевая компетенция, беглость речи, коммуникативные барьеры, иноязычная тревожность, филологическое образование, интерактивная педагогика, студентоориентированное обучение.

INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected global landscape, proficiency in the English language has evolved beyond an advantageous academic qualification into an indispensable metric of global professional competency. Within higher educational settings—most notably across university philological faculties—the overarching goal of linguistic instruction centers on cultivating articulately fluent, phonetically sound, and contextually adept communicators. As a core component of language mastery, oral production serves as the most immediate empirical indicator of a learner's overarching linguistic capability. Nevertheless, ongoing pedagogical observation highlights a recurring structural contradiction in contemporary philological education: despite demonstrating command over complex syntactic paradigms and maintaining exten-

sive passive lexicons, a substantial portion of undergraduate philology students encounters profound friction when initiating spontaneous, real-time spoken communication.

This constraint, widely categorized within applied linguistics as a "communicative barrier" or "foreign language classroom anxiety," restricts learners from efficiently articulating their academic and professional perspectives. Within specialized philological programs, this systemic bottleneck carries heightened consequences, as these cohorts are being prepared for roles as educational leaders, professional interpreters, and linguistic scholars who require advanced verbal fluency. The underlying etiology of these oral performance deficits is inherently multifaceted. It stems from both structural factors—such as teacher-centric instructional paradigms that privilege rote memorization over functional engagement—and psychological impediments, including fear of public grammatical errors and social evaluation within the peer group.

While foundational literature on English as a Second Language (ESL) methodology by prominent theorists such as Jeremy Harmer and Jack Richards has broadly addressed communicative competence, there remains a critical research gap regarding how modern interactive pedagogical tools can specifically neutralize these communicative inhibitions within the localized higher education framework of Uzbekistan. To address this gap, the present study empirically diagnoses the primary linguistic and socio-psychological bottlenecks impeding the oral proficiency of undergraduate philologists. By identifying these systemic obstacles through field data and proposing targeted interactive interventions—including situational case simulations, formal academic debating, and structured role-playing—this study outlines an actionable methodological model designed to convert latent language knowledge into fluid, spontaneous oral communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Over recent decades, the pedagogy of foreign language instruction has intensely scrutinized the mechanisms governing oral proficiency acquisition, particularly within tertiary philological domains. Grounded in the communicative language teaching (CLT) framework conceptualized by Richards and Rodgers (2014), effective language acquisition is predicated on authentic, contextualized engagement rather than static, rule-based drill exercises. Their paradigm posits that university-level language specialists must cultivate broad "communicative competence"—an integrative ability to navigate complex socio-pragmatic environments with linguistic propriety.

Nevertheless, bridging the cognitive chasm between structural comprehension and spontaneous oral expression is frequently obstructed by psycho-affective friction. Harmer (2015) underscores that active speech production in an L2 environment

creates a heightened vulnerability threshold, leaving learners sensitive to socio-evaluative scrutiny. This affective burden is particularly pronounced within philological departments, where learners encounter systemic expectations of near-native precision. Consequently, traditional, teacher-dominated pedagogy—heavily reliant on immediate error correction—tends to intensify foreign language classroom anxiety rather than alleviating it.

Within the contemporary higher education framework of Uzbekistan, regional scholarship similarly advocates for a decisive shift toward student-centered, interactive methodologies. Domestic scholars such as Jalolov (2012) have observed that while national university cohorts routinely demonstrate solid theoretical foundations, converting this latent knowledge into fluent discourse requires systematic, scenario-based immersion. Subsequent research evaluating the integration of CEFR benchmarks across local universities further indicates that task-based pedagogical frameworks—such as structured academic debate and contextualized case simulations—construct a low-anxiety instructional atmosphere. This environment encourages learners to bypass socio-psychological inhibitions and actively deploy their passive lexicon. Ultimately, the scholarly consensus indicates that oral fluency cannot emerge through passive reception; it mandates structured, interactive, and communicative intervention.

METHODOLOGY

To empirically evaluate the underlying obstacles affecting oral performance, this investigation employed a descriptive, quantitative diagnostic research design. Primary data collection was executed through a structured, bilingual (English and Uzbek) digital assessment instrument administered via Google Forms to eliminate semantic ambiguity and interpretive error.

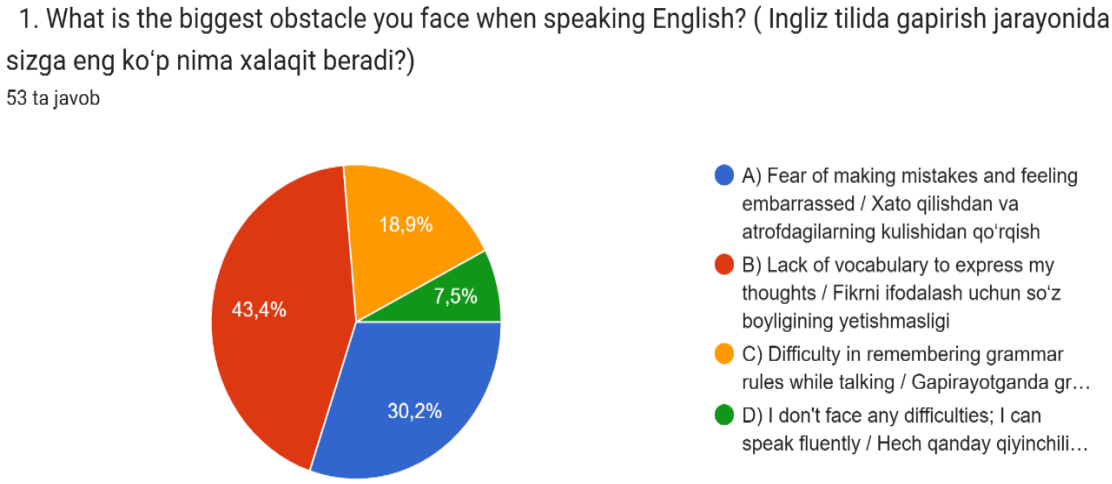
The participant sample comprised 53 undergraduate students enrolled within the philology faculty at a higher education institution in Uzbekistan. All subjects were pursuing degrees in English Language and Literature, forming a target group where advanced verbal communication is an essential metric of academic success. The diagnostic questionnaire consisted of five targeted multiple-choice items strategically designed to measure four central analytical dimensions: immediate socio-psychological and linguistic barriers, student perceptions of historical instructional modes, preferred interactive dynamics, and learner openness toward communicative intervention strategies. Data collection was carried out within a controlled timeframe to secure high instrument reliability. The compiled dataset was subsequently synthesized using proportional percentage distributions for item-level diagnostic analysis.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Empirical metrics collected from the 53-participant cohort yield critical diagnostic evidence regarding the cognitive, affective, and structural vectors governing oral proficiency acquisition.

Diagnostic Dimension 1: Primary Impediments to Oral Execution

An evaluation of the core factors disrupting real-time speech production demonstrates an interconnected constraint involving both cognitive-lexical processing and psycho-emotional friction:

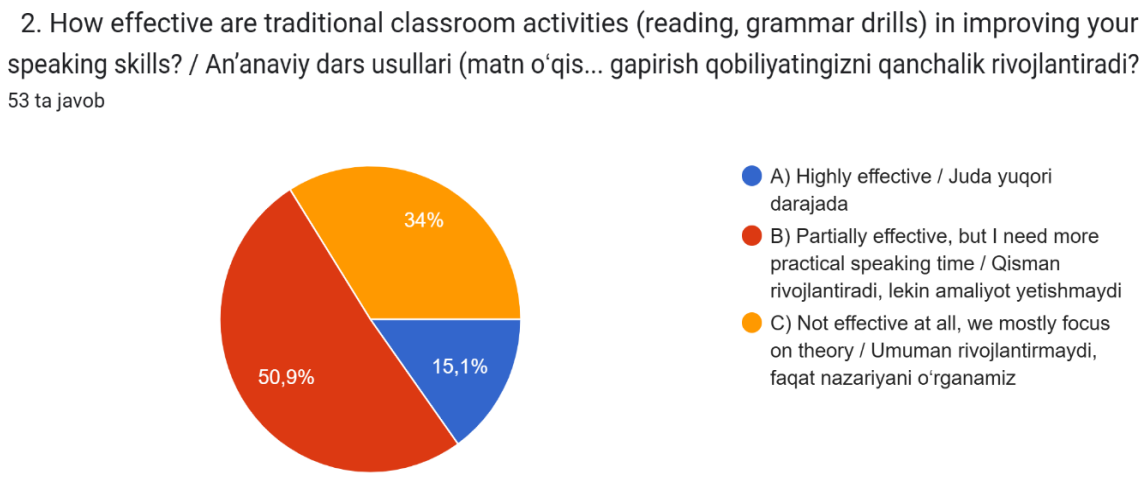


- **43.4%** of surveyed philologists identified active lexical retrieval deficits as their primary operational bottleneck.
- **30.2%** designated socio-evaluative anxiety—specifically apprehension regarding peer scrutiny and public error—as their principal cognitive constraint.
- **18.9%** reported real-time syntactic processing and immediate grammatical assembly latency.
- A minor **7.5%** reported seamless verbal production absent discernible operational barriers.

Analytical Synthesis: These empirical distributions confirm that over 90% of prospective language specialists experience operational strain during spontaneous oral communication, with affective anxiety and active lexical access speed constituting the critical systemic bottlenecks.

Diagnostic Dimension 2: Evaluative Perception of Traditional Methodologies

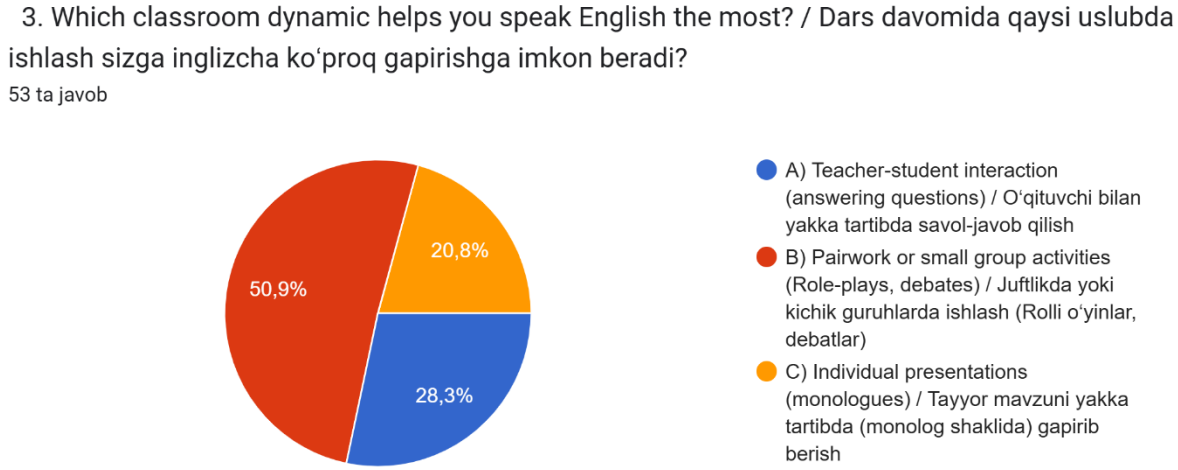
The second item interrogated participant evaluation regarding conventional pedagogical formats (e.g., linear reading, translation drills, and isolated grammatical exercises).



- A cumulative supermajority of **84.9%** expressed critical dissatisfaction with traditional frameworks: **50.9%** categorized them as marginally effective due to severe deficits in authentic communicative output, whereas **34.0%** deemed them entirely ineffective, citing an over-reliance on theoretical exposure.
- Only **15.1%** assessed traditional classroom configurations as highly effective.

Diagnostic Dimension 3: Optimal Classroom Interaction Architecture

Participants delineated the interactional configurations most conducive to speaking enhancement:

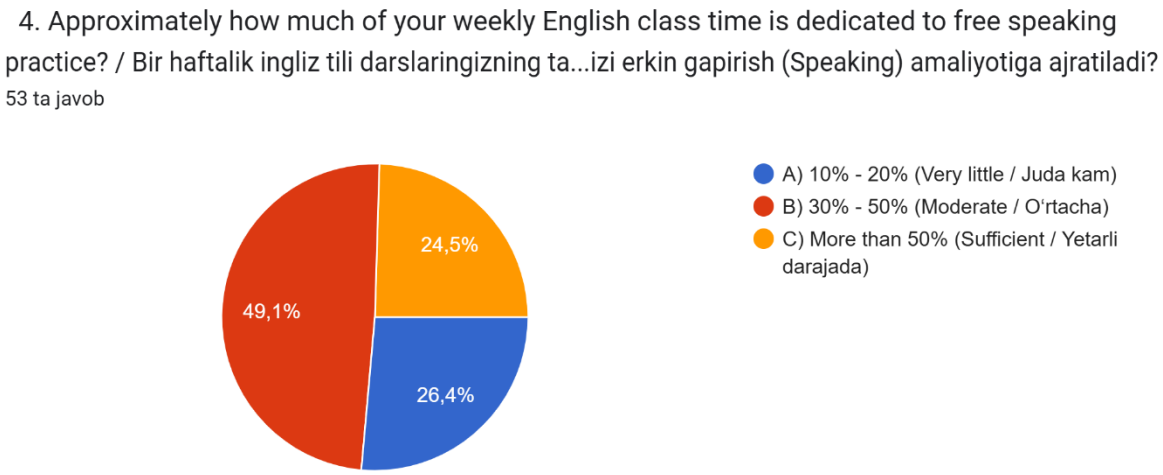


- An absolute majority of **50.9%** isolated peer-to-peer and small-group interactive setups (such as contextual role-play scenarios and structured scholarly debates) as optimal.
- **28.3%** favored direct instructor-student dialogue.
- **20.8%** advocated for individual monologue delivery.

Analytical Synthesis: This highlights a decisive learner preference for transitioning away from vertical pedagogical hierarchies toward lateral, collaborative communicative dynamics.

Diagnostic Dimension 4: Quantitative Volume of Weekly Oral Engagement

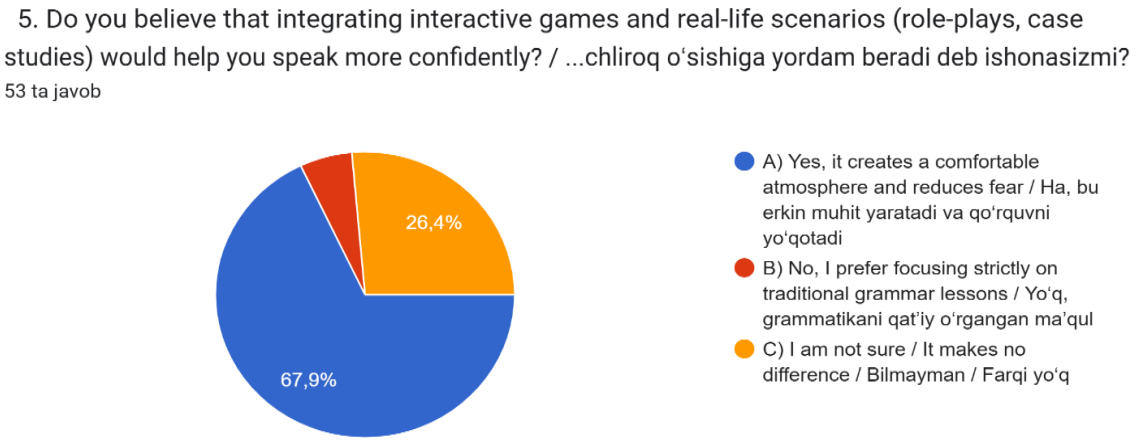
The survey measured the actual proportion of classroom time allocated to unscripted oral communication within the weekly syllabus:



- **49.1%** of participants reported moderate oral practice allocation, accounting for 30% to 50% of instructional hours.
- **26.4%** identified a deficient exposure range, capped at only 10% to 20%.
- **24.5%** experienced sufficient communicative immersion exceeding 50% of course time.

Diagnostic Dimension 5: Student Receptivity to Interactive Pedagogical Frameworks

The final diagnostic item evaluated learner endorsement regarding the systematic implementation of interactive gaming, situational case-studies, and real-world scenario modeling:



- An overwhelming **67.9%** endorsed interactive interventions, confirming that contextualized simulations generate a safe, low-anxiety instructional atmosphere that significantly diminishes socio-psychological resistance.
- **26.4%** remained undecided regarding programmatic outcomes.
- A negligible **5.7%** maintained a preference for conventional, grammar-oriented instructional frameworks.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The empirical findings derived from 53 undergraduate philology majors confirm that contemporary university-level language instruction encounters a structural optimization challenge. While existing curricula successfully instill theoretical linguistic knowledge, they systematically fail to provide low-stakes, highly communicative environments where this knowledge can be converted into spontaneous, confident speech. The finding that 43.4% of advanced language specialists experience active vocabulary retrieval latency demonstrates that lexical items remain stored as passive cognitive data rather than functional communicative assets. Furthermore, the 30.2% anxiety threshold indicates that traditional, teacher-centered error-correction models elevate the affective filter, effectively silencing student output.

To resolve these documented empirical obstacles, higher education frameworks must systematically transition toward a task-based, interactive pedagogical paradigm. First, institutional instruction should reduce passive translational exercises and systematically incorporate contextualized simulations (Role-Plays), where vocabulary activation is tied to authentic communicative urgency (e.g., professional, diplomatic, or scholarly scenarios). Second, to mitigate socio-evaluative anxiety, instructional design must prioritize horizontal peer interactions (Pairwork/Groupwork), enabling learners to negotiate meaning dynamically without the constant threat of immediate evaluative intervention.

In conclusion, this investigation demonstrates that advancing oral proficiency among philological students requires more than merely increasing input volume; it

necessitates a fundamental restructuring of classroom interaction dynamics. By replacing rigid grammatical drills with structured scholarly debates, contextualized case simulations, and collaborative communicative tasks, educators can effectively reduce foreign language anxiety and transform passive linguistic knowledge into fluent, professional oral competence.

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