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**Enhancing Speaking Proficiencies through the Symbiosis of Reading and Speaking Skills**

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**Article Received:** 16/03/2026

**Article Accepted:** 19/04/2026

**Published Online:** 20/04/2026

**DOI:** 10.47311/IJOES.2026.8.04.401

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**Abstract**

Acquiring speaking is the ultimate aim of strategies designed by teachers for English language teaching learning process. So many researches have been explored on such aims and many of them have been successfully explored in classroom arena. The present boom in information technology has initiated methods and approaches among English language teaching fraternity. The present study primarily explores such kind of strategies involving reading and speaking skills. The researcher explores the role of reading in improving speaking skills. The micro skills like vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation in reading are reviewed and the paper aims at achieving speaking skills integrating these micro skills. The finding indicates that integration of both skills has a significantly positive effect on improving speaking skills among ESL students.

**Keywords:** Reading skill, Speaking competencies, Micro skills, Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, ESL

**Introduction**

Teachers are the pioneers in strengthening the English language learning with suitably adequate strategies. ICT enabled classroom is an interesting platform for students to take active participation in learning. But still, teachers play a domineering role in manipulating technology as a supportive role and this role cannot be replaced by the technical inclusion in classrooms. Taking strategies into English classrooms with the help of any form is the need of the hour. Adequate role of a teacher in interaction, discussion

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and collaboration with the students enhances communicative competencies among learners. The paper discusses strategies involving reading and speaking skills in order to improve speaking competencies. Reading, now a days is a common one in classroom teaching but still, it is meant for evaluating the comprehensive abilities of students. Reading can also be viewed for vocabulary, grammar, etc. which in turn effectively contribute to improve the speaking competencies of students. The present paper aims at integrating reading and speaking skills to enhance the speaking skills among ESL students.

### **Importance of English Language**

English language holds a dominant role as communication in official and semi-official contexts. The mushroom of multi-national companies emerged in India and around the world motivates the students to learn the language. The job market available in local and abroad necessitates the seekers who have completed their final year of studies either in arts and science or in other ESP modes to master the skills. Looking for suitable places where they can learn the language is their immediate concern and that is where many of the national and international agencies play a smart role in accommodating the students get into their arena. Online exposure and advancement in technology provides material designers with various opportunities for innovative methods and approaches. Having completed the graduation studies the students while looking for their job understand the need for communicative competencies in English to face the interview held in English language as it the official one.

### **A Paradigm Shift in the Teaching Learning Processes**

Change is the only thing that never changes. A paradigm shift is the common phenomenon in every ESL classrooms. Schools and Colleges in India have started to refine the teaching of English in classroom for various reasons. The language is considered as an important one due to its position as one's economic, social and professional statuses. A good knowledge in the language is the most important one in many professional situations. It is therefore an absolute demand for English language users in India and abroad.

Even though the students are exposed to teaching and learning processes followed by various stages of assessment in ELT classrooms, the students fail to attain standards for facing interviews. This requires a demand among the learners to pick up their right choice of text books and teaching channels that promise provisions of quality in learning. The lockdown nature resulting in online resources subsequently optimizes digital ways of

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teaching and learning. Undoubtedly, this raised unwarranted situation for the teachers regarding their strategic planning towards their teaching learning processes. Accepting the situation the teachers look for opportunities in which the essence of teaching rather becomes a dynamic one. Various researches have been on their tracks to impart such dynamism in the English classrooms. A demand for a shift from teachers' teaching to learners' leaning evidently emphasizes a planning while working out strategies for classroom. The dynamic shift paves way for identifying skills approach with speaking as one of the most important compounds in the integration (Brown). The present study is one of its kind in which strategies are formed integrating reading and speaking skills for enhancing speaking competencies among the final year students of arts and science colleges in Thanjavur district.

### **Speaking Skill**

Improvement of speaking skill is the grim concern in the pedagogy of English language teaching in colleges. This concern minimizes the future career prospects of the students particularly the final year students who are at the verge of getting employed in India and abroad. The ability to speak well to express ideas is the grave concern for the students who are facing the interview board while pursuing their jobs. In this information era the global business market demands the fresher in the job market to have attained speaking competencies.

Speaking is the foremost entity of all other skills. It is a productive skill as Harmer (2007) points out that it is the language skill where students produce the language themselves. While producing speaking, understanding of linguistic and sociolinguistic competencies of the skill is a prerequisite one. Grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary are considered to be the linguistic competencies and what one understands when, why and in what ways to produce language are of sociolinguistic competencies. Moreover, speech has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Cohen, 1996).

### **Reading Skill**

We read for purposes like looking for instructions, getting some information, for entertainment, etc. Reading in classroom teaching learning process is common one and students from their elementary level are exposed to reading comprehension which is an essential component in an examination. There are other reasons why reading is done in

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colleges. For example, developing speed in reading, inferring meaning from context, and reading aloud to refine pronunciation.

### **Integrating Speaking and Reading Skills**

The natural way of language acquisition denotes that having exposed to reading only the students will perform well in speaking. Reading knowledge imparts expansion of speaking competencies. Less reading results in less language learning. Comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known.

Reading helps to master several different micro skills like structure, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and most important the content. When students produce English they may notice a gap between what they want to say and what they can say leading the recognize those language structures or element's that they do not know, or know only partially. Accuracy and fluency are the two major components. (Harmer, 2007) notes down that from the communicative point of view, speaking has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practiced through controlled and guided activities; and, fluency, considered to be ‘the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously’.

Reading and speaking are reciprocal in a way that they complement each other. Improvement of reading paves way for development in speaking. Students who gain stronger reading perform better speaking in an environment. In a speaking class students are given the opportunities to speak as a pair, role play, etc. This approach when combined with reading provides students to develop their command over speaking. In fact, reading when integrated with speaking reaches the ultimate aim of the language development in a well and effective manner. Based on reciprocal environment provides scaffold support and create speaking on their own. Reading in classroom focuses only on its comprehension and a move towards oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the only goals of language study (Richards).

As Nunan (1999) mentioned, learners should be given the maximum number of opportunities possible to practice the target language in meaningful context and situation. Reproducing short story after reading provides the student with such kind of meaningful context. For example, story reading develops micro skills of speaking through matching

pictures with story line. During pre task students are asked to guess the story looking at the pictures. While task activity the students are asked to match the picture connected to the event of the story. The relation between the storyline and picture is well understood and the words are memorable for a longer time. Further, reading a story provides an opportunity for developing not only words but also new pattern which led the students to interlink the words and the structure through repeated reading. The students are thus exposed to unconscious repetition which allows them to acquire the skill.

In a reading process six component skills, automatic recognition skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure knowledge, content/word background knowledge, synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, and met cognitive knowledge and skills monitoring have been suggested. Among these knowledge fields vocabulary and structural knowledge which are acquired through reading, influence learner's speaking achievement.(Grabe,1991, p.379). The following handout integrating speaking and reading skills enhances the formal and informal expressions.

Group A presents the formal expression of words and structures and Group B expresses the informal expressions for the same situation. The sixteen boxes are cut and distributed to sixteen students and they are asked to pair in respect of their expressions. Once they are thus paired they are asked to form lines in the two corners where formal and informal are denoted separately. Finally, they read their expressions one by one and are checked by the teacher whether they are right or wrong.

Group A	Group B
I prefer watching TV on weekends	I enjoy watching TV on weekends
I bought a new car last month	I purchased a new car last month
Could you please tell him I called her?	Tell him I called her
The experiment was carried out by me	I did that experiment
The meeting will commence right on time	The meeting will start right on time
I need your assistance in drafting the mail	I need your help in drafting the mail
We are fortunate to have a supportive manager	We are lucky to have a supportive manager
I would like to know about you	I want to know about you

The above activity when it was done to students they actively participated. The repetition of words and expressions during the activity enriched their words to formally express while speaking..

### **Conclusion**

The study thus proves Lechmann (2007) writing that reading is probably the best way to learn new words. Reading results in incidental vocabulary acquisition. Ideas can be expressed without any hesitation when reading is integrated to enlarge vocabulary. There are other ways of methods like loud reading to develop pronunciation, dialogue reporting to improve conversational skill, etc. for enhancement of other micro skills of speaking.

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