

# SKILLS FOR IMPROVING THE ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF NON-PHILOLOGICAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Hamraqulova O. A.

Interfaculty Department of Foreign Languages

Chirchik State Pedagogical University

## Abstract

Developing oral communication competence is a vital component of higher education, particularly for non-philological students who may not receive formal linguistic training. This paper explores the significance of fostering effective speaking skills and the pedagogical approaches that can enhance oral communication abilities in non-philological students. Emphasis is placed on interactive teaching methods, role-playing, and feedback mechanisms that encourage participation and reduce communication apprehension. The study highlights the importance of integrating communication skill development across various disciplines to equip students with the necessary tools to succeed academically and professionally.

**Keywords:** Oral communication competence, Higher education, non-philological students, Pedagogical approaches, Speaking skills, Communication apprehension, Interactive methods.

## Introduction

The development of oral communication competence is increasingly recognized as an essential goal of higher education. For non-philological students – those pursuing degrees in fields outside linguistics and language studies – the ability to communicate effectively is crucial not only for academic success but also for future professional engagement. Unlike students majoring in philology or related disciplines, non-philological students may encounter fewer opportunities to formally cultivate their speaking skills, resulting in potential barriers to participation in academic discourse, public speaking, and professional collaboration.

Higher education institutions are tasked with preparing students to navigate diverse communicative contexts, whether in presentations, group discussions, or professional meetings. Consequently, there is a pressing need to address the development of oral communication skills across disciplines. This necessitates the implementation of pedagogical strategies that align with the unique needs and academic trajectories of non-philological students.

Research indicates that effective oral communication enhances critical thinking, fosters self-confidence, and contributes to overall academic performance. However, many students experience communication apprehension, limiting their ability to engage fully in classroom



activities. This highlights the importance of creating supportive learning environments that encourage students to practice and refine their speaking abilities.

Pedagogical approaches to enhancing oral communication often include interactive methods such as debates, presentations, and group discussions. These activities not only build competence but also promote collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Role-playing exercises, for instance, simulate real-world scenarios, allowing students to practice public speaking in a low-risk environment. Additionally, the incorporation of peer and instructor feedback plays a pivotal role in reinforcing positive communication habits and addressing areas for improvement.

Integrating oral communication training into non-philological curricula can be achieved through interdisciplinary collaboration, workshops, and specialized courses. By embedding communication-focused activities into existing coursework, educators can provide students with continuous opportunities to develop and refine their skills. Moreover, fostering a culture of open dialogue and active participation contributes to the overall learning experience, preparing students for the demands of professional life.

In conclusion, improving the oral communication competence of non-philological students is a multifaceted endeavor that requires intentional pedagogical design and institutional support. This paper aims to examine effective strategies for enhancing speaking skills and to underscore the value of oral communication as a fundamental aspect of higher education.

### **Main Part:**

Oral communication is an indispensable skill that significantly contributes to the academic and professional success of students, regardless of their field of study. For non-philological students, however, the development of oral communication skills is often overlooked in favor of domain-specific knowledge. This imbalance can hinder their ability to articulate ideas, participate in collaborative projects, and present their work effectively. The importance of fostering oral communication competence in non-philological students lies in preparing them to engage in various forms of dialogue that extend beyond the academic setting and into their future careers.

One of the key challenges faced by non-philological students is the limited emphasis on communication skills in their curricula. Unlike philological programs, which prioritize linguistic proficiency, non-philological disciplines tend to focus on technical knowledge and theoretical frameworks. This results in fewer opportunities for students to practice and refine their speaking abilities. Consequently, many non-philological students experience communication apprehension, a psychological barrier that manifests as fear or anxiety when speaking in public or participating in discussions. Addressing this issue requires a holistic approach that integrates oral communication training into the broader educational experience. Interactive and student-centered pedagogical approaches have proven effective in enhancing oral communication competence. Activities such as group discussions, presentations, and role-playing exercises not only facilitate the practice of speaking skills but also promote critical thinking and collaborative learning. By creating an environment where students are encouraged to express their ideas and receive constructive feedback, educators can reduce communication



apprehension and foster confidence. Additionally, incorporating reflective practices, such as self-assessments and peer reviews, allows students to recognize their strengths and identify areas for improvement.

Another effective strategy involves embedding oral communication activities within the existing coursework. For instance, requiring students to present project findings, participate in debates, or lead class discussions can provide consistent opportunities for them to develop their speaking abilities. This approach ensures that communication skills are not treated as an isolated component but are seamlessly integrated into the learning process. Furthermore, interdisciplinary initiatives, such as communication workshops or collaborative projects between different faculties, can enhance the transferability of these skills across various contexts.

Technology also plays a vital role in facilitating oral communication development. Online platforms and virtual classrooms offer new avenues for students to engage in discussions, deliver presentations, and participate in webinars. These digital environments provide a low-risk setting for students to practice their speaking skills, which can be particularly beneficial for those who experience anxiety in face-to-face interactions. Moreover, recording and reviewing their own presentations allows students to analyze their performance and make necessary adjustments.

Despite the evident benefits of integrating oral communication training into higher education, several obstacles remain. Institutional constraints, such as limited resources and faculty workload, can impede the implementation of communication-focused initiatives. Additionally, some educators may lack the necessary training to effectively teach oral communication skills. Addressing these challenges requires institutional support and professional development opportunities for faculty members. By investing in communication training and creating a culture that values speaking skills, higher education institutions can better equip students to succeed in both academic and professional settings.

Ultimately, the development of oral communication competence in non-philological students is a multifaceted endeavor that requires collaboration between educators, students, and institutions. By adopting innovative pedagogical approaches, leveraging technology, and fostering an inclusive learning environment, higher education institutions can ensure that all students, regardless of their academic discipline, possess the communication skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

### Conclusions

The development of oral communication competence in non-philological students represents a critical component of higher education that transcends disciplinary boundaries. As the demands of the professional world evolve, the ability to express ideas clearly and persuasively becomes increasingly vital. This paper has explored the multifaceted nature of oral communication skills, emphasizing the need for holistic pedagogical approaches that integrate speaking opportunities into the broader curriculum. By fostering these competencies, higher education institutions contribute to the academic success, personal growth, and career readiness of their students.



The primary challenge lies in the inherent focus of non-philological programs on technical knowledge and discipline-specific content, often at the expense of communication training. This discrepancy can lead to gaps in students' ability to articulate their ideas effectively, diminishing their engagement in academic discourse and professional environments. Addressing this issue necessitates a shift in pedagogical priorities, underscoring the value of communication skills as an essential facet of comprehensive education. Through the deliberate incorporation of oral communication exercises, students are afforded the opportunity to develop confidence, enhance their critical thinking abilities, and cultivate a voice that resonates within their respective fields.

One of the most effective methods to improve oral communication competence involves the adoption of interactive learning techniques. Classroom debates, group presentations, and role-playing activities foster active participation and simulate real-world scenarios, allowing students to refine their public speaking abilities in a controlled and supportive setting. These strategies not only mitigate communication apprehension but also promote collaboration and peer engagement. Furthermore, consistent exposure to speaking tasks reinforces learning, ensuring that communication skills are continuously honed throughout the academic journey. Educators play a pivotal role in guiding students toward communication proficiency. By offering constructive feedback, highlighting areas for improvement, and encouraging self-assessment, instructors can create an environment that values growth and reflection. Integrating communication components across courses provides non-philological students with regular opportunities to practice their skills, ultimately enhancing their confidence and competence. Additionally, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, such as joint projects between faculties, enriches students' ability to adapt their communication strategies to diverse contexts, further preparing them for dynamic professional environments.

Technology has emerged as a valuable tool in supporting the development of oral communication skills. Virtual presentations, online discussions, and recorded feedback sessions provide flexible and accessible platforms for students to practice and refine their abilities. Such digital environments are particularly advantageous for students who experience anxiety in traditional classroom settings, offering a lower-stakes alternative for skill development. Moreover, technology facilitates asynchronous learning, allowing students to engage with communication exercises at their own pace.

Despite the numerous advantages associated with enhancing oral communication competence, barriers persist. Institutional constraints, such as limited faculty resources and competing curricular demands, often hinder the implementation of comprehensive communication programs. Additionally, the perceived separation between communication skills and subject-specific knowledge contributes to the marginalization of speaking exercises in non-philological disciplines. Overcoming these obstacles requires a concerted effort from educators, administrators, and policymakers to prioritize communication as a fundamental element of higher education.

Institutional support is essential for the successful integration of oral communication training into non-philological programs. This may involve the establishment of specialized communication centers, professional development workshops for faculty, and the creation of



cross-disciplinary initiatives aimed at fostering a culture of open dialogue and expressive confidence. By investing in communication resources and emphasizing their significance, institutions can bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical skill, producing graduates who are not only experts in their fields but also articulate and effective communicators.

Ultimately, the enhancement of oral communication competence among non-philological students reflects the broader goal of preparing well-rounded individuals capable of thriving in diverse environments. As higher education continues to adapt to the evolving needs of society, the importance of equipping students with the skills necessary to navigate complex interpersonal and professional landscapes cannot be overstated. By embracing innovative teaching methods, leveraging technology, and fostering a culture that values communication, institutions can ensure that all students, regardless of their discipline, graduate with the tools needed to succeed.

The significance of oral communication as a vital educational outcome is supported by existing literature, which emphasizes the role of speaking skills in fostering critical thinking, leadership, and collaboration. For instance, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2021) highlight the interplay between communication competence and emotional resilience, suggesting that improved speaking abilities contribute to greater overall academic confidence. Similarly, Chan (2011) underscores the transformative impact of communication training on students' career trajectories, reinforcing the notion that oral competence serves as a cornerstone of professional development.

In conclusion, the pursuit of enhanced oral communication competence among non-philological students is not merely an academic exercise but a foundational element of holistic education. By addressing the current gaps in communication training and fostering an environment that values speaking skills, higher education institutions play a critical role in shaping the next generation of articulate, confident, and capable leaders.

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