

**Key words:** Public speaking and presentation, speech delivery, communication skills

### **Özet**

Bu çalışma, bir Türk üniversitesinde, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı öğrencilerinin Anlatım Becerileri dersinde kendilerini İngilizce ifade etmekte karşılaştıkları güçlükleri tanımlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Öğrencilerin algı ve deneyimlerini öğrenmek için niteliksel durum çalışması yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Programda öğrenim gören 51 ikinci sınıf öğrencisi çalışmaya katkı sağlamıştır. Veri, öğretim elemanının öğrenci sunumlarını değerlendirme amaçlı kullandığı kontrol listeleri ve dönem sonunda öğrencilerden dersin içeriği ve işlenmesi hakkında geridönüt almak için uygulanan açık uçlu bir anketle toplanmıştır. Bulgular İngilizce sunum yapma aşamasındaki güçlüklerin doğası ve nedenleriyle ilgili önemli konuları ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu bulgular, sesletim ve tonlama; uygun görselleri seçme ve düzenleme, numaralandırma ve gönderme işaretlerini kullanma gibi organizasyon problemleri; vücut dilini kullanma, göz teması kurma ve doğru duruşu sağlama gibi sözlü sunum yapma güçlükleri olarak tespit edilmişlerdir. Bu problemlere çözüm olabilecek ve daha etkin iletişim becerileri geliştirebilecek tavsiyeler ve uygulamalar önerilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anlatım becerileri, sunum yapma, iletişim becerileri

### **Problem statement**

In Turkey Higher Education Council (YÖK) organises and administers the higher education institutions regarding their programmes and curricula. Since 1982 both Education Faculties and mainstream primary and secondary schools underwent through important reorganisations concerning their programmes, curricula, general approaches and methods, course contents, and credits. Improving teacher quality and relationship between schools and faculties within more collaborative partnership programmes have been the important issues

### **CLT as the suggested approach in the new ELT Curriculum**

Throughout the search for the perfect language teaching method, the dominant grammar translation method was challenged by audiolingualism in 1950s. This method was based upon behaviourism, which perceived learning as forming habits through drilling and priority was given to spoken rather than written language (Musumeci, 2009). In the 1960s, behaviourism received severe criticisms and consequently, psychologists proposed cognitive psychology. Chomsky developed a new theory called transformational-generative grammar, which promoted language learning as an active mental process and put back the emphasis on grammar with inductive reasoning. Later, methods (the silent way and suggestopedia) based on humanistic approach emerged which emphasised the affective factors in learning. During the 1970s, linguists perceived language as a tool for expressing meaning and exchange of communication rather than as a set of grammatical, lexical and phonological rules (Nunan, 2003).

Canale and Swain (1980) presented a more pedagogically influential analysis of communicative competence with four dimensions of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. These domains include linguistic knowledge, understanding of the dynamics of the related social context, interpretation of the individual message in relation to the specific discourse or text, and coping strategies that communicators use during communication. Therefore, effective communication is strongly related to the pragmatic competence which can be defined as the ability to use the appropriate linguistic expressions for the intended meaning and purpose according to the rules of conversation such as cognitive, biological, and cultural factors. This would lead to interpreting the oral or written discourse through understanding speaker and hearer roles and relationships and the rules of conversational analysis such as opening conversation, turn taking (ongoing checks, facial expressions, and body shifts) and closing conversation (Yule, 2006).

purpose and setting in which the learners will engage in everyday, vocational, professional, and academic situations (p: 38).

### **The syllabus and the procedure of the public speaking and presentation course**

Communication can be defined as a two way process between the source and the receiver in which the message is encoded by the source through a channel. The receiver decodes the message and gives feedback (Günay, 2004). Public speaking can not be separated from this cycle and can be identified as a continuous communication process where messages and signals circulate back and forth between the speaker and listeners. The audience participates with the speaker in creating shared meaning and understanding with a certain aim or intention such as, giving information and selling a product within a context, which can be strongly associated with the nature of public speaking and presentation (Hall, 2009). However, the new ELT curriculum is prescriptive with its implicit definition of the course without a sound rationale, methodology and content. Consequently, the researcher, as a lecturer, felt the necessity of structuring the content and procedure of this new course within the conventions of communicative competence. The following topics were presented for four weeks at the beginning of the course (14 weeks in total):

- The definition and framework of communication process is outlined
  - Channels of communication such as, face to face, television, radio, and electronic are introduced
  - Ways of communication such as, verbal (oral and written) and nonverbal (eye contact, facial expression, and gesture) are identified
  - Rules for communication such as, credibility, correctness, clarity, concreteness are discussed

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Softening (reducing the force of points)

- Rhetorical questions (presenting ideas in questions rather than direct statements)
- Dramatic contrasts (using contrast to reinforce the point)
- Tripling and machine gunning (chunking important points in threes or listing)
- Build-ups (building up a short and simple conclusion)
- Knock-downs (sudden knock-downs of opposing idea)
- Simplification (simpler words for more powerful effect)
- Creating rapport (building up a good relationship with the audience) (see Powell op.cit.).

Basic techniques of presentation were followed by another turn of student presentations for three weeks. Students remained in the same groups but they chose an important issue (global warming, hazards of smoking, domestic violence) to present with a particular aim such as, opposing or supporting an idea and illustrating the advantages or disadvantages of an issue. They used at least four of the techniques given above depending on the topic and the aim of the presentation. Oral feedback was also given after each 7-10 minutes presentation both by the lecturer and the rest of the class to the presenters through the check-list evaluation form. At the end of the course, students were evaluated according to their performance and efficiency of the presentations, and portfolios. Presentations constituted 80% of the final mark while portfolios (including the classroom activities, drills and homework done by students) kept by the students throughout the course accounted 20% of the final mark.

list form which involved three main parts of the content delivery (style of introduction, development, and conclusion), the speech delivery (range of voice, pronunciation, eye contact, gestures and posture) and presentation technique and material use (visuals, pictures, and technology). The check list data revealed two major themes of positive and negative issues in presentation delivery. Positive issues were namely, selecting interesting and informative topics, effective introduction and development in terms of content knowledge, effective pictures and handouts. Negative issues were identified as loaded slides, small fonts, numbering, dependence on slides, poor and sudden conclusion, time management, inability to maintain correct posture, lack of eye contact and voice control, incorrect pronunciation and grammar, and difficulties in coping with basic techniques of presentation (signposting, sound scripting, emphasis, tripling, and repetition).

### **Positive Issues**

Students selected interesting and informative topics for presentations. They generally stated that although it was difficult for them to make decisions as a group, they had the opportunity to research on the topics which were interesting such as rock music, extreme sports, and fashion. They often found it more difficult to select the topic of the second presentations as they had to have a stance and an aim to present such as to persuade, inform, and to introduce. They generally focused on either global issues, such as swain flue and harms of smoking or personal matters, such as problems regarding student accommodation types and public transportation in the university town. They generally used effective pictures and handouts in presentations which were supported by the use of computer and technology. The introduction and development parts were rich in content and the sequence of the presentations was in a good order. Students introduced themselves, the topic, and the outline of the presentation, defined the target terminology, or the issue, than covered the brief history or facts about the current situation in order to highlight the problem statement, and finally they suggested problem solving

### **Negative Issues**

Loaded slides, small fonts, numbering, dependence on slides, and poor and sudden conclusion were perceived to be the most problematic issues which created timing and management problems to students. The difficulties related to posture, pronunciation, lack of eye contact and voice control were identified as speech delivery problems. Students often failed to articulate long or technical words such as 'economical', 'leukemia', and 'simultaneous'. They could not differentiate phonemes (low/law, soap/soup, bad/bed) from each other during oral production, which created understanding problems. Practising some of the basic techniques of presentation (signposting, sound scripting, emphasis, tripling, and repetition) was problematic regarding the second presentations as students had to use at least four of them for the specific purposes depending on the topic. Students had difficulties in signposting especially in the first presentations. They failed to use instructions such as 'to move on', 'let's move on to', and 'to conclude' in order to give directions to the audience. Using intensifiers ('just', 'entire', 'whole'), emphatic expressions ('I completely agree', 'we sincerely hope', 'we strongly recommend'), giving reasons ('because', 'therefore'), focusing on key points through explanations, and repetitions, and creating rapport through using tag questions ('don't we?', 'haven't we?') and phrases such as 'you see', 'I mean', and 'do you mean?' were problematic issues identified during the second presentations. Incorrect grammar concerning either declarative knowledge such as, correct use of phrases ('raising cultural awareness', 'decision making', 'market share') or procedural knowledge such as, using incorrect form of past participle (sawn\*/seen, losen\*/lost) and omitting prepositions (listen me\*/listen to me, look the slide\*/look at the slide) were also identified as problematic issues during the presentations.

### **Questionnaire**

An open-ended questionnaire was conducted at the end of the course in order to evaluate the efficiency of the particular course in terms

important role in the curriculum since we have improved communication and presentation skills which would help us in teaching as we learned how to control our voice, and body, and how to give public speaking in front of the audience'. S3 mentioned that: '...lesson presentation is similar to giving public presentation as you need to plan and introduce the topic and do the activities with materials so the course was very useful in terms of developing teaching skills'.

### **Negative Issues**

Negative issues were identified as limited time and space for speaking due to big number of students in the class, discouraging feedback from the classmates and the lecturer, limited samples of effective speech, and portfolio keeping. S4 expressed this '...the course was useful but as we are crowded we had some timing problems. We could have given one or two more speeches. We couldn't practise speaking that much...'. Students stated that limited time (7-10 minutes) for presentation and discouraging feedback from the classmates and the lecturer caused disappointment, anxiety and stress. S5 explained that '...we had a very limited time as we are crowded as a class so timing was so stressful and some friends and you criticised us when we cut short the presentation. You said we jumped into conclusion but we did not have time. This was discouraging'. Students indicated that keeping portfolio was not useful as it was repetitive and boring. They suggested that they needed a bigger number of effective speech sample as models. S6 stated that 'we needed more effective sample speech to analyse before we gave presentations and portfolio keeping was not effective as we already did the tasks at home or at the school with you (the lecturer)'.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The check list data revealed that although students were successful in selecting interesting and informative topics, presenting effective introduction and development and using effective pictures and handouts; they had difficulties in organising visuals, concluding the

pragmatic appropriateness, as well as pronunciation, intonation, and use of body language. These activities create conditions for learners to produce a variety of responses and they allow learners to express themselves through content and procedure. Language therefore is not the aim of the lesson, but a means of communication. They improve the awareness of the learner by opening doors to undiscovered worlds of foreign culture and language and communication skills, which could potentially give a more creative, authentic, less guided context and agenda to language learning and teaching (Larsen-Freeman, 2002).

Yet, a major problem of language teaching in the ELT classrooms has been the creation of an authentic situation and context for communication. A language classroom, especially one outside the community of native speakers, like Turkey, is isolated from the authentic context of events, target culture and natural language (Nguyen, 2010). Similarly, Baturay and Akar (2007) state that practising receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills in isolation does not support authentic communication in language learning as in real life one particular skill is not performed without any other. Therefore, skill integration would potentially stimulate more genuine and real world type discourse regarding effective communication which can be defined as an act of sending, receiving and exchanging information of any kind through verbal, written, visual and paralinguistic channels such as gestures and body language. Thus, basic skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), grammar, pronunciation, effective communication and public speaking courses need to be taught in integration so that effective presentation and communication can be a part of the other courses such as skill teaching and teaching practice when suitable.

Pragmatic and discourse competences need to be integrated into the syllabus of communicative classrooms as the interpretation of linguistic meaning in context, the factors governing social interaction and the ability to use the appropriate linguistic expressions for the intended meaning and purpose according to the conventional rules of discourse such as, coherence, cohesion and turn taking are indispensable parts of

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analysis of the speech delivery problems would allow students more time for the noticing speech delivery difficulties. This could be a part of learning portfolios as the evidence of learning, reflection and change, which would make portfolio keeping more useful and purposeful (Miccoli op.cit.)

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10. Tüm çizimler, haritalar, grafikler, fotoğraflar v.b., şekil olarak değerlendirilmeli ve ardışık olarak numaralandırılmalıdır ( Şekil 1- Şekil 2 gibi). Her bir şekil için uygun bir başlık kullanılmalıdır.
11. Tablolar ardışık olarak numaralandırılmalıdır. Her bir tablo için uygun başlık kullanılmalıdır.
12. Dergideki Referans Sistemi, American Psychologists Association (APA) versiyon 6.0'dır.
13. Dergi Yayın Kurulu, makaleleri, üç hakeme gönderir. Makaleler, en az iki hakemin olumlu görüşüyle yayımlanır.
14. Yayımlanması için düzeltilmesine karar verilen yazıların, yazarları tarafından en geç (posta süresi de dahil olmak üzere) 30 gün içerisinde, yeniden Yayın Kuruluna gönderilmesi gerekir. Belirlenen sürede gönderilen makaleler bir sonraki dönemde yayımlanmak üzere sıraya konulur. Metin, değişiklikleri isteyen hakemler tarafından yeniden incelenebilir.
15. Hakem onayı alan makaleler, raporların tamamlanma tarihlerine göre sıraya konularak yayımlanır.
16. Dergiye gönderilecek yazılar, iki kopya alınarak hazırlanmalıdır. Bunlardan bir kopya posta yolu ile gönderilmeli; bir kopya ise, elektronik posta aracılığıyla iletilmelidir. Elektronik posta olarak gönderilen nüshada, yazar/yazarların adı soyadı, makalelerin tam adı, bağlı buldukları kurum ve unvanları, iş/cep telefonları ve elektronik posta adreslerini içeren bir kapak sayfası bulunmalıdır. Kapak sayfası, posta yolu ile gönderilecek kopyaya da eklenmelidir.
17. Yazarlar, yayınlarını İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Dergisine göndermekle, telif haklarını İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Dergisine devretmiş sayılırlar.
18. Dergide yazısı yayımlanan yazarlara, iki adet dergi ücretsiz olarak gönderilir. Ayrıca, telif hakkı ödenmez.
19. Ulusal ve Uluslararası düzeyde akademik bilgi paylaşımının sağlanması amacıyla İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Dergisi'nde