Research paper

Improving Saudi EFL Students' Aural Oral Skills

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Saudi Arabia ... Abh

Aural and oral skills are the skills that enable EFL learners to perform meaningful communication and classroom interaction. Some of EFL Saudi learners avoid to practicing oral aural skills in the L2 and most of the time they exhibit a passive attitude in class. The problem of oral skills can be attributed to a variety of interrelated factors ranging from learner-cultural background and the teaching styles. In many EFL classes the aural oral skills have been somewhat neglected or poorly taught. Motivated learners create a motivated and suitable atmosphere for learning the language in their classroom dealing with challenges, concentrating on the aural oral complex tasks at hand, and stimulating others in the classroom. The implementation of (ICT) in the educational environment especially in the teaching and learning of foreign languages provided language teachers and learners with authentic input through the use computer to enhance EFL learners' aural and oral skills.

Key words: Aural, perform, communication ,avoid, attitude, neglected.

مخلص

المهارات السمعية والشفهية تمكن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية من أداء التواصل والتفاعل الصفي الجيد . يتفادى بعض طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بالمملكة العربية السعودية ممارسة المهارات السمعية الشفهية باللغة الإنجليزية لإنطباعهم السئ ناحية اللغة الإنجليزية. يعزى تفادي الطلاب لممارسة المهارت السمعية والشفهية باللغة الإنجليزية لعدة عوامل تتعلق بخلفيات الطلاب الثقافية وأساليب التدريس.ففي كثير من صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية المهارات الشفوية مهملة أو تدرس بطريقة تقليدية. الطلاب المحفزين ينشئون مناخ تعليمي محفز و يواجهون التحديات اللغوية ويمارسون تمارينسمعية شفهية معقدة ويرغبون غيرهم من طلاب الصف في ممارسة تلك المهارات اللغوية.إستخدام التقنيات الحديثة في التعليم وفرت مصادر لغوية حقيقية خلال إستخدام الكمبيوترلمعلمي وطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية لتحسين المهارات السمعية والشفهية.

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INTRODUCTION

Aural and Oral Language Skills

Aural and oral refer to two of the most basic skills in language learning: listening and speaking. Moreover, these two adjectives are interlinked to each other since speaking and listening are not entirely discrete activities. In learning a language, people listen then speak and later learn to read and write. The speaking provides sounds to be expressed, whereas listening requires sounds to understand messages.

Bozorgian (2012) asserted that listening is the basic foundation of language acquisition, and that there is a strong correlation between audio skills with a different language system. This sequence clearly shows the importance of aural skill in learning the oral skill. The first step of learning a language in normal circumstances is to listen to the target language. However, language starts with the ear, when a baby starts to talk; he does it

by hearing the sounds of his parent and imitating them. In another side, the four skills of a language: listening, speaking, writing and reading develop each other. In other words, what you learn and practice through the exercise of one skill is reinforced through further activities related to other skills

The Importance of Oral Skills in EFL Setting

Oral skills enable EFL students to communicate and interact in a meaningful and fruitful form, that is, exchanging information, negotiating meaning, supporting ideas, facing oral defenses, is a way to motivate students to see the foreign language as a vehicle for social interaction. For that reason, it is important to foster situations in which learners can face real communication in a foreign language. An argument that supports this view is found in By gate (1987: 1), who states:

> "*Our learners often need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged, and through which they make or lose friends.*"

However, in interaction students use all they possess of the language, all they have learned or casually absorbed in real life exchanges (Brown, (1994:159).On the other hand, it is important to create a positive environment to encourage the learners' interaction. As such, they can express their ideas, feelings and opinions without feeling afraid of making mistakes. Students can also carry out communicative tasks in an effective way. Willis (1996) states that creating a low stress atmosphere and using the language for real purposes are ways to get meaningful communication and through interaction learners have the chance to acquire discourse skills.

Teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia

English language has played a significant role for Saudi individuals and society alike. Al-Saraj (2014) asserted that foreign language instruction is particularly important in Saudi Arabia because of rapidly increasing pressure for Saudi Arabian students to learn English. Mahboob and Elyas (2014) emphasized that English has been particularly important in the Saudi education system because of its perceived economic value; the language has become intrinsically linked with the discourse of petroleum. Furthermore, English plays a key role in enhancing foreign investments in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government has recognized education as the cornerstone of a knowledge-based economy that can support sustainable development and economic growth.

Socially, the use of English in Saudi Arabia enhances the rapid spread of technology and contributes to an increasingly borderless society. According to Alrashidi and Phan (2015), access to such technology allows Saudis to communicate with people across geographical borders without barriers through social media. In terms of religion, Islam in no way underestimates the value of learning foreign languages (including English); rather, it encourages doing so for a variety of practical reasons. Teaching of English at most colleges of Saudi Arabia serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English and later lays the basis for Specific English which will be used in the years of the students' specialties such as business, health, computers etc. English teaching is taught even at the school levels, but it does not enjoy as much important part in the curriculum as in many other developing countries.

Problems of Saudi EFL Learners in Aural-Oral Performance

Learners of foreign languages usually do not like to practice oral aural skills in the L2 and most of the time they exhibit a passive attitude in class. The low English language competence of Saudi learners is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon. The problem of oral skills can be attributed to a variety of interrelated factors ranging from learner-related variables. Light bown and Spada, (2013) show that low achievement in the foreign language learning is the result of a complex interaction of both internal and external factors. For example, a controlling, aggressive teacher is an external factor that negatively affects learners' motivations, while the anxiety that such teachers instill in their students is an internal factor that negatively affects students' learning outcomes.

Most teachers take it for granted and believe that it will develop naturally within the process of language learning.

Thomas and Brian Dyer, (2007) argue that one of the reasons for the opinion that listening is a skill that tends to be neglected is the feeling among language teachers that this skill is automatically acquired by the learner as he learns to speak the language. Most teachers also assume listening is synonymous to breathing automatic

Another reason why this skill is not given serious attention is the fact that incompetence in it is easy to hide through nodding and shaking of the head, which may give the impression of understanding, even there is none. Still another reason is that audio-lingual courses give the impression that they are teaching listening when in fact they are teaching other skills. In addition to this, Nobuko Osada, (2004) reported that listening has not drawn much attention of both teachers and learners, they are generally less aware of its importance. On the other hand Mendelson (1994) proposes three reasons for why

listening was poorly taught. First of all, listening was not accepted as a separate skill to be taught explicitly for a long time. Supporters of the idea argued that language learners would improve their listening skill on their own while they are listening to the teacher during the day. Secondly, teachers felt insecure about teaching listening. And finally, the traditional materials for language teaching were not efficient enough to teach listening.

Brophy (2004), states that learners come to school with motivation and enthusiasm, but when they begin to encounter certain external practices, such as responding to their teachers' questions, completing their assignments, taking tests, and having their performances monitored, graded, and reported to their parents, learners may begin to find school anxiety-provoking and psychologically threatening. It is usually believed that the poor result in English is mainly due to the traditional approach to teaching of English right from the school level.

Speaking Difficulties Face EFL Learners

According to (Ur 1996: 120), speaking seems to be one of the most difficult skills students may possess. The speaking skill seems to be problematic for many EFL students. That is to say the use of English for oral communication appears to be difficult for learners of English as a foreign language. Zhang (2009) claims that for the majority of English learners, speaking is the most difficult skill to master. The problem is exacerbated when the language is only heard in the classroom and not practiced. The problem is also intensified when there is no support for its use outside the classroom.

Improving EFL Learners' Oral Skills

The aim of EFL teaching and learning process is to develop EFL learners the four language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. However, many people identify fluency in speaking with the most desirable ability in their target language, for being able to talk smoothly with a native speaker very often proves the actual linguistic level. Accordingly, for most students, the ability to speak a foreign language is synonymous with knowing that language World Scientific News 1 (2015) It is the basic means of human communication.
Oral language skills require learners being able to interact with people in authentic situations, not only during classroom controlled speaking activities Gołębiowska 1987). Therefore, teachers' task to develop that skill is extremely challenging and needs much time, as only by practice may learners succeed. In the majority of EFL classes, communicative efficiency is still not a priority. In most classes teachers fail to provide students with activities that would reflect genuine interaction.

Students rarely talk to each other and rarely have the possibility to talk to a teacher as well.
Many English teachers claim that the best way to acquire speaking skills is by interacting. This aim is fulfilled by means of communicative language teaching and collaborative learning. Communicative language teaching is based on real-life situations that require communication. Following this method in EFL classes, there will be opportunities for the students to communicate with their partners in the target language. It is teachers´ task to create situations in class where students have real-life communication, activities related to their daily life and meaningful tasks that give them the chance to practice oral language. As it has been previously said, speaking is usually the most problematic skill to teach because, apart from its difficulty, teachers do not have much time to concentrate on this skill

The Role of Aural Skills in Developing Oral Skills

Morris & Leavey, 2006) have underscored the role of listening skill in human learning and development. Indeed, listening skill provides the primary impetus to initiate first, second and foreign language learning and later the medium of communication to sustain the long and often tedious learning process Linebarger, (2001). However, listening is the most important skill for language learning because it is the most widely used language skill in normal daily life (Rost 2002), and it develops faster than the three other language skills, which in turn suggests that it can facilitate the emergence of the other language skills (Oxford, 1990)
EFL learners cannot develop speaking skills unless they also develop listening skills; to have a successful conversation, students must understand what is said to them. Later the ability to understand spoken English may become very important (for listening to the radio, understanding foreign visitors, studying etc.). To develop this ability, students need plenty of practice in listening to English spoken at normal speed. Listening of spoken English is an important way of acquiring the language of 'picking up' structures and vocabulary.
In a situation where learners are living in a country where English is the first language, they have plenty of 'exposure' to the language – they hear it all the time, and can acquire it more easily than learners who do not hear English spoken around them. However, EFL teachers need to give these learners as much opportunity to listen to spoken English as possible. To illustrate, Rost (1994) proposed three reasons showing the essential role listening plays to improve speaking skill. First, spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Because learners must interact to achieve understanding, access to speakers of the language is essential.
Moreover, learners" failure to understand the language

they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning. Second, authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to attempt to understand the language as native speakers actually use it. Third, listening exercises provide teachers with the means for drawing learners" attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, new interaction patterns) in the language. Listening and reading have much in common in terms of input processing. Pearson and Fielding (1991) linked listening with reading skill. They argued that like reading, listening involves phonological, syntactic and semantic orchestration of skill and the knowledge controlled by cognitive processes at the same time. Further, Very recently, a study conducted by Yalcinkaya, Muluk and Ashin (2009) show that the foundation of receptive (reading) and expressive (writing) skills is built upon aural (speaking) and oral (listening) skills. They argue that written language skills hardly develop without realizing the infrastructure of a language

The Importance of Listening Comprehension

Through listening, the learners receive input that is essential for language learning to take place (Rost, 1994). Therefore, teaching listening comprehension is important as listening lessons "are a vehicle for teaching elements of grammatical structure and allow new vocabulary items to be contextualized within a body of communicative discourse" (Morley, 2001). In addition, since English is being used as an international language for communication by people from non-native English speaking countries lately, teaching listening has gained more importance lately. On the other hand, teaching listening has also been a challenge for language teachers for several reasons. Anderson and Lynch (1988:3) state that"

> "*we only become aware of what remarkable feats of listening we achieve when we are in an unfamiliar listening environment, such as listening to a language in which we have limited proficiency*".

Most people think that being able to write and speak in a second language means that they know the language; however, if they do not have the efficient listening skills, it is not possible to communicate effectively. According to Nunan, (1998)that is, listening is the basic skill in language learning and over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening.

Listening Comprehension Problems

Listening is one of the most difficult skills for language learners Guo & Wills, (2006). Because of the

overemphasis on grammar, reading and vocabulary, learners who learn English as a foreign language have serious problems in listening comprehension (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011) some of EFL students find some features of listening comprehension easier than others. In that sense, Ur (2007:20) states

> *some of the main difficulties that the students encounter while listening are: "hearing sounds, understanding intonation and stress, coping with redundancy and noise, predicting, understanding colloquial vocabulary, fatigue, understanding different accents, using visual and aural environmental clues".*

Moreover Underwood (1989) explains the common obstacles that students experience while listening as speed of delivery, not being able to have words repeated, limited vocabulary, failing to follow signals like transitions, lack of contextual knowledge, being able to concentrate, and habits like trying to understand every word in what they hear. According to Ur (2007), another important problem is students' lack of ability to use the environmental clues to grasp the meaning. It is not because students cannot perceive the visual clues, as they can already do it in their L1, but they lack the ability to use these visual clues while listening to the target language, a process in which learners work really hard to understand the native speakers and catch the little details. Moreover, for a language learner, comprehending the meaning of the spoken language requires more effort when they are compared with native speakers of that language.

For instance, outside noise or pronunciation differences affect learners more than the native speakers. Although learners are able to cope with this situation in their own language, Ur (2007) provides several explanations for why foreign language learners do not have the same ability to cope with such problems in the target language. First of all, although language learners recognize the words when they see them in written form or pronounced slowly, they cannot understand them just because of the rapid speech or they just do not know them. Secondly, learners may not be familiar with the sound-combinations, lexis and collocations which help them make guesses to fill the missing parts. Not being familiar with the colloquial vocabulary is also one of the problems by itself that students face with. Finally, language learners have a tendency to believe that for successful comprehension they have to understand everything.

The Impact of Motivation on EFL learners' Oral Aural Skills

Motivation is considered as an important element in

learning/teaching process because the learners need to be aware not only what to learn, but also why they learn. They should find the tasks at the hand interesting to learn in an effective way. Therefore, the learners' attitudes, their own motivational orientations toward learning English, and teacher's contribution are from the main ways to increase learner's motivation, and then to improve their success in acquiring English, especially during the classroom.

However, there are learners who try to be successful in their learning English as foreign language through speaking the language in the classrooms. The psychological factor which is an impulse that generates the action and plays a significant role in achieving any kind of purpose is called "motivation". In other words, motivation is what drives people to act in different situations that they should handle while they are living. Many scholars and writers have written about students' motivation and its role in speaking a second/ foreign language.

Moreover, the research has included the relation between learners' motivational orientations and language learning. Yufrizal (2008: 111) states that the factors which influence the second language learning are motivation and attitudes, anxiety, age difference, personality factors, cognitive factors, and other factors. Motivation can push someone to complete a course of work. Motivation is also a passion to do something. Therefore, motivation plays very important role in language learning. Success or failure in language learning seems largely dependent on students' motivation to learn the target language.

Dörnyei (1998) further argues the importance of motivation by stating that motivation provides learners the primary stimuli for initiating second language learning and later motivation become the driving force for learners to be persistent in tedious learning process, so that learners may be able to complete long-term goals if there is sufficient motivation. The theory implies that motivation is one of the determining factors in developing a second language. In particular, motivation seems to be very important in the development of speaking skills. One who has strong motivation might take a part in speaking. It can be inferred that one might speak well in English as a result of motivation which pushes to speak. So, motivation has main role for knowing someone's ability in speaking. For example, one who has strong speaking motivation will practice and train himself to speak fluently and accurately in order to be better speaker. On the contrary, one who has low motivation in speaking will rarely practice and train himself to speak fluently and accurately. So, it might influence his speaking ability stay the same or even get worse.

The Influence of Modern Technology on EFL Learners' Oral Skills

The implementation of (ICT) in the educational environment especially in the teaching and learning of foreign languages provided language teachers and learners with authentic input through the use of CD-ROMs to enhance their level. According to Alsied (2013), the invention of the internet web-based tools gave birth to ICT which is considered as "Garden of Eden" if it is integrated successfully in the language classrooms. However it can be said that the ultimate aim of many learners is to be competent speakers of the target languages. Speaking is always given the priority and this is not a baseless claim for the one who attends EFL classes and see how students pay more interest to their oral performance. We often hear statements like "s/he speaks good/bad English. However, teachers should keep in mind that learning to speak English as a second or foreign language is not as easy as speaking mother tongue, the majority fail to speak the target language fluently and accurately .Thus, many scholars believe that the appropriate use and the successful integration of ICTs in the classroom can reduce the impediments that prevent EFL learners from the mastery of the speaking skill

ICT and the Teaching of Oral Production

Despite the fact that the implementation of ICT in the classroom is difficult for many teachers and students as well, it is not only important but essential to use these technologies in the teaching of oral production. According to Hoven, (1999). The integration of ICT in the educational environment is becoming increasingly important. Learners cannot be effective in tomorrow's world if they are trained in yesterday's skill. Therefore, education in EFL classes has to renew itself in order to be in line with the globalized society. As for the field of EFL, Alsied (2013) asserts that it is essential to adopt ICTs in the teaching of speaking skill since it is one of the most important skill to be mastered. Many scholars believe that when teachers integral ICTs they bring the real world into classrooms. Thus, a careful planning and judicious use of ICTs can encourage students develop their speaking skill. ICTs can improve the quality of teaching and learning. It offers teachers and learners a variety and authentic resources of the target language. ICT bridges the target language culture with the teaching and learning process. Thus the integration of ICTs is not only important but is essential for achieving a successful education.

Computer Technology and Improvement of Listening Skill

The use of computerized lessons can enhance EFL students' listening skill. It allows students to learn independently and to receive immediate feedback upon the completion of tasks. According to Plass, and Jones (2005) teaching and learning of listening using various media embedded in computer can enrich the skill and help in producing better results. The use of computer also gives students the opportunity to enhance language learning by bringing in the real world. Digitized speech and video, offered by the use of computer, can also be highly effective for developing this important language skill. Using computer, with internet, also has plenty of benefits for developing listening. Such use can provide so many authentic audio and video resources to listen and to develop the associated language skills.

Classroom Speaking Activities

In most EFL classes, teacher- pupil exchanges have little communicative value because there is no real information being exchanged. Typically, a teacher asks a "display" question (that is, a question the teacher knows the answer to), an individual student answers, and the teacher evaluates or corrects the answer. Eventually, this is an unrealistic use of language and these questions have clear limitations in terms of how much genuine communication practice the student receives (Dinapoli, 2000). Evidently, for genuine communication to occur in the language classroom, teacher-student (and student-student) exchanges must go beyond display questions and should be based on the gap that occurs between interlocutors when one does not know in advance what the other is going to say (Liao, 200). For the sake of a successful learning process, students should be comfortable to speak and explore their own thinking. They should be encouraged to employ their ideas among classroom activities, to express themselves and achieve their goals. The speaking activities are one of opportunities to practice the students' speaking skill which can highly support speaking fluency development in class. The goal is to have them learn and develop through speech and allow them to practice using all of the language they know in situations that resemble real settings. As Harmer (1984) reports since there were stimulations activities in the classroom for motivating the students, they were increased the self-confidence of being of part in the classroom including answering the question, sharing the idea, and also presentation. For that reason, the students may get discouraged in learning the language unless they get enough chances and activities to practice speaking skill in language classroom. Baker and Westrup (2003: 5) also put forward the

following reasons to practice speaking during a lesson:

> "*Speaking activities can reinforce the learning of new vocabulary , grammar or functional language ; Speaking activities give students the chance to use the new language they are learning Speaking activities give more advanced students the chance to experiment with the language they already know in different situations and different topics".*

Moreover, speaking activities promote speaking skill by decreasing the lack of motivation in learning English which is caused by the inappropriate techniques used by the teacher in teaching speaking skill. Therefore, teaching speaking skill is an effective way to overcome this situation. The teacher should select one or numerous language teaching activities that are appropriate with the level of his students. O"Mlley and Pierce (1996: 59) assert the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language (ACTFL) suggests that "different kinds of speaking activities (and consequently assessment task) are appropriate at different levels of proficiency." Richards and Lockhart (1994) define practice activities as tasks used to perform or learn a particular item or involve the use of a given model. For example, role play may be used to practice communicating in different social contexts. The use of variety of different tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative since it provides a purpose for classroom activity" (Lee, 2000:31). Consequently, one can say that *these activities are not done to practice 16 languages only but to achieve also the communication goals.* The aim of communicative activity in class is to get learners to use the language they are learning to interact in realistic and meaningful ways. Usually involving exchanges of information or opinion." Therefore, language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at making as great as possible individual language use. This claims the teacher not only to make a friendly and humanistic classroom atmosphere, but also to provide every student with a turn to speak.

Discussion / Conversation

In a language classroom, discussion is the most common speaking activity. It is, then, one form of communicative interaction activities. In general, it is the activity in which students talk about something and tell each other their opinions or ideas. Byrne (1986:67) states that:

> *"by discussion is meant by any exchange of ideas and opinions either a basis, with you (teacher) the mediator and to some extend as the participator or within the context of group with the student talking among them''.*

It is an exchange of views for the sake of "the communication and of the communicative continuum" (Harmer, 2001: 273). This action or process of talking and debating a topic can be under the form of a task given up by the teacher who already prepared a title for discussion with a minimum of supervision and interruption by him. Their agree or disagree with the topic will certainly lead them to express themselves with more confidence which result an ability to increase / enhance their speaking skill.

Discussions, then , can be held for different causes, to find solutions of a topic problematic , share ideas , to arrive at a conclusion, and the discussion points will be relevant to what is set by the teacher. It is preferable to form groups of 4 or 5 students to work on a specific topic for a given time period. This type of discussion is called group discussion. These scheduled small groups can give every student the opportunity and time to express himself with his classmates and correct his mistakes which then motivate him to tell it loudly. Kidsvatter (1996: 242) states that *a small group discussion is dividing the large classroom into small groups of students to achieve specific objectives permits students to assume more responsibility for their own learning*. In the same sense, Littlewood, (1999) added that classroom discussion makes learners more able and appropriate to use FL as well as talk about their experiences. Whereas , in order not to face this activity the failure, the teacher should motivate and encourage students to speak spontaneously without being afraid from the error risk which make them reluctant to give their opinion in front of the whole class.

Consequently, most educators agree "the best discussions in class are these that arise spontaneously, either because of something personal that learners report or because a topic (Thornbury, 2005). That to say, teacher should be knowledgeable enough about reducing the students concern, through designing a discussion situation that students can enjoy. According to Harmer (2001) one of the best ways of encouraging discussion is to provide activities, which force students to reach a decision or a consensus. Furthermore, it can provide some enjoyable and productive speaking in language classroom. Another example of discussion can happen after the presentation of a short exposé, students can resort to comment on the topic and express their opinions. The aim of this discussion then is to develop students' oral expression and to share also opinions and debate points of view. On the whole, classroom discussions are not only a tool to develop learner's ability but it also helps them to make quick decision and boosts their critical thinking. It makes students learn how they defend their beliefs or opinions politely and justify their answers despite their disagree with others. Here are some advantages of discussion: Participants are engaged in different talks where they learn to analyze

appropriately on the spur of the moment and explain their own ideas and utterances.   There is a cooperation of information which reinforce the language development. - Learners use their own knowledge of language into communicative use. - There is always a scope for additional communicative use of discussion sessions especially during reports.

Accordingly role play is: an individual's spontaneous behavior reacting to others in a hypothetical situation. There are two types of role playing: role cards and cue cards. The former , the teacher show the students their roles to act freely without giving them any speech or orders on how to act or speak, whereas in the latter students should be restricted to what was prepared from the teacher. Role play has become increasingly common in management courses. This creates a good ambience in the classroom that give good students the opportunity to practice their language and inspire students with lower proficiency levels to play and enhance their language. Role play is an enjoyable activity which encourages interaction in EFL classroom. It supports realistic conversation and communication. This activity is a shift from telling a story to acting out a situation where participants have to improvise .Hence ,various advantages of role play can be considered; -Role play is an extremely flexible activity which leave more space for students to exercise individual differences , their imagination and initiative. - Role plays give the opportunity for students and check out their comprehension by exploring feelings and ideas of characters in given situation. (Ur, 1984). - Role play is a direct interactive activity which fosters spontaneous oral exchanges between students. - Students who participate in roles plays learn the interactive skills of arguing, informing, persuading, complaining, discussing, compromising. Role play is a unique activity which deals with contemporary issues. Being a dynamic activity, participants discover constantly from each other new vocabulary or grammatical rules. - Help students to understand that there are casual relationships between people's behavior and the outcomes of events (Livingstone (1983). Role play is a challenging, funny and motivating activity. All in all, role play is a classroom activity which gives the students the opportunity to practice the language, the aspects of role behaviour and the actual roles he may need outside the classroom.

Information Gap-activities

Information gap is communicative task which aims to information exchange, either teacher/learner or learner/learner. Communicative practice imposes some sorts of information gap where one student is having information and the other does not. Hedge (2000:181) states that *"it involves each learner in pair or group*

possessing information which the other learners do not have' gap activities are interactive activities where students are supposed to be working together having different information that should be shared to get the complete and correct information. Information gap activities are clearly defined by Gower.et al (1995), A situation where information is known by only one or some of those present, students use the language they have at their command to bridge the information gap, by asking question, giving information…etc. This activity requires students to use the knowledge which has been distributed to them to complete the task. According to Scarcella (1992), information gap activities are probably ones which serve language development than other activities and produce bigger output. The usefulness of information gap as an activity can be drawn in the process which students are involved all equally to reach its goals. Most information gap activities are strongly motivating and effective because of the nature of its tasks since it is require students to find solution and solve problem. These tasks are done to test language competence, mastery and ability as well. The test provides teachers with tangible evidence of students' communicative competence whether they are competent or not.

CONCLUSION

Aural-Oral skills enable EFL students to communicate and interact in a meaningful as exchanging information, negotiating meaning and supporting ideas. English plays a key role in enhancing foreign investments in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government has recognized education as the cornerstone of a knowledge-based economy that can support sustainable development and economic growth. Some of the EFL learners unable to practice oral aural skills in the L2 and most of the time they exhibit a passive attitude in class.EFL teachers´ are in a position to create situations in class where students have real-life communication, activities related to their daily life and meaningful tasks that give them the chance to practice oral language. The implementation of (ICT) in the educational environment especially in the teaching and learning of foreign languages provided language teachers and learners with authentic input to enhance their level in aural-oral skills. Some activities can enhance EFL learners oral aural skills like discussion, conversations and role play activities.

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