

# SLA Classroom Research and EFL Teaching Practices of Oral Skills

Sami Al-wossabi

English Department, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—Second language acquisition studies have been significantly impacting the field of language learning and teaching and constantly informing EFL/ESL teachers with the best practices and implications for their language classes. The present study, therefore, examines issues on teaching practices of oral skills that are addressed in SLA studies and their relevance and applicability to the Saudi EFL situation in higher education. It highlights issues such as, the importance and limitations of the negotiation of meaning in group-work and pairs, the effect of training of interaction strategies on learners' oral development, the importance of predicting intonational prominence, providing appropriate feedback and the use of authentic materials. The present paper will further provide some recommendations on how EFL teachers may initiate interactive speaking activities in the EFL classroom and how that would aid learners' second language development.

**Index Terms**—SLA studies, negotiation of meaning, authentic materials, appropriate feedback, SLA speaking activities

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers should always consider and value their students' willingness to speak the target language and teach accordingly. Failing to support students in their attempts to produce output will consequently and consistently deter them from present and future opportunities to speak the language they are learning.

Yet, speaking in the target language is not an easy task and requires sustainable efforts on the part of teachers as well as learners. Bailey and Savage (1994) stated that "Speaking in a second language is the most demanding of the four skills ... for many people, speaking is seen as the central skill" (p. 7). Golebiowska (1990) claimed that speaking is, "...the major and one of the most difficult task confronting any teacher of languages" (p. 9). Luoma (2004) pinpointed that,

"The ability to speak in a foreign language is at the very heart of what it means to be able to use a foreign language. Our personality, our self-image, our knowledge of the world and our ability to reason and express our thoughts are all reflected in our spoken performance in a foreign language (p. 9)

Organizing systematic ways to teach spoken English is a goal worthwhile to achieve taking into account that we have to strike a balance between what we like in a perfect world and what can be done in the real world. However, it seems that in many Saudi EFL classes speaking does not actually receive a major concern either by teachers, students or the administration. The main objectives of the degree course, though addresses speaking goals are lacking realistic implications that are supposed to match students' levels, needs or the learning contexts where no such contact with members of the target group is available.

Although, clearly specified outlines for teaching speaking would be of great help to EFL teachers, there are many obstacles that inhibit the enhancement of oral production skills of Saudi EFL learners. For instance, EFL large class is one of the main hindrances that teachers may encounter. A negative effect on both learners and teachers is always present in such an environment. The majority of learners lack their interest in learning as they may rarely have the chance to speak in the classroom. Teachers, on the other hand, tend to master the scene as to save time and efforts and to have good control over a massive number of students that could be up to one hundred students in one class. In such learning environment, students' passivity is typical and writing skills seems to be the dominant skill for determining students' achievements and language proficiencies.

What follows is a selective account of SLA literature pertaining different perspectives and practices for teaching speaking skills. The purpose is to highlight SLA oral teaching practices that could potentially update traditional teaching practices of oral skills in the EFL Saudi context, provide educators with techniques to enliven their EFL speaking classes and help exceed the existing shortcomings with the least efforts and time particularly in EFL large classes.

## II. SLA CONSIDERATION ON TEACHING SPEAKING

### A. Timing Teachers' Use of Language

Walsh (2002) stated that, "Teachers' ability to control their use of the language is at least as important as their ability to select appropriate methodologies" (p. 3). He conducted a study where, eight experienced EFL teachers were

requested to participate. Each teacher was asked to make 30 minutes audio-recordings of their lessons. All of them were told that their recordings should contain teacher-fronted activity with examples of teacher-learner interaction. The results showed that only some teachers were able to generate opportunities for learners to participate interactively because their use of language and pedagogic purpose are at one. That is, those teachers were aware of the necessity to make a balance between their use of the language and the pedagogical aim of the task at hand. Walsh concluded his study by confirming the fact that teachers' ability to control their language use has great implications for both teacher education and classroom practices.

Walsh's (2002) study has a clear relevance to the Saudi EFL classroom where teachers usually control the topic of discussion. In such context, teachers tend to speak all the time and most learners are merely listening and not participating. EFL learners are resultantly showing no interest to whatever their teachers talk about or ask them to do. Similarly, some teachers may also show no concern or any feelings of guilt for their students' negligence. Thus, mutual hidden mistrust is building up mostly as the result of teachers' excessive time talking and only hardly as the result of learners' carelessness.

As suggested in the above study, EFL teachers must rethink of their use of the language classroom as to whether it constructs or obstructs learners from having opportunities to use the language meaningfully and appropriately. Walsh also provided some pedagogical implications with which EFL teachers particularly those engaged in teacher-fronted activities should be concerned with:

- (1) engaging learners in the classroom,
- (2) encouraging interactional adjustment between teachers and learners,
- (3) promoting opportunities for self-expression and
- (4) facilitating and encouraging clarification by learners.

Indeed, as Walsh's recommendations implied, when EFL learners are involved even through asking for clarification, they feel they are part of the learning processes and that they share an important part of the responsibility for their own learning. If not, most learners either become uninterested or for the best they tend to concentrate on other aspects of the language such as writing and grammar.

Although, the large number of students may hamper any efforts to adjust and promote interactional strategies in EFL large classes, teachers are still capable of controlling their use of the language. A smart selection of an interesting speaking activity could bring the whole difference in the world in a speaking class. For instance, teachers can use simple activities such as "if-questions" which require students to imagine how they would react to an interesting real life situation using one sentence response. A conditional if question such as, "*what would you do if you are invisible*" would instigate many students to think, act and react.

The mutual interplay between teachers and learners is crucial in the process of L2 acquisition and production. The exchange of roles between speakers and listeners does create a productive context for both learners and teachers while learning and teaching the target language. However, prior to any expected production of output by learners, EFL teachers must guide learners on how to use interaction strategies such as, seeking information, clarifying oneself strategy, using discourse markers, fillers, etc. Learners, then, can develop a sense of involvement and commitment toward better and intelligible utterances in their oral output.

### *B. Interaction Practices and Strategies*

Lam & Wong (2000) carried out a small-scale pilot study to examine the correlation between training of interaction strategies and the development of oral skills in ESL classroom. Fifty-eight sixth secondary students of about 17 years of age and who have been studying English for 13-14 years in Hong Kong were asked to participate. The subjects were average to above average-level. All subjects were asked to participate in a group discussion task and then the discussion was recorded on a pre-and post-training basis. The results indicated that there was not much genuine interaction among learners in the pre-training episode. However, analysis of the post-training episode revealed some sort of interactive speaking in group discussion such as seeking information, clarifying oneself strategy, which did not appear in the pre-training recording. The results also showed many instances of ineffective use of the interaction strategy while trying to participate in group discussion.

However, the process of training learners for the above mentioned interaction strategy needs to be well-planned and should take enough time to measure its effectiveness. We need to teach students interaction strategies such as, asking for clarification, seeking for more information, supporting each other's' output, and expressing thoughts and ideas before we expect them to produce meaningful stretched discourse. Such well-planned training model of interaction strategies would be of a great value to be proposed in the Saudi EFL situation where learners do lack these techniques that are necessary to sustain conversations and avoid communication breakdowns.

Teachers should teach these interaction strategies to their students and remind them to use them while they do tasks. For example, learners can be trained on using phrases and questions such as, "*pardon me*", "*I'm sorry, can you repeat that?*", "*what do you really mean?*", "*can you give me an example of that?*", etc.. Also, the use of discourse markers, such as, *well, I think, and OK* is yet an extremely useful interactional strategy. The ultimate aim for advocating the use of interaction strategies is to enable EFL learners maintain the discussion of a topic and avoid any gaps in communication.

### C. Negotiation of Meaning

A great deal of research studies in SLA explored the role of negotiation of meaning in language acquisition. Mackey (1999) claimed that active participation in conversational interaction affect positively the production of more advanced structures. Nakahama, Tyler & Lier (2001) argued that conversation that takes place during the negotiation of meaning offer substantial learning opportunities at multiple levels of interaction (e.g., discourse management, interpersonal dynamics, topic continuity). De La Fuente (2002) found that learners' comprehension of L2 vocabularies, L2 receptive vocabulary, L2 production and retention were greater when they had opportunity to negotiate meaning in groups.

Pica, et al (1996) suggested that "participation in verbal interaction offer opportunities for learners to follow up on new words and structures to which they have been exposed during language classroom and to practice them in context", (p.59). She conducted a study to test student-student negotiation of meaning and how they help each other to aid their L2 learning while being engaged in negotiated interaction. Thirty two low intermediate Japanese students of English participated in her study. Participants were divided into two groups; twenty NNSs learner-learner group and 10 NSs-learner dyads. Pica found that Learners, though a limited source of modified input and modified output, can provide opportunities for feedback in a simple form. She also found that learners provided more utterances of feedback of the simple segmentation type than did the NSs. Moreover, learners provided morphosyntactically adjusted L2 utterances when they work with each other.

On the other hand, Musumeci (1996) investigated teacher-student negotiation of meaning in three content-based language classrooms. Three 50-minute lessons conducted by three teachers. The three classes contained 14, 20, 14 students respectively learning Italian. The results showed that teachers modified their language when students indicated signals of non-understanding while verbal or non-verbal. Moreover, teachers modified their speech regardless of the activity type (whole class, small groups, or one-to-one), but the students, in this study, preferred to ask for clarification only when they were in small groups or one-to-one interaction with the teachers. Musumeci stated that negotiation of meaning is crucial as it initiates modification of the input by teachers and that makes the input more comprehensible to students. Musumeci also suggested that more negotiation of meaning might result in learner-modified output which will render their speech to be comprehensible to their teachers who are native speakers. Unlike Foster (1998), Musumeci confirmed that negotiation is an important component of the learning experience and that it should not be considered as a repair of imperfect or failed communication.

Pica and her colleagues' (1996) study corroborated the influence of negotiated interaction on learners' modification of their speech while interacting with each other or with native speakers of English. Musumeci's (1996) study, on the other hand, confirmed the importance of the negotiation of meaning in the learning experience as it does not only result in the modification of the teachers' speech but also the modification of learners' language while interacting with their teachers.

However, fostering EFL learners to ask their teachers for clarification by uttering a statement like "I'm sorry! I do not understand" seems to be too difficult to be asked by Saudi EFL learners. It is culturally sensitive for Saudi learners to tell their teacher that they don't understand something particularly in public school settings. However, in higher education where EFL language educators are from different cultural backgrounds and even have more tolerance to such inquiries, teachers should let their students know that it is OK to ask for clarification or express their inability of understanding the topic of discussion. Moreover, teachers should appreciate that using self-clarification strategies is in fact an effective strategy for learners to modify their input which will in turn have potential positive impacts on their ability to speak and express themselves on the long run.

Interestingly, Foster (1998) lessened the influence of the negotiation of meaning in learner-learner interaction under real classroom conditions. She added more support to the need for greater negotiation for meaning between teachers and learners. Foster reported a classroom observation of the negotiation of meaning by EFL learners engaged in required and optional information exchange in both dyads and small groups. The subjects were twenty part-time intermediate students and from a wide age range (17-41). They were assigned to perform four communicative tasks; two by students working in dyads and two by students working in small groups. The results showed that there were very few instances for negotiated interaction whether in dyads or in the small groups. It was also observable in this study that many students did not speak at all. Foster claimed that group-work tasks designed to negotiate meaning might de-motivate learners rather than encouraging them to develop their speaking skills as they feel incompatible and unsuccessful repeating themselves while asking for clarification. She argued that when learners face gaps in communication, they tend not to use the strategy of negotiating for meaning.

This study actually hints at an important point that persists in the Saudi EFL classrooms where many students do not participate or even talk when they are asked to work in groups. That is true, however, unlike what was stated in the above study I would argue that Saudi EFL do not participate mainly because they do not have enough linguistic foundations that would help them negotiate meaning with each other or with their teachers. In this respect, I think Saudi EFL learners should not only be taught strategies for negotiating meaning through introducing them to some phrases of asking for clarification but also with activities that train them to employ their lexical repertoire, exchange information, express their thoughts and ideas and only through activities that are of interest to them.

### D. The Use of Authentic Materials

Another issue that is profoundly discussed in SLA is the use of authentic materials particularly those of corpus based as they represent real spoken genre. McCarthy (1998) stated that, “learners trained to be good observers of data have taken an important step towards facilitating features of talk” (p.52). Basturkmen, (2001) argued that authentic texts could be used to raise the learners’ awareness of language use and strategies of interactive speaking through engaging learners in question-response sequences in talk.

Basturkmen examined three conventional types of description of questioning and their limitations in ELT materials; form-based focus, useful expressions focus, and no language focus. In response to the limitations of the types of questioning used in ELT materials, the author suggested a nice sample of text focused-instructions that teachers may follow to guide learners to the features of interactive talk used in their authentic texts. Some of these instructions are;

1) studying transcribed turns to identify common patterns; using a recording or a transcript to identify how speakers ask for...respond to, etc;

2) transcribing small segments from a recording of naturally occurring talk.

Basturkmen's (2001) model of questioning is guided by text focused-instructions and usually targets advanced learners. Such model can also have great implications for training beginners and intermediates in the Saudi EFL academic setting. For instance, EFL learners can be encouraged to identify common and fixed patterns, phrases or expressions of the language used in authentic texts. When learners become active observers of language use through questioning by asking for clarification or confirmation it is time then to provide them with interactive activities that drive them to initiate discussions and contribute ideas with their peers and their teachers.

#### E. *Suprasegmental Aspects (Intonational Prominence)*

Arabic and English phonological system vary extensively, not only in the range of the sounds each language has, but also in the relative importance of stress and intonation. The teaching of suprasegmental aspects of English is therefore crucial for enhancing Arabic learners' functional intelligibility. There is, however, a predisposition in the Saudi EFL situation to focus on the speech sounds of English, its place and manner of articulation with little concern of suprasegmental aspects of English, such as stress, intonation, and rhythm.

Levis (2001) highlighted the importance of teaching focus, or intonational prominence on functional basis so that it can be transferred meaningfully by learners into their speech. The author argued that intonational prominence, which can be predicted through word class and new-given information, is a critical part of any pronunciation course because of its crucial role in confirming the information that is important in any communicative situation. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) argued that “intonation is an essential part of oral communicative competence that is not usually self-evident to non-native speakers”, (p. 218). The author presented some major problems associated with predicting word class and new given information. For instance, the major problem with predicting focus by word class is that it does not always work well in context as focus in context is usually related to information structure. In response to the traditional ways of teaching predicting focus, the author presented an approach to predicting focus through three functional regularities: *focus in answers to question, the correction of misinformation, and focus in repeated questions*.

Saudi EFL learners are not trained on how and where to place intonational prominence within individual words or sentences in continuous discourse. They are not aware that placing stress improperly on English words can sometimes alter its meaning and could be perceived differently. It is, therefore, valuable as Levis observed in his study, to train learners with activities that address, for instance, the *focus in answers to question* and *focus in repeated questions*. For example, the teacher can write the answers to four questions about himself/herself, marking the focus, “four YEARS”. Students in small groups try to guess what the questions are, “*How long* have you been as a teacher?” This type of activities helps learners identify the focus that is used to provide specific information in answering questions. This training, as the writer suggested will help learners benefit from the “functional uses of language that have clear focus regularities that can be readily applied during the course of speaking” (p. 54).

#### F. *The Impractical Use of CLT Practices*

It is noteworthy here that there is also a tendency to mechanically follow the communicative language teaching method. The speaking syllabus contains many dialogues that address issues such as asking for direction, permission, requesting, etc. Learners are usually asked to practice reading these dialogues rather than for example noticing its linguistic features that could potentially be incorporated in their oral discourse. Unless language educators adjust and adapt CLT practices to suit their learners' needs and language proficiencies, learners will never be able to participate in normal conversation.

Celce-Murcia et al (1997) called for a new perspective of communicative language teaching in the ELT classroom. They argued that CLT, though meant to enhance the learners’ communicative skills, needs to be adapted into a more specific principled approach. The authors explained that the system of language functions proposed by CLT deals mostly with ways of expressing agreeing, inviting, asking for permission, etc, and that in itself as Widdowson ( cited in this study, 1978) suggested does not actually represent “the whole business of communication” (p. 9). They explained that the neglect of linguistic competence by many CLT supporters can be compensated by raising the learners’ awareness of structural regularities and formal prosperities, which will, in turn, increase the language attainment. The authors’ purpose is apparently to call for a new principled communicative approach that involves basically three main tendencies, cited in the above study, and is proposed by Dornyei and Thurrel (1994):

- (1) adding formulaic language,
- (2) raising learners' awareness of the organizational principles of language use within and beyond the sentence level, and
- (3) sequencing communicative tasks more systematically in accordance with a theory of discourse-level grammar.

This article is very valuable in that it shows how important for teachers to realize that CLT in its traditional broad form is not always the magical solution to produce oral output. Although, there is a tendency in the Saudi EFL context towards focusing on language functions such as agreeing, inviting, etc., the outcomes of such approach are not always perceptible. Saudi learners remain unable to use the language as it has been planned. As Celce-Marcia and her colleagues suggested, we are in need for a more specific principled communicative approach that provides both communicative opportunities and a logical coherent framework for teachers to apply such an approach.

#### G. Providing Feedback

Feedback is yet another crucial aspect that needs to be addressed in this paper with regard to the SLA literature. The literature is abundant with SLA studies that recommend teachers to not overtly correct EFL learners' mistakes while producing verbal responses or while speaking dialogues or conversation particularly in the EFL classroom where students are too sensitive to teachers' feedback (Kepner 1991; Semke 1984; Sheppard 1992; Truscott 1996).

Pica (1996) confirmed that learners' response to negative feedback did not have an immediate impact on modifying learners' production. However, feedback should be explicit and very selective as not to inhibit the learners' attempt to communicate. Truscott (1996) claimed that error correction should be altogether abandoned, stating some motives for such drastic action: (a) explicit EC can be discouraging, (b) many teachers themselves are unable to completely understand students' mistakes and therefore should not attempt to fix them, c) it is nearly impossible for a teacher to adequately balance consistency with variation to account for their students' individual linguistic and affective needs because the effectiveness of different EC techniques depends on certain characteristics of the individuals in a class (e.g., previous achievement, extrinsic motivation, and anxiety).

Hence, it could have been withdrawn that EFL learners cannot reach the level of intelligible speaking simply by giving them too much feedback. In fact, as students regularly practice using the target language they may reach a level where they may be able to notice the mistakes they commit while speaking. They may develop a sense of self-correction strategy that will help them avoid committing such mistakes, particularly, those mistakes that might repeatedly appear in similar communicative situations.

In the light of the above discussion, such pedagogical reforms necessitate plenty of time and consistent efforts taking into account that every learning context is different and that there is no single best methods that could fit into all contexts. However, we, language educators, can agree on the feasibility and usefulness of having an interactive speaking class which entails the use of carefully selected or designed authentic speaking activities, teaching of interaction strategies, providing appropriate feedback and considering students' needs and language proficiencies. Incorporating these principles in the EFL speaking classes can at least pave the road for boosting learners' communicative competencies and ensure that learners are on the right track towards better production of L2.

### III. SLA SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

In designing or selecting speaking activities, EFL teachers need to consider that such activities should represent different purposes from those of written ones. Enabling learners to speak in a language is different from teaching them how to write and record events in the same language. Spoken interaction has a different mechanism including verbal and non-verbal speech behaviors and different sociocultural norms and conventions. As Burns (1998) put it out, "many classroom materials designed for the teaching of speaking are, at the least, less than appropriate, and often misleading and disempowering; they fail to provide second language speakers with depiction of conversational data or with effective strategies for facilitating spoken communication in English", (p. 106).

Nevertheless, there are many other communicative activities that could significantly prepare learners to be proficient and confident in speaking the target language. Nonverbal introduction activities are typical examples of these activities. For example, the teacher tells students that each student should introduce himself/herself to his/her partner without speaking. The students can use gestures, signals, visuals or anything nonverbal. For example, pointing at a wedding ring may indicate marriage. The students then can speak out what they have practiced as nonverbal communication.

Another activity that might be of a great value to EFL teachers who are faced with large classes is the activity of describing an event. The students are divided into several groups (3 to 5 students each). Group members can share something new and good that happened to them last week. This is a voluntary response which students can do in any order. Examples of this activity might involve a communicative structure like: "*I am proud of myself because.. ("I took the bus for the first time and I did not get lost")*".

For more advanced learners, they might be given some relevant cultural and social topics for a prepared talk. This task can be given to students as homework for the next day. Therefore, they can prepare their talk in advance. It is not suggested that teachers ask their students to hand their written prepared talks. However, students can be welcomed to discuss their talks before delivering them in the classroom. Moreover, teachers should not recommend their students to memorize their talks. Memorization should not be considered as a means to facilitate the learners attempt to speak.

Instead, learners can have key points or headlines written in a piece of paper which they can use while presenting their topics.

In addition, Lazaraton in Celce-Murcia (2001) suggested some of the major types of speaking activities that are also applicable to the EFL classroom, such as discussions, speeches, role plays, conversations, audiotaped oral dialogue journals and other accuracy based activities. He also suggested that the teacher can assign students to out-of-class learning activities, such as watching and/ or listening to an English-language film, television show, or to an English-language film, television, or radio program.

Riggenbach (1999) suggested some conversational activities that help learners understand how native or proficient speakers of English generate discussions on possible pattern of the discourse and then to raise the learners' awareness of how their talk is similar or dissimilar to native or proficient speakers' talks. Some of these activities are; turn taking, discussions, speech events, storytelling, informative talk, attitudes and assumptions, listener responses /backchannels, etc.

#### IV. PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are many activities out in the field of SLA and the teaching of foreign languages. EFL teachers can always have the choice to adapt or adjust these speaking activities to what could be more appropriate to their learning and teaching contexts. However, prior to teaching speaking, EFL teachers can best serve their students by evaluating their learning scenarios in terms of students' needs, students' language levels, textbooks, course objectives, other teachers' experiences, etc. The following are also some of the insights and considerations that I gained from my teaching experiences in speaking classes.

1. Teachers no matter what they do, they cannot simply make students speak. Rather, they can guide them to better techniques and practices to produce oral output.
2. Students should develop a sense of involvement and responsibility for their own learning of how, when and what to say. Teachers should help them realize that they have an important role in L2 acquisition and production.
3. Students are different when it comes to speaking. Even less hard working students can be better speakers simply because they have enough desire and willingness for speaking.
4. Many students prefer to focus more on writing while some prefer to focus on developing their speaking skills
5. Mechanical teaching and learning can also be manifested in using prescribed ESL speaking textbooks where students don't feel an immediate effect of such activities on their oral output.
6. The more you ignore students' actual specific needs for communication, the further the students detach themselves from the learning processes in speaking classes.
7. The best speaking activities ever can greatly be seen in activities that address the students' own cultural, social and everyday life situations. Things that students can understand, feel, know and talk about in their L1 before thinking about it in L2.
8. Acting role plays that students don't experience in their everyday life situations is a false start for teaching speaking.
9. Teachers should lessen the students' error phobia by not overtly correcting their mistakes.
10. Exams in speaking classes should not pose a threat on students or be considered as a criterion for passing or failing a speaking class.

#### V. CONCLUSION

With regard to the above SLA perspectives, practices and considerations discussed in this paper, I do firmly believe that interactive speaking cannot take place in the Saudi EFL context unless teachers control their use of language and give a space for learners to practice and express their stance. Students should feel that they are contributing to their own learning and not only satisfying their teachers' demands or final exams' requirements. Actually, teachers know what types of activities that can instigate and elicit responses from their learners. Deviating from the prescribed norms is not a sin since it would fairly benefit EFL learners' communicative needs.

Incorporating collaborative communicative tasks is a good start for enabling learners to modify their speech by asking for clarification and negotiate meaning with their peers and teachers. Through gradual instructional training for learners to exploit useful interaction strategies, learners, including weaker ones, will develop confidence for uttering other oral discourses in other communicative contexts.

In conclusion, an interactive speaking environment is doable only when EFL learners are allowed to take part in understanding, analyzing and shaping their learning developmental processes. They should be encouraged to express their needs and uncover the gaps in their interlanguage repertoire whether these gaps are linguistic, grammatical, or sociocultural. Hence, learners can realize the significance of learning in a speaking class and that it is meant for developing their oral skills rather than overwhelming them with quizzes and assignments.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Bailey, K. M., & L. Savage, (Eds.), (1994). *New ways in teaching speaking*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

- [2] Basturkmen, H. (2001). Description of spoken language for higher level learners: The example of questioning. *ELT Journal*, 55(1), 4-13.
- [3] Burns, A. (1998). Teaching speaking. In W. Grabe, et al (Ed.), *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 102-132. New York: Cambridge Press University.
- [4] Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching approaches: An overview. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (pp. 3-11). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- [5] Celce-Murcia, M., Dornyei, Z., & Thurrell S. (1997). Direct approach in L2 instruction: A turning point in communicative language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(1), 141-149.
- [6] Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D.M., & Goodwin, J.M. (1996). Teaching pronunciation: A reference for teachers of English to speakers of other languages. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [7] De La Fuente, M. J. (2002). Negotiation and oral acquisition of L2 vocabulary. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24(3), 81-112.
- [8] Foster, P. (1998). A classroom perspective on the negotiating of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 1-23
- [9] Golebiowska, A. (1990). Getting students to talk. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Kepner, C. G. (1991). An experiment in the relationship of types of written feedback to the development of second language writing skills. *Modern Language Journal*, 75, 305-313.
- [11] Lam, W., & Wong, J. (2000). The effects of strategy training on developing discussions skills in an ESL classroom. *ELT Journal*, 54(3), 245-251.
- [12] Levis, J. M. (2001). Teaching focus for conversational use. *ELT Journal*, 55(1), 47-55.
- [13] Luoma, S. (2004). Assessing speaking. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Mackey, A. (1999). Input, interaction and second language development: an empirical study of question formation in ESL. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21(4), 557-587.
- [15] McCarthy, M. (1998). Spoken language and applied linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [16] Musumeci, D. (1996). Teacher-learner negotiation in content-based instruction: Communication at cross-purposes? *Applied Linguistics*, 17(3), 286-321
- [17] Nakahama, Y., Tyler, A., & Van Lier, L. (2001). Negotiation of meaning in conversational and information gap activities: A comparative discourse analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(3), 377-405.
- [18] Pica, T., Lincoln-Porter, F., Paninos, D. & Linnell, J. (1996). Language learners' interaction: How does it address the input, output, and feedback needs of L2 learners? *TESOL Quarterly*, 30(1), 59-81.
- [19] Rigganbach, H. (1999). Discourse analysis in the language classroom. USA: The University of Michigan Press.
- [20] Semke, H.D. (1984). Effects of the red pen. *Foreign Language Annuals*, 17, 195-202.
- [21] Sheppard, K. (1992). Two feedback types: Do they make a difference? *RELC Journal*, 23, 103-110.
- [22] Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46(2), 327-369.
- [23] Walsh, S. (2002). Construction or obstruction: Teacher talk and learner involvement in the EFL classroom. *Language Teaching Research*, 6(1), 3-23.

**Sami Al-wossabi** is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics at the English department, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. He is currently teaching English language courses in Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition. He has also written articles on different research topics. His main areas of interest include Task-based language teaching (TBLT), communicative language teaching (CLT), computer assisted language learning (CALL) and second language acquisition (SLA).