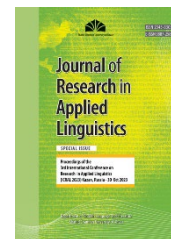




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## Identifying the Communication Challenges of Non-English Speakers in Communicating in English

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### Abstract

This article's goal is to share the findings of a study that aimed to pinpoint the difficulties young non-English language learners have when interacting with one another during an English language contest. The following theoretical and practical techniques were used to support the study: observation, interviewing, data collection, analysis, and synthesis; conceptual analysis of the National English Contest structure and assessment criteria with regard to its communication and interaction parts; and analysis of the fundamental concepts and theories of communication, its functions, motives, and styles. 60 high school students, ages 15 to 18, participated in the study (29 female and 21 male individuals). Results of the study showed that no matter how sophisticated the participants' vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation of the English language were, 60% of them, or 36 students, still had trouble establishing the goals of effective communication. The responses of the participants as well as typical blunders in communication are cited by the authors. They cite the standards for judging communication performance in the Speaking section of the National English Contest and provide samples of the Speaking Module activities. These include the speech's topic, vocabulary and grammatical usage, pronunciation, intonation, and partner engagement.

**Keywords:** Communication Challenges; English Language; Non-English Speakers.

### 1. Introduction

One of the main goals of teaching English languages, according to contemporary language teaching methodologies, is communicative competence (Mirolyubov, 2010). Students in schools and universities should be taught how to communicate effectively in addition to how to use language. One of the most crucial instruments for socialization, a means of subsistence, the fulfillment and control of fundamental needs, and the primary means of human contact is communication. Problems with communication might lead to issues with personal growth (Efimova, 2006).

Diverse communication styles exist. The thesis of C. N. Edwards states that there are three types of interaction or communication styles: collaborative manner. This style's primary characteristics are selflessness in conflict resolution and openness to and comprehension of the needs of others. The willingness to use structuring to address the problem is what defines instrumental style (Sabirova et al., 2019). Analytical Approach. Understanding situational and interpersonal elements as well as the disclosure of activity determinants that deviate from those that are accepted or existing helps people deal with other people and situations (Edwards, 1973). The communicative aspect of communication pertains to pinpointing the particulars of the information exchange process between individuals who are active participants, including factors such as the parties' relationship, attitudes, objectives, and intentions.

The development of a general strategy for interactions is the interactive aspect of communication. People interact in a variety of ways, the most common being cooperation and competition. However, evaluating these kinds abstractly as simple agreement or disagreement results in a formal description of interactions. The process of creating an image of another person through "reading" a partner's physical attributes, psychological profile, and behavioral patterns is part of the perceptual side of communication. According to Beattie and Ellis (2017), identification (assimilation) and reflection are typically the primary processes involved in another person's cognition.

## 2. Literature Review

There are many different ways to interpret the concept of communication because it is a complicated and varied process that has been extensively studied. Specifically, the writers of the Education Dictionary view communication as a multifaceted, intricate process that involves building relationships between individuals and is prompted by the need for cooperative activities. The consequences of scientific research indicate that communication is made up of at least three distinct processes: social perception (perception and comprehension of the partner), interaction (exchange of actions), and communication (information exchange) (Kodzhaspirova & Kodzhaspirov, 2005). According to Kukushkin, communication is a process of direct relationships built on mutual comprehension and the deliberate transfer of information in accordance with accepted social standards and the requirements of successfully completed tasks (Kukushkin, 2005). Communication is a symbolic kind of interpersonal engagement that is driven by the need for group activities and intended to bring about a significant shift in partner's personal-semantic formations and behavior (Rogov, 2001). The phenomena of communication serve multiple purposes. Psychologists make a distinction between the following communication functions.

### 3.1. Pragmatic Function

According to this function, the most crucial requirement for bringing individuals together during any cooperative endeavor is communication. Since communication is the means by which humans acquire knowledge and skills, it plays a crucial part in the formative process. The ability to assert oneself is provided by the function of confirmation in the communication process. Because it is seen as a universal method of reasoning, the intrapersonal function is one of the most significant functions. Humans are capable of producing inner-represented speech, which influences the choices and actions they take (Leontiev, 1997; Zimmaya, 2000). Based on Argyle's taxonomy, psychologists worldwide recognize the following reasons for communicating.

### 3.2. Non-Social Needs Mediated by Social Behavior

The individual's directionality and overarching motives have the least bearing on this motive. Argyle lists two of them: the need for public recognition (a person enjoys being the center of attention, etc.) and the need for power (a person attempts to dominate another people's behavior). a necessity for violence. a requirement for self-awareness and self-promotion. An associate need that is focused on an individual of the other sex is a sexual need (Argyle, 1967). Two additional motives are added to Argyle's framework of communication motives by psychologist Leontiev: a pragmatic need and an altruistic social need (communication is directed toward the interests of another person or individuals) (Leontiev, 1997). Leontiev (1997) distinguished between three primary categories of needs in relation to social interactions: needs directed toward the communicator's needs, needs directed toward the other person's needs, and needs directed toward the needs of society.

## 3. Methodology

After developing an understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of detecting communication barriers among young non-native English speakers, the writers must support their claims with anecdotal evidence. The writers' considerable experience serving on juries for both the National English Contest's Regional and National rounds forms the basis of the analysis that follows. The issue at hand is how to guarantee the effectiveness of the communication efforts so that the younger non-native English speakers can facilitate complete cross-cultural contact in a contemporary multicultural society.

The following theoretical and practical approaches were used to provide well-founded conclusions on the problem's status: observation, interviewing, data collection, analysis, and synthesis; conceptual analysis of the National English Contest structure and assessment criteria with regard to its communication and interaction section; and analysis of the fundamental concepts and theories of communication, its functions, motives, and styles. 60 high school students, 21 males and 29 females, enrolled in grades 9 through 11, participated in the study. These pupils qualified for the National English Contest's Regional round based on their performance in the school and municipal rounds. The age range was 15 to 18, with 16 being the norm. The study employed observation and product outcome analysis, which were based on the standard evaluation criteria for the communication and interaction portion of the Speaking Module. Regardless of how sophisticated their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and other English language skills may be, 60% of the students questioned (36 in total) appear to find it challenging to meet the communication objectives.

#### 4. Results

The authors advise taking into consideration the standards for judging the quality of communication in the Speaking portion of the National English Contest before focusing on the difficulties young non-native speakers of English have when communicating. These are some of them:

1. Contents. If the communication task is fully completed—that is, if the communication aim is met and the conversation topic is fully disclosed—the maximum score of four points is awarded. The applicant shows that they can articulate their thoughts clearly and succinctly, providing strong justifications for their decisions and conjectures. The speaker can conduct a conversation with a random communication partner in three to four minutes because they are fluent.

2. Interaction with communication partner. The candidate may receive the maximum score of two points if they show that they have advanced communication skills with their partner. This includes the ability to start, carry on, and end a discussion; to take turns exchanging viewpoints on the matter; and to encourage and provoke the partner's communication using pertinent questions, remarks, and interjections while utilizing a variety of verbal and nonverbal communication techniques.

3. Vocabulary in communication. In order to receive the maximum score of three points, the candidate must show that they have a wide-ranging, well-versed vocabulary in the subject matter that will enable them to successfully complete the communication act. A maximum of two small errors cannot take away from the speech's overall good impact.

4. Grammar in communication. Maximum 2 minor mistakes cannot overshadow the overall positive outcome of the candidate's speech. The candidate may receive a maximum score of 3 points if they show a command of rich and extensive relevant grammar structures to ensure the successful performance of the communication act.

5. Pronunciation and intonation. Pronunciation and intonation are given less weight because a candidate can receive up to two points for speaking English fluently and making no more than two pronunciation errors that do not impede communication. It should be mentioned that, although typically seen as desirable, adhering to the standard English intonation patterns is not thought to be necessary for effective communication.

#### 5. Discussion

In order to evaluate the communicative aspect of communication, which is linked to pinpointing the details of the information exchange process between individuals who are active participants (Kurasovskaya et al., 2015), the National English Contest organizers believe that a dialogue is the most appropriate method for evaluating the communication abilities of young English language learners. The authors agree with scientists who believe that discussion is the means by which individuals exchange knowledge, information, and viewpoints while also facilitating clarification and enrichment of those exchanges (Blommaert et al., 2005; Castor, 2021).

**Task 1:** Envision yourself attending your English School Club meeting. The club members would like to plan a visit to a well-known art gallery. You are to go on an outing with your other classmates and share with them all that you know about the artist and painting (a fact file is attached). It is your responsibility to elucidate the picture's fame and importance to the audience.

Speak about: The artist's life; The history of the painting; The theme of the painting; Cultural value of the painting.

**Task 2:** To find out more details about the picture your random partner is presenting, ask two questions about it.

**Task 3:** Respond to your partner's two inquiries if they would like more details.

##### 5.1. Preparation time – 15 minutes. Use the fact file.

It appears that the task type requires communicators to use an analytical style of communication, which is the capacity to interact with individuals and situations by comprehending situational and interpersonal factors and disclosing activity determinants that are different from those that are accepted or existing (Edwards, 1973). The following can be listed as some of the most frequent communication errors Contest participants made:

1. The applicant is incapable of carrying out a specific task (a tour guide, member of a school club, a volunteer group activist): A tourist guide: 'Hello, everyone. I will be your guide for today. Let me tell you about one of the stunning

landmarks of our city ...' A member of the club: 'Hello, everyone. I'm happy to see all of you. Today we have to decide what natural reserve we will be volunteering in summer. I think the best option will be .... The reasons are the following ones...'

2. The applicant is unable to elaborate on their points, using the relevant topic-specific vocabulary.

3. The candidate uses a limited range of connectives.

4. The candidate loses sight of the goal of the presentation, which is to convince the audience to visit this particular museum and view the particular image as unique from others. The primary objective is to demonstrate why the picture is well-known throughout the world and why the club members should view it. Therefore, saying "That's all" to end the presentation does not allow for more communication with the partner.

5. The candidates incorrectly tend to ask indirect questions during Tasks 2 and 3, which, in contrast to direct questions that demand an immediate and active response, first add more grammatical errors to their list in the jury's notes and, second, lessen the partner's involvement in the process.

6. Furthermore, questions should focus on topics that were not covered in the presentation; therefore, restating information in the question does not indicate that the partners have reached a consensus on language or have a shared understanding of the communication scenario. It's also important to note that the Speaking Module's second section must consist of a genuine dialogue that is opened with statements like: Thank you for your impressive presentation, but I would like to clarify one thing. ...

I see, thank you. Can I ask one more question? ...

7. When a partner is unable to respond to a question because they either do not comprehend it or do not have the necessary information to address a particularly challenging inquiry from the communication partner, the participants are faced with a similar issue. In these respects, rather than remaining silent, he or she should say anything like:

Well, it seems to be that ... This is the way the candidate could make a supposition and extend their conversation instead of merely cutting short the communication act.

8. Together with them, there are certain contextual difficulties that result from a lack of prior knowledge of culture and art and a propensity to undervalue the significance of the context when addressing the specialized language. The most illustrative examples could be the painting *Boyarinya Morozova* by Vasily Surikov which was turned in the presentations by some of the most fluent candidates into *Boyarskaya Morozova*, *Barynya Morozova* or most ridiculous *Baryshnya Morozova* as well as a famous 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century painter *KustOdiev* pronounced as *KustodIev* and mentioned as a Soviet painter born in 1987. Other examples abound. It is understandable that this not only makes the speaker appear absurd, but it can also result in the communication act failing entirely when speaking with an expert in the topic.

## 6. Conclusion

The goal of the study was to investigate the difficulties that young non-native English speakers have when interacting with one another during the National English Contest. The majority of participants (60%) in the research study on 60 high school students, ages 15 to 18, reported having trouble communicating with their partners during the Speaking Module because they lacked the necessary communication skills to be effective communicators. The majority of participants don't succeed because they can't expand on their ideas; some students struggle to function in a particular profession (such as a tour guide, club member, volunteer, etc.); others don't focus on the task's goal, which makes it difficult for them to perform satisfactorily, et cetera. The research's principal conclusion is that participants' inability to exhibit background knowledge on the subject at hand is what mostly keeps them from being effective communicators. In the interim, the researchers plan to carry out more investigation into young non-native English speakers who succeed in the National English Contest. It is intended that by sharing these research findings, educators and school administrators would become more aware of innovative teaching strategies that can be applied to help children do better in the contest's Speaking Module.

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