

# **Teaching Model for the Improvement of Oral Communication Skills**

## **-Focused on tourism English**

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The purpose of this study is to provide a tourism English teaching model for the improvement of oral communication skills. Oral communication skills in English are the most required skills in the field of tourism, being as a means of communication with foreign visitors. However, many students majoring in tourism English feel frustration and lack confidence in efficiently getting their ideas across to native speakers. One of the main reasons for this is that students' classes have focused on 'usage' rather than 'use' of language in the framework of PPP(presentation-practice-production) model.

A great deal of second language research has shown that learners need to be actively involved in gaining input through interaction with language acquisition/learning in order to increase the amount of utterance, meaning negotiation, grammar modification, feedback through scaffolding.

For the goal of improving the oral proficiency in the tourism fields, I have introduced a model of Triple-I(Identification, Interaction, Induction), focusing on provoking interaction. The stage of identification is preparation for the Interaction stage, focusing on the identification of the task and the expressions used with it. The Interaction stage is the language construction stage, focusing on interaction through a technique of scaffolding and practice when necessary. The Induction stage is the wrapping up stage, focusing on inducing learners' language knowledge that learners have learned during the class.

The main differences between the PPP model and the Triple-I model are as follows: (1) In terms of teaching procedure, the PPP model places the Interaction stage in the same place as the production stage, the last phase of the lesson. Accordingly, the Interaction stage in the PPP model can be skipped in the real classroom situation, depending on the learners' level of proficiency and the extent of learners' comprehension of the task. Conversely, in the Triple-I model, the Interaction stage becomes centralized, after Identification, and before Induction; (2) In terms of techniques, the PPP model uses systematic, graded techniques: first

presenting, then practicing language, and finally producing language. Accordingly, the model considers language acquisition/learning systematic rather than dynamic and constructive. In contrast, the Triple-I model uses techniques of providing learners with opportunities of constructing language, placing practice after interaction, and considering language acquisition learning constructive as well as systematic; (3) The PPP model is a teacher-centered teaching model: presenting language, letting learners practice and produce language controlled by the teacher. The Triple-I model, however, is learner-centered as well as teacher-centered, with the teacher facilitating the learner to construct language himself, or herself.

In order to test the practicability and effectiveness of the Triple-I model, an experiment was conducted during a 16 week period. The study problems were whether: (1) there will be a significant difference in speaking skills improvement for the tourism English field in accordance with the models; (2) there will be a significant difference in the amount of utterances and the frequency of grammar modification, negotiation, and scaffolding in the interaction activities, in accordance with the models; (3) there will be a significant difference in the improvement of general English, in accordance with the models.

Subjects for the study were 62 sophomore junior college students in tourism English. Each group consisted of 31 students. The two groups were examined as equal groups in a final written achievement test as well as with interview. Experimental group was assigned the PPP model.

For study problem 1, pre-test and post-test were given to measure speaking ability in the tourism field. For study problem 2, the classes were videotaped three times and student-student interactions were transcribed so that the amount of utterances, the frequency of grammar modification, negotiation, and scaffolding could be counted. For study problem 3, pre-test and post-test were conducted in four areas of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. The data from established research problems were analysed by SPSS release 10.0. The results of the analysis were as follows:

- (1) Significant differences were found between the two groups in the speaking ability test ( $p < 0.01$ ) for the English for Specific Purposes (tourism English). Students in the experimental group achieved higher scores than those in the control group.
- (2) The amount of utterances and the frequency of teacher's scaffolding were significant during the interaction activities. Students in experimental group

achieved higher scores than those in the control group in the amount of utterances and the frequency of teacher's scaffolding. There was no significance in the frequency of grammar modification and negotiation.

- (3) General English use ability differences between the groups were insignificant in all four areas: speaking, listening, writing, and reading.

In conclusion, the Triple-I model of teaching spoken English for tourism English students is valid, reliable, and practical. Thus we may predict that we can enhance oral communication ability by applying the Triple-I model to the teaching of tourism English conversation in the classroom.