



INVESTIGATION OF ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS



 Abdul Malik Abbasi¹

 Riaz Ahmed Mangrio²

 Mansoor Ahmed Channa³

Urooj Hanif^{4*}

¹Associate Professor-English & Chair, Department of English, Sindh Madressatul Islam University, Karachi, Pakistan.

²Associate Professor-English, Department of English, Sindh Madressatul Islam University, Karachi, Pakistan.

³Professor-English, Department of English, Quaid-e-Awaam University Narwab Shah Sindh, Pakistan.

⁴Student of BBA, Department of Business Administration SMIU Karachi, Pakistan.

Email: urooj875hanif@gmail.com



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

Article History

Received: 29 July 2020

Revised: 31 August 2020

Accepted: 16 September 2020

Published: 1 October 2020

Keywords

Confidence

University level

Speaking

Communication skills

Development

English.

This study aims to explore the factors affecting English spoken abilities of university level students who face problems in speaking adequate English. English is used in Pakistan as a professional tool, however, it is taught as a subject rather than a language that is the reason even at the university level, Pakistani students face problems in speaking English properly. The study further examines the impact of English speaking skills on one's career and personality and to investigate different attainable ways for the students to develop their speaking skills. For this purpose, the total number of samplings ($N=40$) undergraduate respondents from different universities of Karachi were randomly preferred as a Sample of the study in which there were ($n=18$) males and ($n=22$) females under the age limit of 18 to 22. The study was based on online closed-ended questionnaire. Online *Google Questionnaire* form was utilized as a data collection tool. The study revealed that majority of the students face problem in speaking fluent English while they wish to be the fluent speakers. Additionally, the study found some phonetic and cognitive aspects i.e., pronunciation, grammar, listening and reading are important factors they face. The study further discovered different techniques for the students to develop their oral skills on their own. The improvement of English speaking builds up the confidence level of students which ultimately helps them to achieve successful career opportunities ahead.

Contribution/ Originality: This study explores the English language spoken issues at university level. The paper further found some phonetic and cognitive aspects as problematic i.e., pronunciation, grammar, listening, and reading skills. In addition, the study documents the weak areas of the students and contributes some of the significant techniques for the university students in Pakistan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Prior to the fact that English is a leading language throughout the world as it is used as a tool of communication. More than two billion people around the world use this language as an instrument in most of the professions in every nook & corner of the world. English is the most widely used language throughout the world which has taken the place of the first and second language in most of the countries in every continent. It is considered as a *Global Language* creating the inevitability for every single person to learn English language.

English language has become a lingua-franca in various domains of the modern world, such as business, science, and technology, etc. In this modern era, English has captured a tremendous attention on account of its commonality of communication all over the globe. Moreover, everyone has developed the eagerness and need to enhance English language skills. English is such an important language that everyone strives to learn, and for this, four essential skills are needed i.e., reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Zaremba (2006) states that speaking seems to be the most significant skill out of all the four macro skills of English language. Speaking is one of the most important aspects of effective communications. According to Burns and Joyce (1997) speaking is a process of interaction as it involves sending, receiving and information processing. Unfortunately, speaking skills are generally neglected aspects in the classrooms while teaching English, therefore, there is a great need to make people realize the standing of English speaking skills.

Most of the Pakistani students lack English speaking skills maybe because of the reason that from the very beginning of one's academic schooling, English is not taught as a language but a subject. This definitely causes them to face problems in the higher academics and career. There is a great need for university-level students to work on their own for the development of the English speaking skills. The students need to develop English speaking skills because they are a few steps away to step into their career and professional life where they are required to have a good command over English speaking skills in order to grab successful career opportunities. Osborn, Osborn, and Osborn (2008) state powerful communication in terms of speaking usually makes a number of advantages for speakers as well as for business firms, for instance the outcomes of effective English communication can be the achievements during job interviews, job training, ceremonial speaking and business purposes. This study purely aims to determine the influencing factors of English speaking skills and to figure out multiple ways through which university-level students can develop their English speaking skills by working on their own.

1.1. Background

Just like other countries, English is also taught in Pakistan from primary to higher levels of education but the problem here is that out of all the four skills, reading and writing skills are better taught to children from the initial levels of their academia. Additionally, the two interlinked skills, listening, a receptive skill and speaking, a productive skill, both are neglected to be developed among the students from the primary to secondary levels of education, in view of this the students face problems in speaking English even at university and in their career. This paper is designed to find out the influence of English on their career and to get the best terms and techniques for the students to work on their English by focusing on improving pronunciation, learning new vocabulary, listening and reading more and more in order to develop their speaking skills.

As no one could deny the importance of English Language in academic and professional life, therefore, it has become a necessity for the university level students to work on their English language skills, especially speaking skills since spoken skills seem to be the dominant and important in order to achieve success in academics and getting worthy career opportunities. In this modern era, every step towards success requires a more talented mind, groomed personality, excellent communication and work managing skills which show that good English speaking skills play a key role in success as it grooms the personality to be more attractive by having great English speaking skills. Keeping in view the necessity and importance of good English speaking skills, this research study has been designed.

If the focus of students would not be made toward the importance of developing English speaking skills, then it would not be wrong to say that they may have suffered in near future as lacking these important skills one can lose so many significant opportunities in making their career successful and stepping up towards the brighter future. The motive behind this paper is to make university-level students think in regard to the necessity of developing English speaking skills for their brighter and shiny future and to make them work harder than ever for the development and enhancement of their English speaking skills.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- i. To identify the influence of English speaking skills on one's career and personality.
- ii. To find out different ways for the students to develop their English speaking skills.
- iii. To determine the factors that affect English speaking skills.

1.3. Hypothesis

Majority of the university level students face problem in speaking adequate English.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Al-Eiadeh, Al-Sobh, Al-Zoubi, and Al-Khasawneh (2016) conducted research aimed to improve the speaking skills of the students of Ajloun National University, Jordan. A semi-structured interview was used as a data collection tool, a sample of the study consisted of 20 students. The results of this research showed that students of the University face problems in speaking English due to the confusion and nervousness as they were facing trouble in pronouncing correctly and had limited vocabulary because of the reason that they did not learn proper speaking skills from the school level. This research study also suggested various possible solutions for the betterment of weak English speaking skills of students such as the use of modern media for communicating in English and to express the necessities and feelings of students while practicing English speaking in and out of the classroom. Boonkit (2010) conducted a qualitative action study to find the key aspects of improvements, English speaking of the non-native speakers. The data was collected by a task-based course conducted in 15 weeks considering the population of 18-course participants and the results showed that creative topics, confidence, and competence of speaking are the important aspects of enhancing speaking skills.

Additionally, Khan and Ali (2010) argued that English as a subject and as a language and to know the teaching criteria of English in schools and colleges as to identify whether they facilitate students to develop their English speaking skills. The data was collected by 40 students of 4 different colleges through a questionnaire which was tabulated in the form of counting frequencies. The results showed that English was taught as a subject not as a language which is the main cause of poor English speaking skills of the students. Arshad (2013) conducted research to find out the factors that become an obstacle in speaking English for the University level students and to discover the causes of those factors and feasible solutions to deal with the obstacles. Random sampling method was used for the research as any of the 250 students from The University of Sargodha were provided with the 10 questions based questionnaire and the results found that majority of the students faced problem in speaking English properly due to the limited vocabulary, incorrect pronunciations, lack of understanding of the grammatical structure and weak fluency level. The study also provided helpful recommendations to improve poor speaking skills.

Lumettu and Runtuwene (2018) argue that impromptu speaking (speaking without any previous preparation) can be one of the ways to develop English speaking skills of students as speaking should be given the topmost priority among all four speaking skills and believe that the impromptu method can effectively develop students' speaking capability by letting them speak from their insights in simple English. For this study of knowing how impromptu the method can help developing speaking, the qualitative approach was used and the data collection tools used, i.e., documentations, observations and interviews. The results of the study showed that impromptu practice can help students interact immediately and help them enhance their vocabulary which can be possible through engaging them in interviews, storytelling, discussions, speeches, and presentations.

(Abbasi, Ahmed, Farooqi, & John, 2019) state that 'English Speech Anxiety in English language classroom prevails during English class because of so many factors involved. One significant factor involved in speech anxiety is English language teacher himself/herself whose language proficiency is high, pronunciation level is also high, new students' speech anxiety level increases. Pakistani English language speakers should speak without speech anxiety, though it seems to be a part of human nature being nervous while speaking English as a second language.

The students should learn how to manage speech anxiety by welcoming it and try to overcome it not by monotonous imitation but by being natural in English speech’.

Furthermore, [Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar \(2011\)](#) state that learning speaking demands excessive attention and practice but this skill is most of the time neglected while teaching and so students face problems in speaking. They argue that English can be learned just as we learn our mother language by listening and repeating but this natural way is not used in the classrooms while teaching English but it should be. Their study was designed to find out the factors affecting English speaking skills at the secondary level and for this twenty schools of Faisalabad were randomly selected from which 20 students and 8 teachers were selected randomly from each school as a sample and separate questionnaires were made for students and teachers, the results revealed that only half of the students and teachers use English as a medium of communication during class while they also use Urdu as a medium of communication which shows that students do not get much concentration on developing English speaking skills.

In addition, weak English speaking skills even at the university level can be due to the reason of ineffective teaching methods at school and college level. In order to study what kind of teaching strategies are used for ESL learners at intermediate level in Pakistan ([Abbasi, 2011](#)) conducted quality research based on both quantitative and qualitative methods and the sample was of 40 English language teachers from the public and private sectors. The results of this study revealed that the private sector use better strategies as compared to public sector which uses old strategies, therefore, [Abbasi. \(2011\)](#) recommended that there is a considerable requirement of teacher training programs, workshops, and seminars for the ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers to make them approach the modern methods to be applied in the classrooms for developing the English communication capability in students.

The study of [Urrutia and Vega \(2010\)](#) suggest that speaking is the most difficult skill to develop in students due to the lack of confidence as they lack vocabulary, feel shy about pronouncing wrong and have fear of being embarrassed and humiliated. Furthermore, the study revealed that games should be an important tool for developing the speaking skills of students within the classroom. According to [Sharma \(2018\)](#) students face problem in speaking good English due to the lack of vocabulary, creative ideas, minor exposure to speak and lack of effective teaching methods. His study was aimed to know that if storytelling would help to develop the speaking skills of intermediate level students in Nepal, the sample was the students of 11th grade and data was collected through observations have done through speaking tests and storytelling contests. The results showed that the storytelling strategy worked effectively and brought speaking proficiency in students by improving their fluency level, vocabulary, grammar, comprehension and pronunciation. Thus, he found storytelling as one of the best way to develop the English speaking skills of the students. [Kanwal and Khurshid \(2012\)](#) conducted a study to discover the hardships that university-level students face while learning English language skills, a random sampling method was used in which 200 postgraduate students of NUML University acted as survey respondents who were provided with the 27 items closed-ended questionnaire to collect their responses to the respective study. The results found that students were discontented with their English course learning outcomes and wanted it to be improved they required additional help and activities for the enhancement of their English language skills.

[Abbasi., Khalil, and John \(2019\)](#) argue that ‘two variables academic and social anxiety have directly affected on ESL learners’ academic performance and disrupt their thinking abilities. As the twenty-first century is the century of competition, students are also competing in their academics to achieve more quality results and greater performance. This sometimes leads to anxiety which highly affects them. The desire to succeed and the fear of failure co-exist amongst many students. According to this study, students wish to become socially acceptable images but failing to do so it becomes a major reason for anxiety’.

2.1. Research Questions

The study is based on the following research questions:

1. Do University level students face problem while speaking English?
2. Do English speaking skills influence on career and personality of students?
3. What are the different ideas to develop English speaking skills?
4. What are the factors that are necessary to develop English speaking skills?

3. MATERIAL & METHODS

3.1. Research Design

The approach chosen for this study is a quantitative research method is used to quantify the responses and opinions of the selected population. For the data collection of this study, primary data was collected by the opinions of university-level students from different universities and various departments with the help of closed-ended questionnaire having 21 statements based on the topic of development of the English Language at the university level.

3.2. Population

The population set for this research study was the undergraduate university-level students of different universities from Sindh district, Karachi.

3.3. Sample

Random sampling method was used as the university students were the major focus therefore, the sample was of 40 students (22 females & 18 males) from different universities under the ages of 18 to 24. Out of these 40 students, 26 are from SMIU, 5 students from Iqra University, 4 students from FAST University, 3 from Karachi University and 2 students from DHA Suffa University. Most of the students of SMIU were from the BBA department and few from the media department while all the students of FAST University were from the computer science department and all the students of Karachi University were from the department of biotechnology while students from Iqra University and DHA Suffa University were from BBA department. The random sampling was used because English speaking skills are equally important to be developed at university level students, no matter from which university and from which department they belong to. Mostly all the students were from the fourth and fifth semesters.

3.4. Research Instrument

For the purpose of conducting survey research, online closed-ended a questionnaire with *Likert scale* items like agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree, consisting of 20 statements (questions), was used as a study instrument. This Online questionnaire was made with the help of Google Forms.

4. DATA COLLECTION

A survey form was made first with Google Forms online, then the form was forwarded to the chosen population and within a week 40 responses were collected, after that the quantified graphical representation of all the 20 statements were shown on the google form website and so the data collected and further, the data will be analyzed in the data analysis section and it will be shown through a bar chart.

4.1. Data Analysis and Discussions

This section will display the interpretation of obtained results through collected data in percentages and discussion on them according to the research queries. Data analysis is showed by a graphical view for each statement below. All the statements are aimed to collect the primary data for this research study based on the importance, necessity and improvement of English speaking skills. By analyzing the results of responses on these

statements, it would be disclosed that how much % of Pakistani university-level students face problem in speaking good English while having the wish of being fluent speakers, along with those various possible practices of improving English speaking skills will also be discussed and major factors affecting these skills will be disclosed.

Question 1: You understand English easily but when it comes to speak, you face problem.

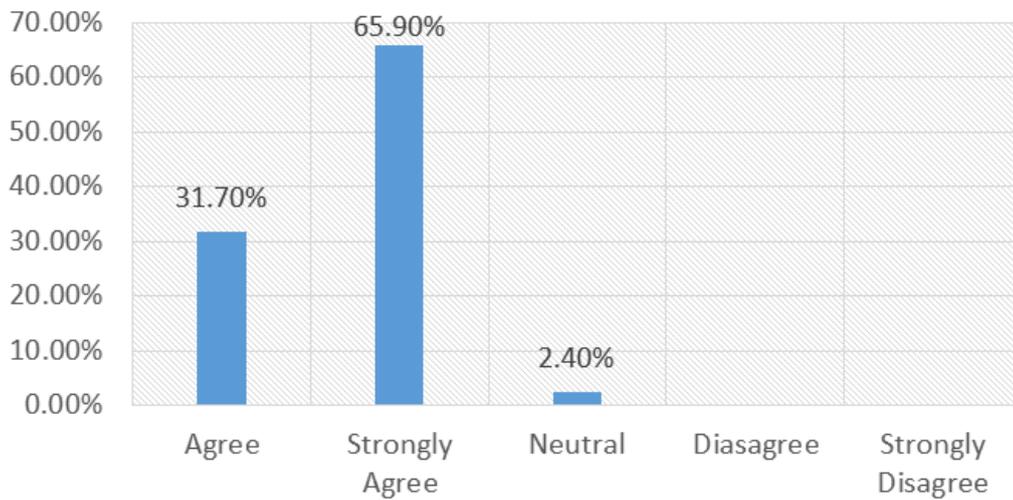


Figure-1. illustrates the responses of query no:1 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

The graphical analysis through Figure 1 clearly illustrates that more than half of the university level, students face difficulty in speaking English while they can understand it, as according to the results 51.2% are agreed with the statement while 22% are strongly agreed and a little percentage of 14.6% disagreed while 9.8% were neutral. This shows that the majority of the university level students in Pakistan face difficulty in speaking adequate English which makes them suffer in their academic and career levels which are due to the weaker base of English Language from the primary levels of education.

Question 2: You wish to be an excellent English Speaker.

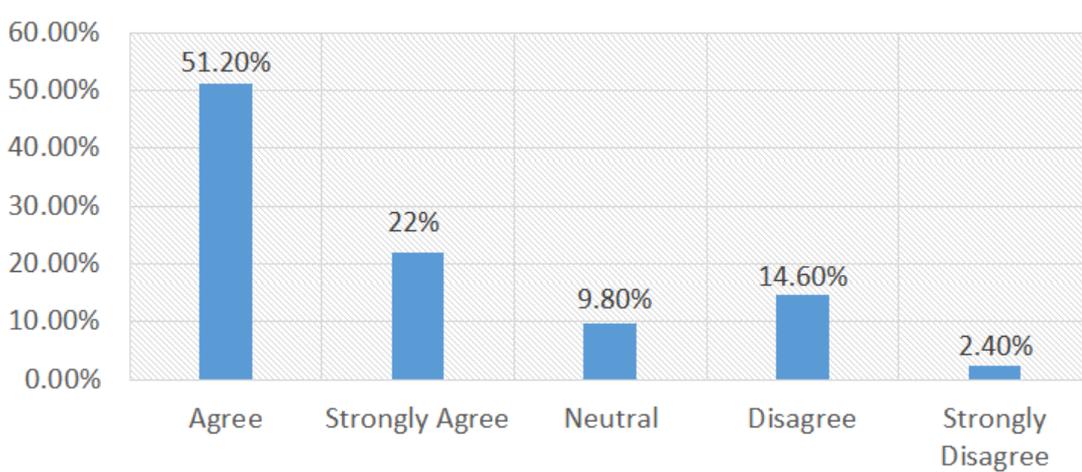


Figure-2. illustrates the responses of query no:2 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 2 illustrates that university-level students really wish to be fluent speakers but sadly, they are not the ones. Heavy % of 65.90% are strongly agreed with the statement whereas, 31.70% are agreed. This means that every student likes to have fluent English speaking skills and wants these skills to be possessed in themselves so that they can have the effective communicating quality to grab successful academic and job opportunities.

Question 3: Poor English speaking skills become a hurdle in getting successful career.

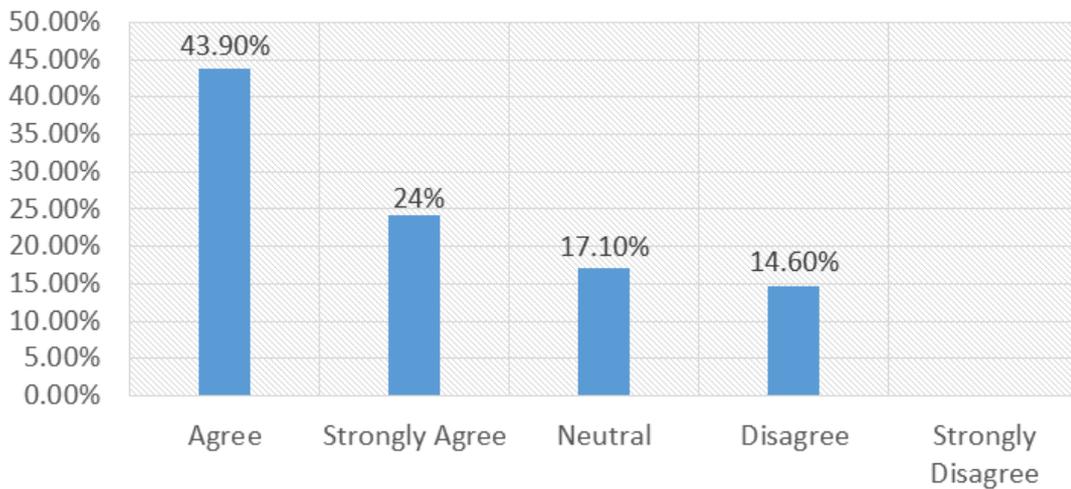


Figure-3. illustrates the responses of query no:3 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 3 illustrates that more than half of the students believe that the poor speaking skills can be an obstacle in achieving career brightening opportunities, therefore, there is a need to develop and improve English speaking skills as 43.9% are agreed with this statement while 24% are strongly agreed. Few of them are disagreed as the graph showing 14.6% and 17.1% were neutral.

Question 4: Good English speaking skills consequently boost up your confidence.

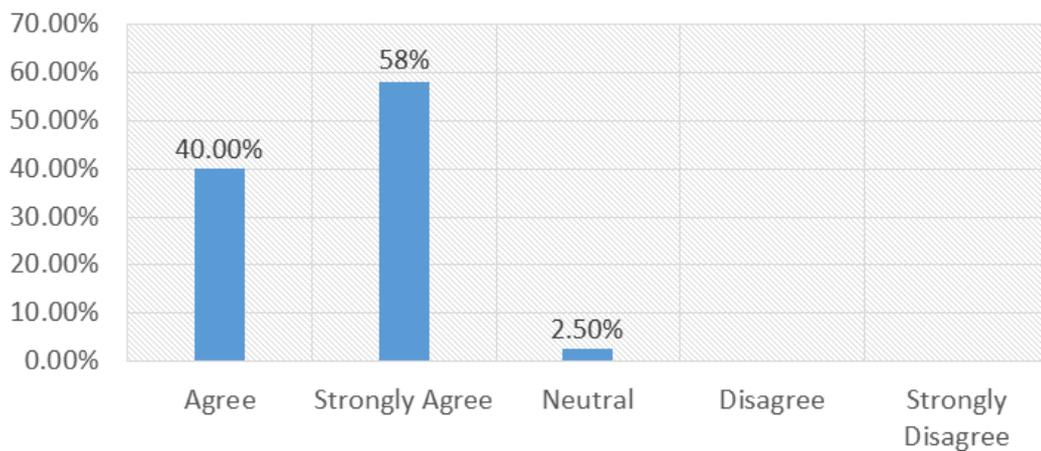


Figure-4. illustrates the responses of query no:4 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 4 illustrates that almost all the students have confidence in that speaking adequate English increases and enhances their confidence level, therefore, it would not be wrong to say that good-accented English speaking skills affect one's personality in a positive manner as 58% are strongly agreed while 40% are agreed and the most interesting thing here is that no one disagreed.

Question 5: Listening English plays a key role in developing English speaking skills.

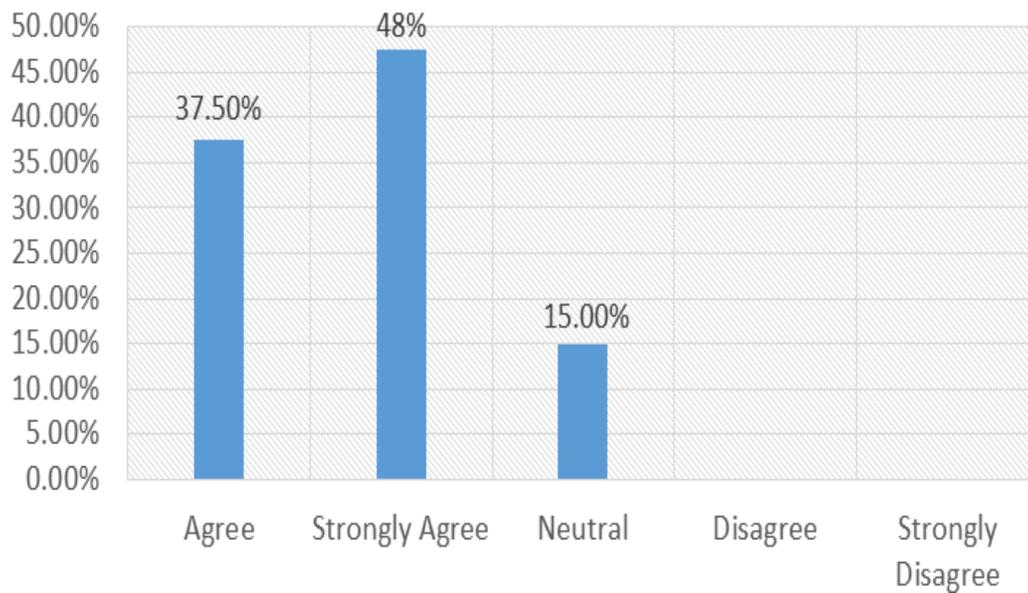


Figure-5. illustrates the responses of query no:5 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

The strong percentages of agree (37.5%) and strongly agree (48%) in Figure 5 illustrates that Listening is one of the most important factors to develop English speaking skills. No one disagreed while 15% became neutral. This shows that listening is a major factor in the development of English speaking skills as listening helps in improving and enhancing vocabulary, accent and fluency level.

Question 6: Listening is not enough to develop speaking skills unless you practice it.

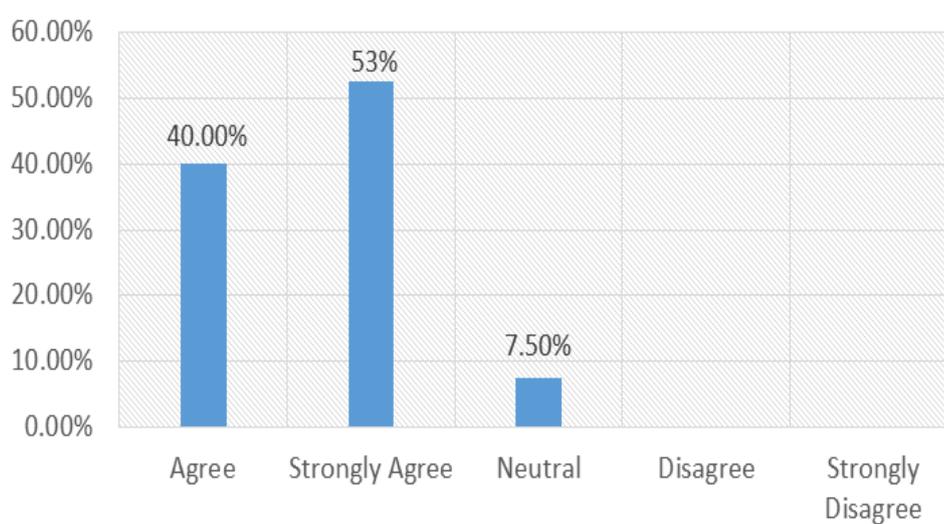


Figure-6. illustrates the responses of query no:6 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

The higher percentages of strongly agreement (53%) and agree (40%) as illustrated in Figure 6 indicates the importance of practice in order to develop speaking skills as only listening will not make you a fluent speaker, though it helps a lot in developing speaking skills, practice is mandatory. No one disagreed with this statement while 7.5% are neutral. This shows that the majority of the students believe in the importance of practice as without practice, it would never be possible for the one to be an excellent fluent speaker.

Question 7: Practice speaking in front of a mirror is an efficient way to develop English speaking skills.

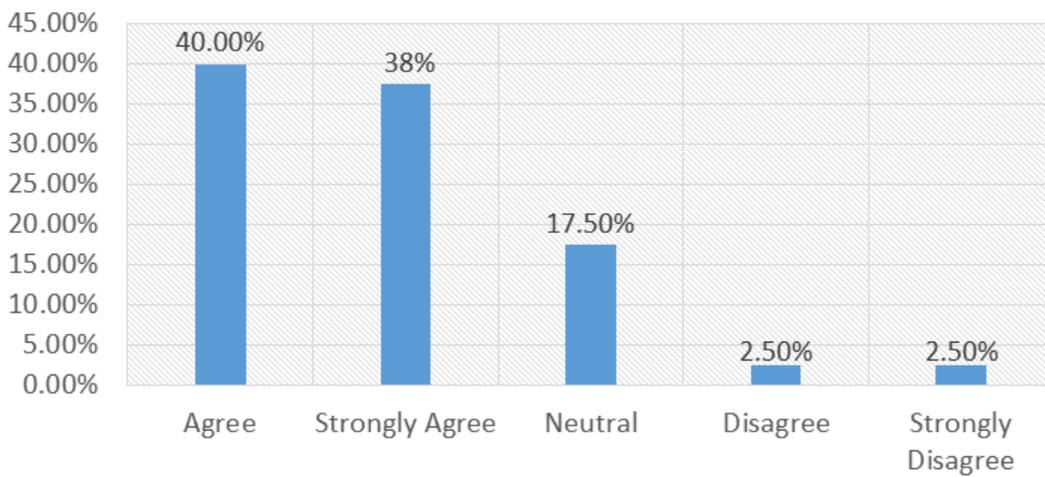


Figure-7. illustrates the responses of query no:7 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Looking at the graphical view of Figure 7, it can be seen that 40% are agreed while 38% are strongly agreed with this statement; therefore practicing in front of looking glass proved to be an effective way of practicing and developing English speaking skills, negligible % of 5% are disagreed while 17% were neutral. This means that looking glass practice can be one of the helpful practices in developing English speaking skills.

Question 8: Practicing speaking by talking to yourself makes you more fluent in translating your thoughts in English.

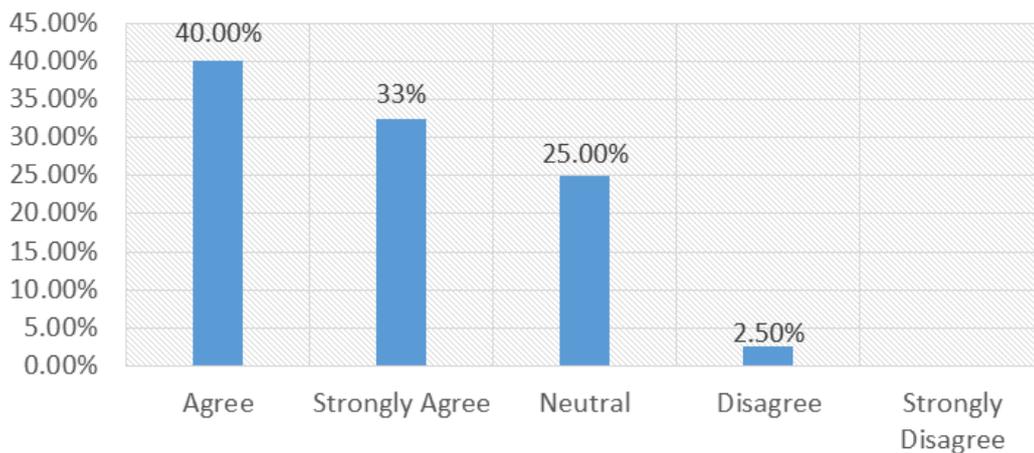


Figure-8. illustrates the responses of query no:8 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 8 illustrates that 40% of students are agreed while 33% students are strongly agreed with the thought that practicing by talking to one’s own self brings fluency in translating thoughts in English; therefore, it helps to develop speaking skills. Negligible % of 2.5% disagreed with this statement.

Question 9: Reading aloud is one of the best ways to develop English speaking Skills.

Figure 9, illustrates that 50% of the students are agreed, 33% are strongly agreed, and 10% are neutral while 7.5% disagree. These results indicate that the majority of the students find reading aloud a helpful method for practicing English speaking, therefore, this can be one of the factors affecting English speaking in a positive manner.

Question 10: Reading aloud helps you in focusing on the improvement of pronunciation.

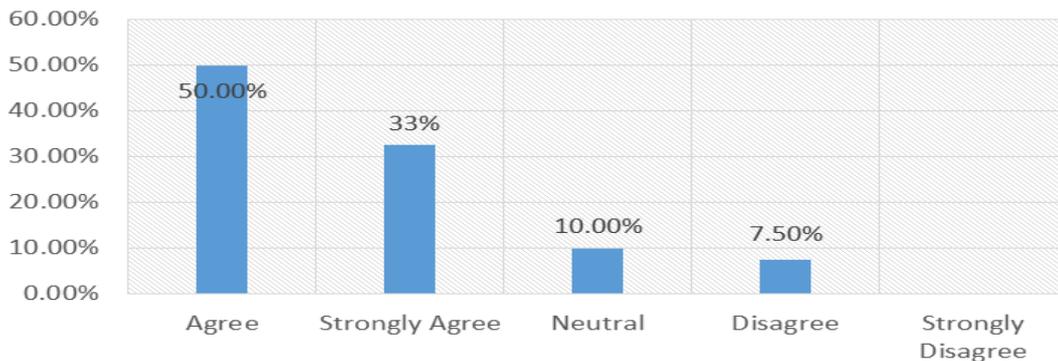


Figure-9. illustrates the responses of query no:9 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

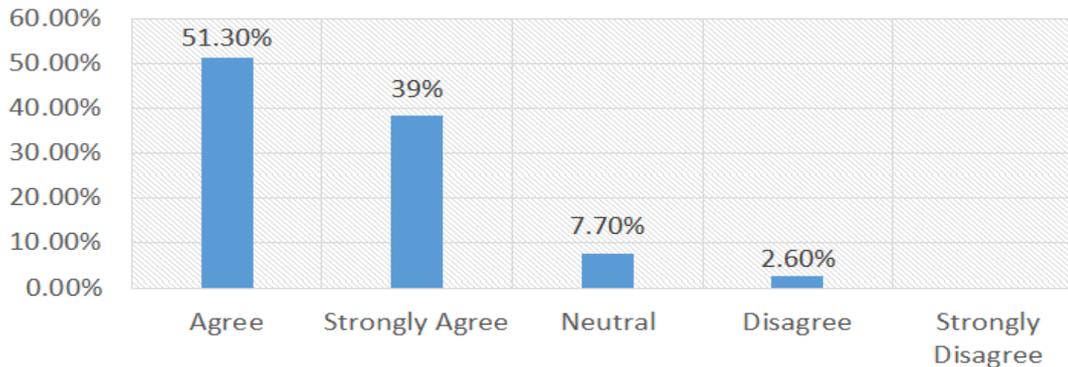


Figure-10. illustrates the responses of query no:10 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Strong percentages of agree (51.3%) and strongly agree (39%) in Figure 10. illustrates that reading aloud helps in focusing on pronunciation improvement, therefore, it can be used as one of the techniques which helps in the development of English speaking skills. A negligible percentage of 7.7% are neutral and 2.6% disagree. This shows that reading aloud can be one of the helpful factors in developing English speaking skills.

Question 11: Good pronunciation is a key factor in developing speaking skills.

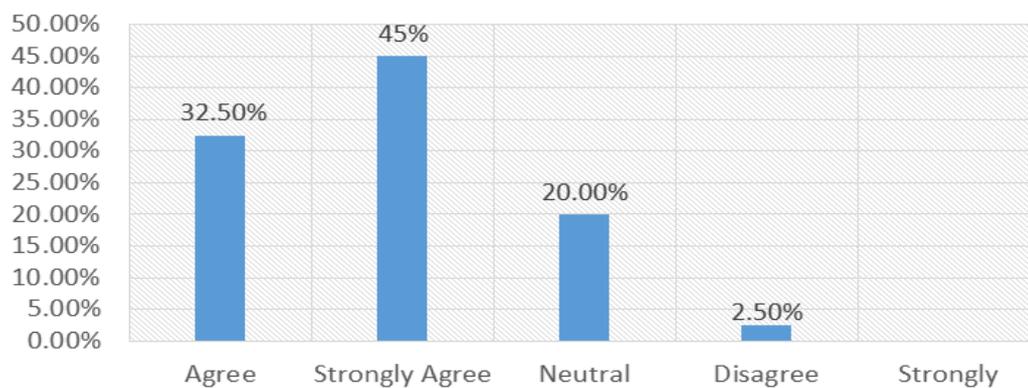


Figure-11. illustrates the responses of query no:11 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 11 illustrates that 45% of students are strongly agreed while 32% are agreed with the statements and showing that pronunciation is one of the major factors that influence speaking skills and must be paid attention to. Here is a small % of 2.5% disagree while 20% were neutral. This shows that good pronunciation is a key element that affects English speaking skills in a positive manner.

Question 12: TED talk videos with transcripts are the best source of improving pronunciations and enhancing vocabulary.

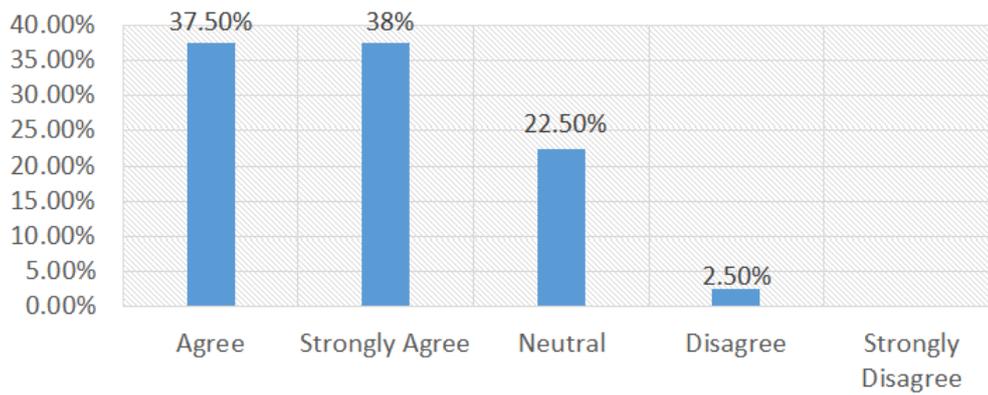


Figure-12. illustrates the responses of query no:12 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 12 illustrates that more than half of the students believe that TED talk videos can help improving pronunciation and vocabulary which are the influencing factors affecting speaking skills. 37.5% are agreed while 38% are strongly agreed and 22.5% are neutral while only 2.5% disagree. This shows that the use of electronic social media can be beneficial for the betterment of English speaking skills if and only if used purposefully.

Question 13: By watching channels like BBC and CNN, one can improve English speaking skills to a greater extent.

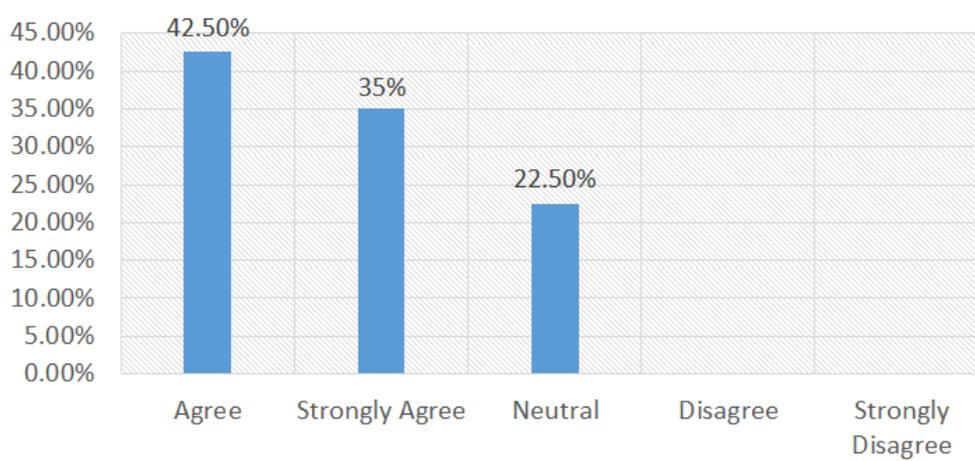


Figure-13. illustrates the responses of query no:13 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 13 Illustrates that 42.5% agreed to this statement while 35% strongly agreed and 22.5% were neutral while no one disagreed which portrays that media like BBC and CNN can be helpful factors in developing English speaking skills. The professional English used on these news channels can help improve, enhance and develop the English speaking skills of students at the university level.

Question 14: Listening to English conversations or stories online and rephrasing them by using synonyms helps to enhance your vocabulary and fluency level.

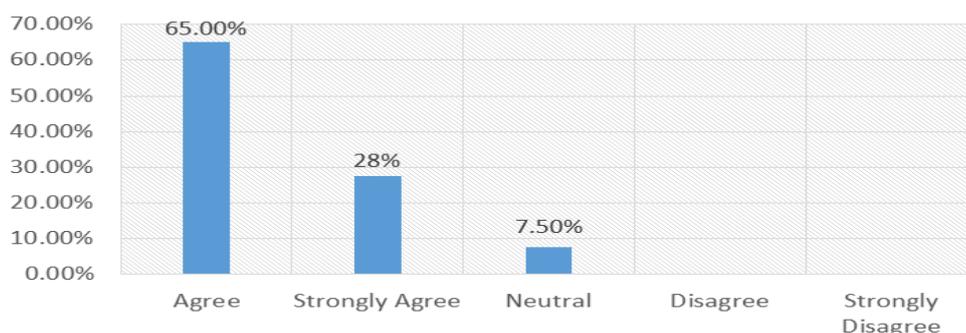


Figure-14. illustrates the responses of query no:14 using *Likert scale* in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 14 illustrates that 65% of students are agreed while 28% are strongly agreed and 7.5% are neutral. The strong % of the positive response shows that practice by rephrasing helps in enhancing vocabulary as it will maximize knowledge about same and different meanings of various words by using synonyms and antonyms. Question 15: Watching English movies helps you to learn new vocabulary, idioms, pronunciations and intonations of English.

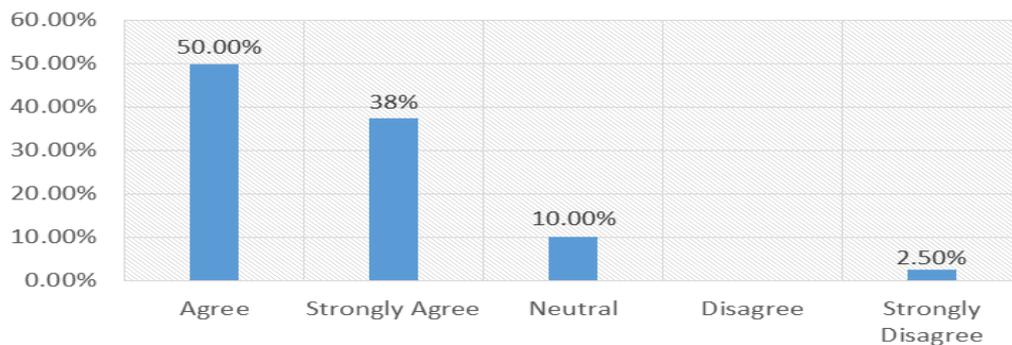


Figure-15. illustrates the responses of query no:15 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

Figure 15 illustrates that 50% of the students are agreed with the statement while 38% are strongly agreed and 10% are neutral whereas, 2.5% strongly disagreed. The higher percentages of agreement and strongly agreement show that students believe that watching English movies can help to enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and knowledge of English intonations. Question 16: Listening English music and singing along with it, is one of the best way to develop your speaking skills.

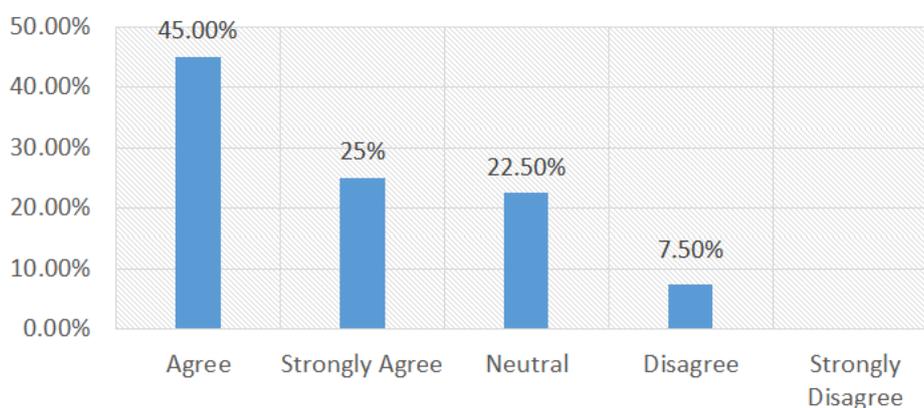


Figure-16. illustrates the responses of query no:16 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

According to graphical representation of Figure 16., 45% of students are agreed with the statement, 25% strongly agreed, 22% were neutral whereas, 7.5% disagree with it. The majority believe that listening to English songs can be a helpful technique to develop English speaking skills.

Question 17: Learning grammar is necessary to develop English speaking. The results from Figure 17 (Appendix-A) illustrates that 48.7% of people are agreed with this statement while 39% are strongly agreed and 12.8% are neutral while no one disagreed. This shows that students believe grammar as one of the major influencing factor in the development of speaking skills so students should work on their English Grammar to be improved through technology or books sources to make improvements and enhancement in English speaking skills.

Question 18: One should try to make and learn short sentences on daily life situations to improve English speaking. Figure 18 (Appendix-A) illustrates one of the most interesting results as 75% of students are agreed with

the statement while 25% are strongly agreed and no one disagreed which means that all the students believe that without daily practicing English speaking skills could not be developed and for daily practicing no idea is better than the making of short sentences on daily life situations on a regular basis.

Question 19: Practicing alone is better than practicing with any friend or partner. Figure 19 (Appendix-A) illustrates different opinions of students for this statement as 32.5% are agreed, 10% are strongly agreed, 30% disagree, 7.5% are strongly agreed and 20% are neutral with this statement as half of them prefer practicing alone and half of them prefer to have speaking practice with friends. One should use the practices according to their comfort and learning pattern,

Question 20: Excellent English speaking skills make your personality an attractive one. Figure 20, the last figure (Appendix-A) illustrates that more than half of the students think that good English speaking skills really affect their personality in a positive manner as these skills brings a charm in their personality and make it attractive, the results are clearly visible through this graphical picture as 55% of students are agreed to this statement and 25% are strongly agreed on which collectively shows that 80% of students think that good English speaking skills really add a charm to their personality.

5. DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

As the study aimed to determine the need and importance of English speaking skills in the life of university-level students and to find out valuable possible practices by acting upon which students could help their own selves in developing their speaking skills by putting in their own efforts, the results revealed that almost 71% (combined % of agreed and strongly agreed on respondents) of the university level students face problem in speaking good English while 98% (combined % of agreed and strongly agreed on respondents) students wish to be the fluent speakers which again shows that they cannot speak English properly that is why the wish so. Furthermore 68% (combined % of agreed and strongly agreed respondents) believe that poor English speaking becomes an obstacle in achieving prosperous career opportunities while 14.6% of students do not think so while 98% of them find good English speaking skills as a confidence-building factor. When asked about the factors that help in developing English speaking, listening seemed to be the most important aspect as 85% of students find it as a key factor for developing English speaking but 78% of students are of the opinion that without practicing speaking, listening would not be enough to develop English speaking skills while 5% students opposed it. Moreover, 78% students find mirror practicing as a useful technique in developing English speaking skills while 5% do not think so and 17% remained neutral, however, 72% of students believe that talking to one's own self helps to build up thoughts in English which consequently promotes the development of English speaking skills while 25% of students decided not to comment and 5% disagreed with the thought. Another important aspect found for developing English speaking skills was reading aloud as 72% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the thought while only 7.5% disagreed. Additionally, it is found that almost 90% of respondents believe that reading aloud helps in focusing on the improvement of pronunciation while 75% think pronunciation as a vital factor for the development of speaking skills and 20% remain neutral here while 5% disagreed.

Additionally, the majority of students find TED talk videos and media like BBC and CNN a helpful source in this regard as 75% to 77% respondents reacted positively. For the enhancement of vocabulary and fluency level, almost 93% of respondents found rephrasing a helpful tool. Similarly, 87% believe that watching English movies also helps in this regard. Likewise, 70% respondents found the idea of listening to English music and singing along with it useful for developing speaking skills. Most importantly, 93% believed that English speaking should be practiced daily for enhancing and developing these skills. One more important aspect found was grammar as 87% respondents are of the thought that grammar is a necessary aspect to develop English speaking. Another practicing tool that 100% of the respondents found effective was the making of short sentences on daily life situations in order to develop English speaking. One more interesting thing to be written here is that half of the respondents like to

practice speaking alone while half of the prefer practicing with a friend or partner as 42.5% agreed with it and 37.5% disagreed while 20% remained neutral. Finally, the last statement proved the effect of English on one's personality as 80% of respondents believe that good English speaking skills make the personality an attractive one.

6. CONCLUSION

Examining the importance of English at the university level, finding the key factors that affect English speaking and exploring the ideas by working on which students can develop their own speaking skills, collectively was a wonderful experience of gathering statistical information from different universities of Karachi, Pakistan. The study reported that the majority of the university-level students cannot speak English properly though they can understand and all of them wish to be the fluent speakers as they think that poor English speaking skills can negatively impact their career while good English speaking skills will groom their personality, boost up their confidence level and will help them to find successful career opportunities. Moreover, the study also revealed the important factors for the development of English speaking skills which includes listening, reading, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

Furthermore, useful activities were discovered throughout the study by the help of which university-level students can work on their own for the development of their English speaking skills which included practicing in front of the mirror to develop fluency level, reading aloud to work on pronunciation, watching English movies to enhance vocabulary, for learning idioms, understanding intonations of English and correction of pronunciation, making short sentences on daily life situations for early learning, rephrasing online conversations by using synonyms in order to increase vocabulary and enhance fluency in speaking, watching media like CNN and BBC and videos like TED talk with transcripts to check pronunciation, listening English songs to good accent, talking to one's own self to develop thoughts quickly in English, to work on grammar by using technology and most importantly practicing daily to develop English speaking skills. By using the above mentioned ways, one can improve his or her English speaking skills to a greater extent by working on his own.

6.1. Recommendations

Based on this study, it is observed that university-level students should pay attention to the matter of developing English speaking skills and should start working on their own to make themselves one of the excellent fluent speakers. Some recommendations are as follows:

- One should develop listening skills first in order to develop English speaking skills as they both are interconnected.
- Channels like CCN and the BBC should be watched by students on a daily basis in order to improve their speaking skills/accent.
- One should also watch TED talk videos with transcripts to check out the pronunciation corrections.
- One should make sentences on daily life situations to enhance their vocabulary and speaking quality.
- Mirror practicing should be used as a technique for developing English speaking skills.
- One should make it a habit to practice English speaking on a daily basis.
- English movies should be watched in order to develop vocabulary and to understand the intonations of English.
- The technique of reading aloud should be used to focus on pronunciation correction.
- One should talk to own self in order to make a habit of translating thoughts quickly into spoken words of English.

Funding: This study received no specific financial support.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Acknowledgement: All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study.

REFERENCES

Abbasi, A. M., Ahmed, S. R., Farooqi, A., & John, S. (2019). Exploring factors of speech anxiety in second language classroom. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 10*(5), 97-102.

Abbasi., A. M. (2011). A survey of teaching strategies in ESL classroom *Language in India Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow, 11*(11), 313-329.

Abbasi., A. M., Khalil, A., & John, S. (2019). English as second language learners' performance correlates of social and academic anxiety. *ELF Annual Research Journal, 21*(1), 18-41.

Al-Eiadeh, A.-R., Al-Sobh, M., Al-Zoubi, S. M., & Al-Khasawneh, F. (2016). Improving English language speaking skills of Ajloun National University students. *International Journal of English and Education, 5*(3), 181-195.

Arshad, A. (2013). Why students fail to speak English after getting sixteen years education. Academia. Retrieved from: http://www.academia.edu/5398796/Research_Article_on_English_speaking_problem.

Bashir, M., Azeem, M., & Dogar, A. H. (2011). Factor effecting students' English speaking skills. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 34-50.

Boonkit, K. (2010). Enhancing the development of speaking skills for non-native speakers of English. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*(2), 1305-1309. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.191>.

Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). *Focus on speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.

Kanwal, W., & Khurshid, F. (2012). University students' difficulties in learning English language skills. *Language in India Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow, 12*(2), 327-337.

Khan, N., & Ali, A. (2010). Improving the speaking ability in English: The students' perspective. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*(2), 3575-3579. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.554>.

Lumettu, A., & Runtuwene, T. (2018). Developing the students' English speaking ability through impromptu speaking method. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series, 953*(1), 012035. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/953/1/012035>.

Osborn, S., Osborn, M., & Osborn, R. (2008). *Public speaking guidebook*. Boston: Pearson.

Sharma, D. R. (2018). Action research on improving students' speaking proficiency in using cooperative storytelling strategy. *Journal of Nelta Surkhet, 5*, 97-105. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jns.v5i0.19495>.

Urrutia, W., & Vega, E. (2010). Encouraging teenagers to improve speaking skills through games in a Colombian public school. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 12*(1), 11-31.

Zaremba, A. J. (2006). *Speaking professionally*. Canada: Thompson South-Western Activities.

Appendix-A

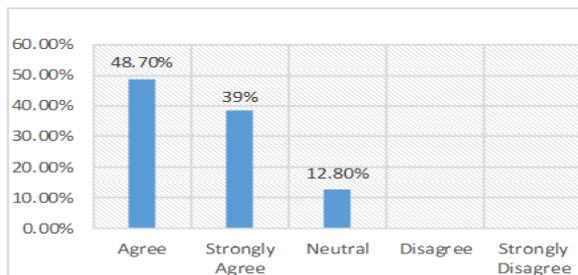


Figure-17. Illustrates the responses of query no:17 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

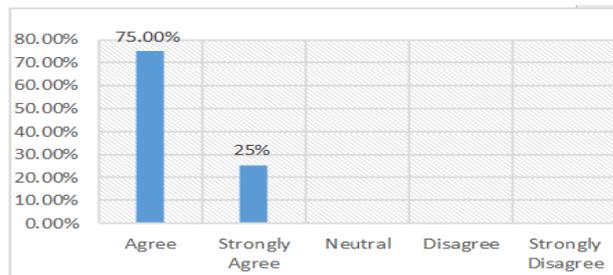


Figure-18. illustrates the responses of query no:18 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents

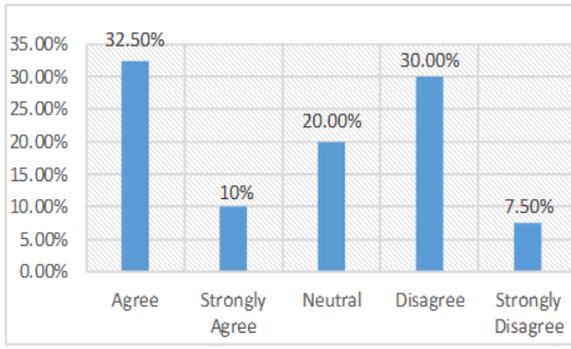


Figure-19. Illustrates the responses of query no:19 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents.

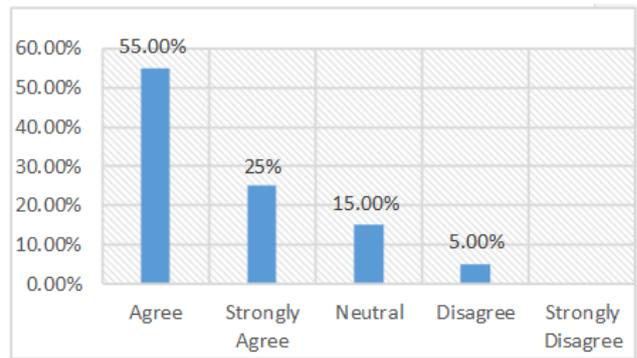


Figure-20. illustrates the responses of query no:20 using Likert scale in percentage across the respondents

Views and opinions expressed in this article are the views and opinions of the author(s), International Journal of Publication and Social Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content.