

The Students' Views about Oral communicative Competence at Sudanese Universities in an EFL environment

AMMAR ADAM ABDELNABI MOHAMED
Hail University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Dr. MOHMOUD ALI AHMED OMER
Sudan University of Science and Technology

Abstract:

The students in Sudan study English as a foreign language in an EFL environment, so they supposed to encounter serious problems concerning mastering the oral communicative competence, because it can be obtained through much practice of the language from an early age. The study focuses on the students' views about oral communicative competence inside and outside classrooms for those who are majoring in English, in particular. This kind of a problem has been a headache for both teachers and learners for long ago because English is not much practised in real life situations and students don't have enough opportunities to have real conversations outside the classroom environment. Those who communicate well may have visited or have lived for some time in one of the English-speaking countries or they have their own way in developing themselves in this concern. Based on the above mentioned view point, the present study intends to investigate the students' views about oral communicative competence at Sudanese universities in an EFL environment. A group of 40 female and male EFL learners majoring in English at three different Sudanese universities in Khartoum State participated in this study. Data are collected via a questionnaire. The responses were analyzed through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Key words: communicative competence, EFL environment, SPSS.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Most of EFL students view oral communicative competence as challenging and frustrating because it can be acquired or mastered over much practice and efforts. In addition to learning academic English they need to adopt a new convention of their own style of acquiring communicative competence.

The Sudanese university students, in particular, those who are majoring in English need to communicate better in English as they need that in their future career, nevertheless, they find that somehow difficult because they might feel under pressure to indulge in real situational communication. One of the reasons behind that, a lot of them pay much attention to grammar rather than conveying their message to the listener, as a result they may miss a great opportunity to develop their communication ability. Sudanese students learn English as a foreign language, so they often find their courses very challenging. They need to work hard in and outside English classes to enhance their oral communicative competence. Based on the above mentioned viewpoints, the present study will attempt to explore and investigate the students' views about the nature of oral communicative competence in an EFL environment. The students who responded to the study questionnaire are majoring in English.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The study investigates the importance of oral communicative competence at Sudanese universities, and how the students view and like it in an EFL environment. The study discusses issues related to the subject.

1.2 Research Questions

This study is designed to answer the following questions:

1- To what extent are Sudanese university learners majoring in English aware of communicative and pragmatic knowledge of the language?

2- What is the extent to which oral communicative activities are carried out in Sudanese classrooms English majors at universities?

3- How much do the learners pay concern to the oral communicative competence?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the above questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1- Sudanese EFL learners lack oral communicative competence of the language.

1- The communicative activities in classrooms don't fulfill the learners' need of using the language in real life situations.

3- Sudanese EFL learners have a few opportunities to improve their oral communicative competence outside the classroom environment.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study is intended to accomplish the following objectives:

1- Investigating learners' attitudes towards factors that affect oral communicative competency among students majoring in English at Sudanese universities.

1- Find out to how much students are aware of the importance of the communicative competence.

3- To find out the correlation between classroom communication and oral communicative competency in real life situation.

1.5 Methodology

The researcher used a descriptive and analytical tool: students' questionnaire for investigating Sudanese university students'

views about oral communicative competence in an EFL environment.

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 The Importance of Learning English

The English language can be a big business for many people worldwide. Studies show there could be as a billion students learning English around the world at this time. This can be reasonable to consider moving into learning English as a second or foreign language to students in all parts of the world. However, when you somebody combines this with the freedom the job gives to move around the world and earn enough to live, the case with teaching and learning English gets even stronger. While English speakers move out to different lands, students of English migrate to other parts of the globe searching for a better life and new horizons. (Maxom, 2009, p.1)

2.2 Learning the language

Learning English language is of utmost importance to most of the Sudanese university students because they need it for their jobs or to do post graduate studies or even for communication or travel the world for different reasons. But still there are some obstacles facing the students in learning English. Although English has become the number one international language of business and language of learning, it is not spoken by every member of the family or society. Also, it is not spoken by every university assistant, taxi driver, or store clerk. Knowledge of the country in which you are living and working will make your stay more rewarding. (Camenson, 2003, pp. 25, 26)

2.3 English as a global language

English is no doubt is a global language for many reasons. That can be seen clearly to people in actual life. You hear English in

the media spoken by politicians around the whole world so that their messages can be conveyed to most people in the world. You see lots of people around the world are trying to learn English for different reasons. Whenever you travel, you see English is used for signs and advertisements. Whenever you go to public places such as hotels or restaurants, people understand English and there will be an English menu.

These are fascinating questions to explore, whether your first language is English or not. If English is your mother tongue, you may have mixed feelings about the way English is spreading around the world. You may feel pride that your language is the one which has been so successful; but your pride may be tinged with concern, when you realize that people in other countries may not want to use the language in the same way that you do, and are changing it to suit them.

If English is not your native language, you will have strong desire and mixed feelings about it. You may be strongly motivated to learn it, because you already know that it may open doors for you to the world, you may need it in your future job or career, or will put you in close touch with other people around the world who speak it as a mother tongue, second or foreign language more than any other language. English stays as a global language because of dominating many fields of people's life. Whenever these reasons gone, the globalism turns to another language. Who knows may be Chinese language is on the way. (Crystal, 2003, pp. 1, 2)

English has become a world language because of its wide diffusion outside the British Isles, to all continents of the world, by trade, colonization and conquest. The process began with English settlements in North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. English settlements in the West Indies also began in the seventeenth century, in competition with Spanish, French and Dutch colonizers. The expansion of British influence and power continued at an even greater rate during

the nineteenth century. Early in the century, the British displaced the Dutch as the dominant power in South Africa and during the first half of the century British rule was also established in Singapore, British Guiana, New Zealand and Hong Kong. The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by 'the scramble for Africa', in which colonial powers (Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Portugal) competed for possessions in the African continent. As a result, British rule was established in regions of West Africa (including what is now Nigeria), East Africa (including what are now Kenya and Tanzania) and southern Africa (including what are now Zimbabwe and Botswana).

This worldwide expansion of English means that it is now one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Estimates of the numbers of speakers of English vary widely, but even the most modest of these agree that there are well over 400 million speakers for whom English is a native language and many more for whom English is a second or foreign language. (Barber, Beal& Shaw, 2009, p. 139-141)

The term "global English" is used to describe the use of English as a world or international language rather than simply the language of native speakers of English. Global English emphasizes that English is spoken as a first, second or foreign language both within and across national borders around the world, and that in many situations "native-speaker" accents are not considered necessary or even desirable. (Richards& Schmidt, 2010, p. 247)

2.4 Oral Language Development and Instruction

One can ask a question: What the case of a 6-year old child starts school whose first language is not English when he or she arrives at a school where English is the language of instruction? We all believe that oral language is the base for literacy development and learning process. For the case of that

child mentioned, do teachers wait for him or her to develop the communicative competence or just starting a formal literacy instruction? This is an important question for teachers of English to solve or to find an answer then decide. What exactly is expected for a child is to learn to speak the language of instruction fluently before starting school. So, for a recent immigrant child, the focus is to learn the language of instruction first and expose him into the community so as to develop communication then he starts school. For most children and adults there is little focused attention on speaking. That is why there should be a great consideration to support oral language learning in classroom. Teachers should adopt good strategies to help students develop oral language in classroom and outside school environment. (Barone&Xu, 2008, p. 83)

2.5 Communication

Communication is the exchange of ideas, information, etc., between two or more persons. In an act of communication there is usually at least one speaker or sender, a message which is transmitted. And a person or persons from whom this message is intended (the receiver). Communication is studied from many disciplinary perspectives, is often viewed as a discipline in its own right, and is central to sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and information theory. (Richards& Schmidt, 2010, p.98)

Absolutely, everyone needs a good communication in his everyday life conversations, for studying at university, college or at school. He needs it as well in his future career based on his previous studies. Many students spent about twelve years at school trying to improve their writing skills, yet they neglected developing their ability to converse, to address an audience, so they are now lacking the ability to express themselves or their thoughts clearly and effectively in English as they study it as a foreign language. That is why employers sometimes complain that many graduate students applying for

jobs are still have poor communication skills. Education courses at schools should be intended to improve students' communication skills and to develop other interpersonal skills related to enhancing their English. The problem is that a lot of students did not try before to test their good ability to speak in public, they did not think much about it until they have to address an audience or attend an important interview or a conference. Students have to engage in presentations and seminars held at universities to develop their communication skills and have much practice on how to convey their message and address others. The people judge you by the way you speak, the way you express yourself and the way you have good communication skills. (Barrass, 2006, p. 1)

2.6 Planning for Communication

Communication needs good plan from an early age of the children. There should be suggestions about how to plan an inclusive curriculum and how to plan for progression and developing communication for children when they first start school or in primary schools by using assessment information. Plans should be set to meet the learners' needs in the early and later parts of the foundation stage. All the plans on how to teach and learn communication, language and literacy can be located in syllabuses that related to learns' need and relevant to young children. There are strong reasons to plan in the early age of children to communicate well so as to achieve productive and enjoyable results in learning and teaching. That is because children in an early age foundation interact better rather than when they grow up. It is better in that age to make them progress in communication, set good plans for them to match their learning needs and cover areas of teaching and learning for good future outcomes. Planning for communication moves through several stages. It goes bit by bit to outline the learning objectives and show the activities that offered to children to

achieve good results now as well as soon. (Browne, 2007, pp. 175, 176)

2.7 International Communication

Borg (2009) interviewed one of his respondents saying that: "people around the world can talk together, each other in the best way ... when one person knows how to explain in English, very easy to go around the world. They can read and write, and can speak anywhere in the world ... I think it's the best language to communicate in the world" (p. 19).

2.8 Language and Communication

All living creatures have their own way to communicate. They have some means of conveying their message to others of their own group, communication is of utmost importance for them to survive. They use several means, some use physical movement or facial expressions, others use vocal noises.

Human beings can exploit many varieties of techniques of communication. Man, uses oral message, he also uses his body for gestures of different kinds. He can convey information by facial expression like eye contact or moving his eyelashes. The word language is used to cover all forms of communication, and that animal language as a common term. Man, shares other creatures in using signals, but he is special in using vocal language with a complexity range far beyond anything known to exist among other forms of life. Still human language is special because it consists of many characteristics that we cannot find in any other creatures' means of communication. (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill&Pincas, 2003, p. 25)

2.9 From Classroom to Real World

The language class is not quite enough for learners to assure success in mastering the language or in the academic mainstream. Students need to practise the language outside

classroom environment for better outcomes. Practice always makes perfect, so learners have to be active in exposing themselves in real life conversations outside classroom in order to develop their communication skills and language awareness. EFL students should put themselves in a position to converse with cooperative native speakers of English about everyday topics through chat rooms or in real life discussions, but this experience will not be enough to prepare them to academic purpose in the study of English as a foreign language. Students need a long time to master the language and develop good communication competency, for this reason good programmes in an early age would help children's transition from the language class to the outside real world. Technology and Internet facilities in recent years have changed the world of communication into a revolution of better techniques of teaching and learning. (Krashen, 1989, pp. 15, 16)

2.10 Communicative Competence

Rickheit& Strohner (2008) have the following ideas about the concept of communicative competence: "The ability of people to reach their goals in social life depends to a large extent on their communicative competence. The notion of 'communicative competence' was introduced by Dell Hymes in the 1960s (1962, 1964, and 1972) to emphasize that the knowledge of grammatical rules is not sufficient for speaking a language and for communicating. There is a shared belief in many societies that good communication has many constraints and that one of the most important constraints is the underlying ability of the interlocutors" (P. 15).

2.11 Acquiring Communicative Competence

Nowadays, designers of syllabuses of EFL are working to focus on techniques of combining the traditional teaching of English - grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation-with greater

emphasis on how to use the language meaningfully for communication purposes. Thus, there is a concentration on the selection and ordering of what is to be taught according to the learners' need. (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill&Pincas, 2003, p. 35)

3.0 METHODOLOGY

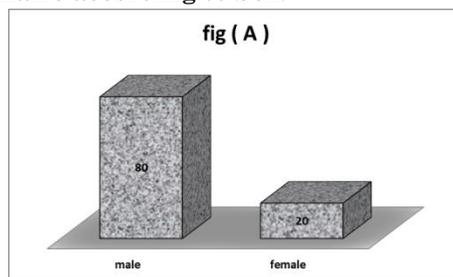
3.1 Introduction

The method used to conduct this study was the descriptive research method. It contains a full description of data collection techniques, the subjects and procedure. In the process of collecting information, the researcher depends on questionnaire for students majoring in English at some Sudanese universities. The methodology of this study was designed to explore students' views on: Sudanese university students' oral communicative competence in an EFL environment.

3.2 Study Sample

The sample of the students' questionnaire, investigated for the purpose of conducting this study consists of 40 students from three Sudanese universities. All students majoring in English of different levels. The males are 32 and 8 are females. The researcher distributed the questionnaire at universities with assistance of some colleagues.

Figure No. (A) The frequency distribution for the study respondents for the questionnaire according to Sex:



3.3 Tool of data collection

3.3.1. Questionnaire:

The questionnaire was processed according to the following sequences: (i) Questionnaire design (ii) Validity of questionnaire (iii) Reliability of questionnaire.

3.3.1. 1. Implementation of questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to investigate students' views and attitudes towards the oral communicative competence of the students at Sudanese universities.

The questionnaire consists of 9 items with a 5-points frequency scale (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree). All the items in the questionnaire have roughly the same format.

Item 1 was designed to see how learning communicative competence in EFL classes is challenging to students at Sudanese universities, and also to see how oral communicative competence is carried out at Sudanese universities in classes.

Items 2 and 3 were designed to measure to what extent students express themselves outside the classroom environment by interacting with people who speak English, in particular, native speakers.

Items 7 were designed to investigate ways that students may find useful to develop their ability in communication outside the classroom environment. They might do that through social media or visiting one of the English-speaking countries. Item 8 was designed to measure the students' performance in real life situations.

Items 12 and 13 were designed to measure the students' activities outside the learning and teaching environment to develop their language in conversations and also, to see whether activities in class are enough or not to meet their needs of using the language outside the classroom.

Item 15 was designed to measure the learners' attitudes towards communicative language teaching and to see how students are aware of it.

Item 16 was designed to measure how students view grammar and communicative competence as ways to improve their language and which one of the two they pay much concern.

3.3.1.2. Validity of Questionnaire

To check and revise the questionnaire validity, it was given to 4 experts. All of them are Ph.D. holders, one is an associate professor and the rest are assistant professors. They all agreed that all items are very much related to the subject and are useful to produce good results for the study. They also mentioned that the language used is clear and straightforward. They made some remarks due to some items and suggested modification for them. They asked to reduce the number of items, before they were 20, so, the researcher listened to them and omitted 4 which they saw they were not much related to the study.

3.3.1.3. Reliability of questionnaire

Reliability refers to the reliability of any test, to obtaining the same results if the same measurement is used more than one time under the same conditions. In addition, the reliability means when a certain test was applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one were counted; then the same test applied another time on the same group and the same marks were obtained; then we can describe this test as reliable. In addition, reliability is defined as the degree of the accuracy of the data that the test measures. Here are some of the most used methods for calculating the reliability:
Alpha-Cronbach coefficient.

On the other hand, validity also is a measure used to identify the validity degree among the respondents according to their answers on certain criterion. The validity is counted by a number of methods, among them is the validity using the square root of the (reliability coefficient). The value of the reliability and the validity lies in the range between (0-1). The validity of the questionnaire is that the tool should measure the exact aim, which it has been designed for.

In this study the validity calculated by using the following equation:

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Reliability}}$$

The reliability coefficient was calculated for the measurement, which was used in the questionnaire using Alpha-Cronbach coefficient Equation as the following:

For calculating the validity and the reliability of the questionnaire from the above equation, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to 20 respondents to calculate the reliability coefficient using the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient; the results have been showed in the following table:

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.813	9

3.4. Procedures

With some colleagues' assistance, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to students of different levels majoring in English at three different universities in Khartoum state. The researcher first asked them politely to read the instructions before responding to the questions. For more clarification the subjects were informed that:

- The information is for research purposes only.
- There is no right or wrong/ or yes or no answer.

- The most important point is that, students should answer honestly.
- The students were asked to indicate the sex and class level.
- The 5-point frequency scale provided consisted of the frequencies:

Strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree. The first question is shown as follows:

1. Learning oral communicative competence is challenging in EFL classes.

Strongly agree agree not sure disagree
strongly disagree

The subjects were required to choose one of these frequencies by putting a 'tick' in the box provided for each option.

They were also reminded that all the questions must be ticked only once. On administering the questionnaire to the students, the researcher explained every difficult or confusing words, where necessary, of what was being asked for, besides accepting discussion that processed by some students. The researcher reminded the students to answer honestly. After all that, the researcher collected copies and being taken for analysis.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This part of the study is devoted to the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of the data collected through the questionnaire which was given to 40 respondents who represent students in three different Sudanese universities.

4.2. The Responses to the Questionnaire

The responses to the questionnaire of the 40 students were tabulated and computed. The following is an analytical interpretation and discussion of the findings regarding different points related to the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

Each item in the questionnaire is analyzed statistically and discussed. The following tables and graphs will support the discussion.

4.2.1. Analysis of the Questionnaire

The researcher distributed the questionnaire on determined study sample (40), and constructed the required tables for collected data. This step consists transformation of the qualitative (nominal) variables (strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, and strongly agree) to quantitative variables (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) respectively, also the graphical representations were used for this purpose.

The Sex: The frequency distribution for the study respondents according to Sex:

Table NO. (A)

sex	Frequency	Percent %
Male	32	80.0
Female	8	20.0
Total	40	100.0

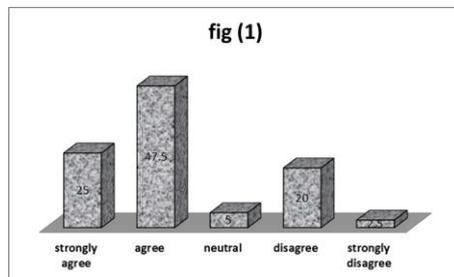
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

Figure No.(A), it is shown that most of the study's respondents are males, the number of them was (32) persons with percentage (80%), while the female respondents number was (8) persons with (20%).

Question No. (1): Learning oral communicative competence is challenging in EFL classes.

Table No. (1): The frequency distribution for the respondents' Answers of question No. (1):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	10	25.0
agree	19	47.5
not sure	2	5.0
disagree	8	20.0
strongly disagree	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0



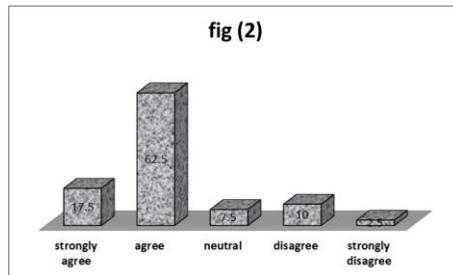
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

It is clear from the above table No.(1) and figure No (1) that there are (10) persons in the study's sample with percentage (25.0%) strongly agreed to " Learning oral communicative competence is challenging in EFL classes ". There are (19) persons with percentage (47.5%) agreed to that idea, and (2) persons with percentage (5.0%) were not sure of that, and (8) persons with percentage (20.0%) disagreed to the idea. only (1) person with 2.5% strongly disagreed.

Question No.(2):The students feel shay to express themselves in English outside the classroom environment.

Table No. (2): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(2):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	7	17.5
agree	25	62.5
not sure	3	7.5
disagree	4	10.0
strongly disagree	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

It is clear from the above table No.(2) and figure No (2) that there are (7) persons in the study's sample with percentage (17.5%) strongly agreed to " The student feel shay to express themselves in English outside the classroom environment ". While (25) persons with percentage (62.5%) agreed to that idea. (3) Persons with percentage (7.5%) were not sure of that and (4) persons with percentage (2.5%) disagreed. Only (1) person with 2.5% strongly disagreed.

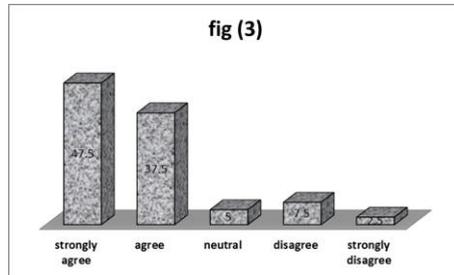
Question No. (3):Some students have chances to interact with native speakers of English.

Table No. (3): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(3):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	19	47.5
agree	15	37.5
not sure	2	5.0
disagree	3	7.5

Ammar Adam Abdelnabi Mohamed, Mohmoud Ali Ahmed Omer- **The Students' Views about Oral communicative Competence at Sudanese Universities in an EFL environment**

strongly disagree	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0



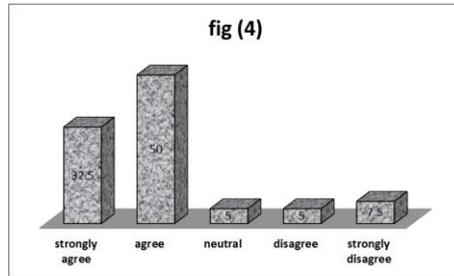
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(3) and figure No (3) that there are (19) persons in the study's sample with percentage (47.5%) strongly agreed to " Some students have chances to interact with native speakers of English ". There are (15) persons with percentage (37.5%) agreed to that notion and (2) persons with percentage (5%) were not sure. (3) persons with percentage (7.5%) disagreed while only (1) person with 2.5% strongly disagreed.

Question No (4): Students try to find other ways outside the classroom environment to improve their oral communicative competence.

Table No. (4): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(4):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	13	32.5
agree	20	50.0
not sure	2	5.0
disagree	2	5.0
strongly disagree	3	7.5
Total	40	100



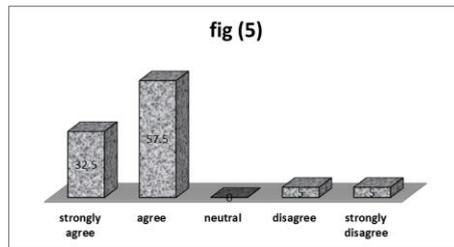
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(4) and figure No. (4) that there are (13) persons in the study's sample with percentage (32.5%) strongly agreed to: "Students try to find other ways outside the classroom environment to improve their oral communicative competence". There are (20) persons with percentage (50.0%) agreed to that and (2) persons with percentage (5.0%) were not sure of that. (2) persons with percentage (5%) disagreed and (3) persons with 7.5% strongly disagreed.

Question No. (5): I am satisfied with my English performance in real life situations.

Table No. (5): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(5):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	13	32.5
agree	23	57.5
not sure	0	0
disagree	2	5.0
strongly disagree	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0



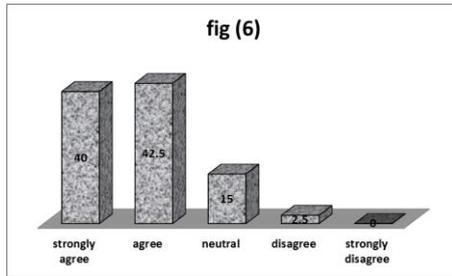
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No. (5) and figure No. (5) that there are (13) persons in the study's sample with percentage (32.5%) strongly agreed to: "I am satisfied with my English performance in real life situations". There are (23) persons with percentage (57.5%) agreed to that idea while (0) person with percentage (0.0%) was not sure of that. (2) persons with percentage (5%) disagreed and (2) persons with 5% strongly disagreed.

Question No. (6): Students who are majoring in English have a little opportunity to practise their English outside the teaching and learning environment.

Table No. (6): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(6):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	16	40.0
agree	17	42.5
not sure	6	15.0
disagree	1	2.5
strongly disagree	0	0
Total	40	100.0



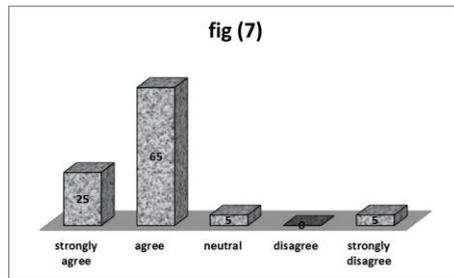
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(6) and figure No.(6) that there are (16) persons in the study's sample with percentage (40.0%) strongly agreed to “Students who are majoring in English have a little opportunity to practise their English outside the teaching and learning environment”. There are (17) persons with percentage (42.5%) agreed to that thought and (6) persons with percentage (15.0%) were not sure of that. (1) person with percentage (2.5%) disagreed and (0) person with 0.0% strongly disagreed.

Question No. (7):The communicative activities in class fulfill the learners’ need of using the language in real life situations.

Table No. (7): The frequency distribution for the respondents’ answers of question No.(7):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	10	25.0
agree	26	65.0
not sure	2	5.0
disagree	0	0
strongly disagree	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0



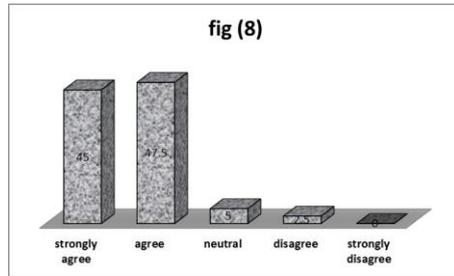
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(7) and figure No. (7) that there are (10) persons in the study's sample with percentage (25.0%) strongly agreed to "The communicative activities in class fulfill the learners' need of using the language in real life situations". (26) persons with percentage (65.0%) agreed to that idea and (2) persons with percentage (5.0%) were not sure of that. (0) person with percentage (0.0%) disagreed and (1) person with 2.5% strongly disagreed.

Question No. (8): Developing learners' attitudes toward communicative language teaching enhance their willingness to communicate in EFL classes.

Table No. (8): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(8)

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	18	45.0
agree	19	47.5
not sure	2	5.0
disagree	1	2.5
strongly disagree	0	0
Total	40	100.0



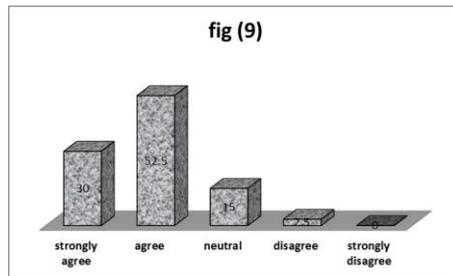
Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(8) and figure No. (8) that there are (18) persons in the study's sample with percentage (45.0%) strongly agreed to: "Developing learners' attitudes towards communicative languages teaching enhance their willingness to communicate in EFL classes". There are (19) persons with percentage (47.5%) agreed to that idea and only (2) persons with percentage (5%) were not sure of that. (1) persons with percentage (2.5%) disagreed and (0) person with 5% strongly disagreed.

Question No. (9): Students pay much concern to grammar rather than communicative English.

Table No. (9): The frequency distribution for the respondents' answers of question No.(9):

Valid	Frequency	Percent%
strongly agree	12	30.0
agree	21	52.5
not sure	6	15.0
disagree	1	2.5
strongly disagree	0	0
Total	40	100.0



Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS

It is clear from the above table No.(9) and figure No. (9) that there are (12) persons in the study's sample with percentage (30.0%) strongly agreed to: "Students pay much concern to grammar rather than communicative English", while there are (21) persons with percentage (52.5%) agreed to that notion. There are (6) persons with percentage (15.0%) were not sure and only (1) person with percentage (2.5%) disagreed. (0) person with 5% are strongly disagreed

4.3 Discussion of the Results

The results are discussed according to the sequences of data analyzed by the instruments used in the research. The discussion is necessary to develop and promote the students' oral communicative competence in an EFL environment.

- The most significant results obtained by the students' questionnaire analysis indicate that most of the students who responded to the questionnaire view oral communicative competence as challenging in EFL classes. Very few of them see that it is not challenging, maybe those students had a good opportunity to interact with native speakers of English or with people who know English or they have lived or visited one of the English-speaking countries or having good knowledge of the language due to some special factors.

- Most of the students either agreed or strongly agreed to the point that they try to find other ways outside the classroom

environment to develop their oral communicative competence. Maybe, most of them try to improve that by having much listening to TV channels, using video programmes and YouTube.

- A great number of the students sees that the communicative activities in class do not fulfill the learners' need in real life situations.

- All the students except one agreed to the idea of developing learners' attitudes towards communicative language teaching enhance willingness to communicate in EFL classes. The same amount agreed that students who are majoring in English have a little opportunity to practise their English outside the teaching and learning environment. That would be something negative towards their communication development as it is said that practice makes perfection. Students have to practise their English and try to find ways to apply that. Most of the respondents agreed that they feel shy to express themselves in English outside the classroom environment.

- All the respondents agreed that they pay much attention to grammar rather than communicative English. That is a big problem for them to develop their communication ability because much of their attention and concern is devoted to grammar. They need to focus on developing their oral communicative ability without neglecting grammar as a means of learning the language; although some people have an idea that grammar comes second to language, saying that, the most important point is to convey your message to the listener without paying much attention to grammatical mistakes.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

Acquiring oral communicative competence is difficult, challenging and frustrating for most EFL learners in particular

the Sudanese students. Moreover, it can be very stressful for them because of many factors they may encounter during their study, so they always exert efforts to find some ways to develop that important part of learning the language outside the school environment. How well students communicate with others has a major impact on their future career because they need English in their jobs and other fields of life.

The main purpose of this research is to assess, investigate and explore students' oral communicative competence in an EFL environment at Sudanese universities, besides how to overcome difficulties that might face students in that concern. To achieve this, the researcher used questionnaire. The questionnaire was applied on a group of different level students at three Sudanese universities.

5.2 Findings

From this study, the researcher came up with the following findings:

- 1- Learners normally 'speak to learn' rather than 'learn to speak'. Learners speak in order to learn of accuracy of the components of the language (sound discrimination or patterns, grammatical structures or functional realizations) rather than develop fluency in using the target language in spoken interaction with native speakers or other learners.
- 2- Communicative activities play a vital and an active role in developing the students' oral communicative competence. Such kind of activities whether practised inside or outside the classroom enables students to choose appropriate English for communication when facing diverse social interaction requirements.
- 3- Facilities such as educational videos, listening to TV channels, YouTube, having conversations with native speakers of English, interacting in English clubs are very useful to promote the students' oral communicative ability and can be

efficient for them to feel confident and having much trust on themselves when having real life situational conversations. Most of the students responded to the questionnaire agreed that the communicative activities in classroom doesn't fulfill their need, so they need the above outside activities.

4- Students' reflections on their learning achievements motivate them to keep on practising on social interactions for their development of oral communicative competence.

5- Most of the responded students agreed upon paying much attention to grammar rather than communication. They had difficulty expressing themselves in English because most of their attention is paid to grammar and how to make a correct English sentence. They have a fear of making grammatical mistakes which might lead to a linguistic barrier.

6- Most of the students agreed upon developing learners' attitudes towards communicative language teaching enhance their willingness to communicate in EFL classes.

5.3 Recommendations

1- The study recommends that teachers should encourage students and get them aware of the importance of oral communicative competence. They should use different materials in classrooms to develop their communication ability and guide them to better sources and techniques to develop it outside the classroom environment.

2- The study advises students, in particular those who are majoring in English to try always to develop their communicative ability through real situational conversations with people who know English very well, so as to overcome the shyness or the linguistic barrier which they might have.

3- The research recommends that an oral communicative language test should be added to the table characteristics of the university students' marks to emphasize its importance.

4- The study advises students to be aware of the importance of the oral communicative competence and try to improve their communication ability by using different sources.

5- The research recommends that grammar shouldn't be an obstacle for the learners to draw their attention away from the task of oral communicative competency. High attention to grammar might take most of the students' focus away from the real communication; furthermore, the language should be for communication rather than paying extra attention to grammar.

6-The study recommends that communicative competence language teaching should be given children at schools at an early age.

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