

TOWARDS AN ESL-ORIENTED SPEAKING PEDAGOGY:
REPOSITIONING ENGLISH THROUGH EVIDENCE FROM 57 UNIVERSITY DIALOGUES

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1. INTRODUCTION

English in Vietnam is increasingly expected to function as a medium of academic, professional, and transnational communication. Yet early university speaking tasks may remain structured around fixed prompts, predictable question-answer sequences, and controlled production.

CORE TENSION
Policy-level repositioning ↔ Classroom-level prompt-bound interaction

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What recurrent linguistic and interactional features characterize early university speaking tasks?
- How do these features reflect underlying pedagogical assumptions about speaking?
- What pedagogical directions can support an ESL-oriented speaking pedagogy?

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**ENGLISH AS A
COMMUNICATIVE RESOURCE**
Use • agency • responsiveness

**INTERACTIONAL
COMPETENCE**
Turn-taking • expansion • repair • negotiation

**CLASSROOM DISCOURSE
AS SOCIAL PRACTICE**
Task design • norms • participation roles

ANALYTICAL FOCUS
Turn structure • response development • negotiation • breakdown • repair

4. METHODOLOGY

57
recorded & transcribed
dialogues

3–6
Question-response
exchanges

1
first-year English-major
cohort

ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

1 LINGUISTIC PATTERNS
agreement • tense • articles • word form • completeness

2 INTERACTIONAL ANALYSIS
turn expansion • follow-up • negotiation • repair • breakdown

3 PEDAGOGICAL INTERPRETATION
patterns interpreted through the integrated framework

CONTEXT
Regular speaking sessions • pair work • thematic prompts • verbatim transcription

5. KEY FINDINGS

01 SYSTEMATIC GRAMMATICAL INSTABILITY
Recurring problems in subject-verb agreement, tense, articles, word forms, and clause completeness.

02 LIMITED TURN EXPANSION
Responses are often brief; students rarely elaborate, provide examples, or develop a shared topic.

03 MINIMAL NEGOTIATION OF MEANING
Clarification, confirmation, contingent follow-up, and engagement with a partner's contribution are rare.

04 BREAKDOWNS RARELY REPAIRED
Incomplete responses, silence, and topic abandonment are usually followed by moving to the next prompt.

05 PROMPT-BOUND INTERACTION
The dominant sequence is: ask → short answer → next question; task completion outweighs exploratory dialogue.

CENTRAL INTERPRETATION
The main limitation is not grammar alone;
it is restricted interactional design.

6. FROM DIAGNOSIS TO DIRECTION

CURRENT ORIENTATION
Accuracy + prompt completion
+ predictable turns
ESL-ORIENTED SPEAKING PEDAGOGY
Responsiveness + negotiation
+ collaborative meaning-making

7. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

- Make interactional competence an explicit learning outcome.
- Reduce prompt dependency; use thematic cues and open subtopics.
- Build contingency through information gaps, role-plays, and decision-making.
- Require meaningful turn expansion, not merely longer answers.
- Teach and normalize repair, clarification, and reformulation.
- Assess responsiveness, dialogue maintenance, and topic development.
- Respond to ideas before correcting form; allow brief organic digressions.

8. KEY CONTRIBUTION

**Repositioning English must occur at the
micro-level of classroom interaction -
not only in policy discourse.**

9. LIMITATIONS

- One cohort in one institutional context.
- Structured, topic-bound dialogues may not represent spontaneous conversation outside class.
- Qualitative analysis; no statistical frequency or correlation measures.

10. SELECTED REFERENCES

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PEDAGOGICAL REPOSITIONING: FROM PROMPT COMPLETION TO DIALOGIC CONSTRUCTION

1 OBJECTIVES

Make interactional competence explicit:
respond, extend, clarify, repair.

2 TASK ARCHITECTURE

Reduce rigid prompts; build contingency,
choice, and collaborative problem-solving.

3 CLASSROOM NORMS

Normalize communicative struggle,
risk-taking, and exploratory talk.

4 ASSESSMENT

Reward dialogue maintenance,
responsiveness, and topic development.

ENGLISH AS A WORKING LANGUAGE • responsiveness • negotiation • collaborative meaning-making

KEY TAKEAWAY: Repositioning English is realized in everyday classroom interaction - turn by turn, question by question, repair by repair.

Source: Nguyen Xuan Tich, "Towards an ESL-Oriented Speaking Pedagogy: Repositioning English through Evidence from 57 University Dialogues."