

# Enhancing English Speaking Skills of Students in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sri Lankan University Colleges

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**Abstract** – Sri Lankan University Colleges as providers of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), cater industrial skill development recognized by the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). It is of ample importance that the students who obtain the Higher National Diploma (HND) and the NVQ are competent in English communication skills that will enhance their opportunities in employment. Although the role of English in employment is undeniable and it is taught in University Colleges for three academic years, majority of students are incapable of communicating in English in spontaneous speech situations related to their vocations. This research investigated the problems of limited vocabulary and nervousness faced by University College students when using English as a medium of communication in vocational speech situations and analyzed effective pedagogical approaches to be utilized in language classrooms to overcome the aforesaid problems. The data was collected through need analysis questionnaires and interviews based on a group of twenty NVQ level 6 students following HND in Technology at University College of Ratmalana. The enactment of authentic workplace communication situations through various speaking tasks in language classroom was used as teaching pedagogy for twelve weeks. The results of the study revealed that the tasks were effective in overcoming the problems of limited vocabulary and nervousness faced by students when using English as a medium of communication in vocational speech situations. According to interviews disclosing students' opinion on the success of the teaching pedagogy, the learning tasks were improving their knowledge in vocational vocabulary and confidence in speaking English.

**Keywords:** English communication skills, vocational English-speaking, vocational speech situations