УДК 378.147.091.33-027.22:811.111’27

DOI: 10.31652/2786-9083-2026-7(1)-70-82

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ПРАКТИЧНИЙ КУРС РОЗМОВНОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ОСВІТНЄ СЕРЕДОВИЩЕ ДЛЯ РОЗВИТКУ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ СТІЙКОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ

Анотація. Дослідження присвячене вивченню важливої ролі комунікативної стійкості як для студентів, так і для звичайних людей. Живучи в умовах війни, постійних повітряних тривог та природних катастроф, люди мають справлятися зі стресом, пов’язаним із комунікацією, залишатися емоційно стабільними та підтримувати змістовні взаємодії. Метою цієї роботи є вивчення практичного курсу розмовної англійської мови як середовища, що сприяє розвитку комунікативної стійкості на основі інтерактивних та метакомунікативних стратегій. Дослідження базується на залученні студентів до виконання завдань на основі сценаріїв, що передбачають емоційно складні та соціально чутливі ситуації. Застосування анкети як попереднього, проміжного та підсумкового тестування дозволило відстежити розвиток комунікативної стійкості студентів у англійській мові. Результати показують, що курс забезпечує сприятливе середовище для подолання викликів взаємодії, регулювання емоцій та ефективної комунікації. Більше того, числові дані свідчать про те, що курс має тривалий вплив на комунікативну стійкість студентів. Наприкінці курсу студенти здатні справлятися з емоційно складними взаємодіями англійською мовою за допомогою емпатії, пояснень, переговорів та підтримки.
Ключові слова: комунікативна стійкість; комунікативні стратегії; навчання на основі ситуацій; вивчення іноземної мови; комунікативний стрес;

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PRACTICAL COURSE IN SPOKEN ENGLISH AS AN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR FOSTERING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE RESILIENCE

Abstract. The study explores the vital role of communicative resilience for both university students and ordinary people. Living in times of war, constant air raid alarms, and natural disasters, individuals have to handle communication stress, remain emotionally stable, and manage meaningful interactions. The purpose of this paper is to examine the Practical Course in Spoken English as a suitable environment for developing communicative resilience based on interactional and metacommunicative strategies. This research is based on engaging students in scenario-based tasks that involve emotionally challenging and socially sensitive situations. Administrating the questionnaire as pre-, mid-, and posttests allowed us to keep track of the development of learners' communicative resilience in English. The findings show that the course provides a favorable environment to deal with interaction challenges, regulate emotions, and communicate effectively. Moreover, the numeric evidence implies that the course has a lasting impact on students' communicative resilience. By the end of the course, learners are able to handle emotionally challenging interactions in English through empathy, explanation, negotiation, and support.

Key words: communicative resilience; communicative strategies; scenario-based learning; second language acquisition; communicative stress;

Relevance of the study

Against the backdrop of rapid globalization and the increasing role of the English language in academic and professional communication, the enhancement of effective spoken interaction is a core priority for students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages. In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the concept of resilience as an essential personal and professional quality that enables individuals to cope with challenges, adapt to changing conditions, and maintain effective performance under pressure. In the context of foreign language education, this concept becomes relevant in regard to students' ability to handle communicative stress, overcome anxiety, and manage meaningful interaction in unpredictable speaking situations. In this respect, communicative resilience can be understood as the capacity to remain emotionally stable, strategically flexible, and interactionally effective despite communicative difficulties or setbacks.

Problem Statement

Although students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages typically obtain an advanced level of linguistic proficiency, this does not always result in effective and emotionally stable spoken communication. A significant amount of students experience struggles in managing interaction in spontaneous speaking contexts, particularly in situations characterized by uncertainty, cognitive load, or emotional pressure. These challenges suggest that successful oral communication depends not only on language knowledge, but also on learners' ability to regulate affective responses, manage interactional demands, and adapt strategically to communicative constraints.

This points to a gap between the communicative demands placed on future language professionals and the level of preparedness students demonstrate in real-life speaking situations.While prior research has examined communicative competence

and strategic behavior in second language use, the role of structured conversation-based instruction as an integrated environment for cultivating communicative resilience remains insufficiently theorized and empirically explored. Consequently, there is a need for targeted investigation into how the Practical Course in Spoken English can contribute to strengthening students' capacity to maintain effective interaction under challenging communicative conditions.

Analysis of recent research and publications

Resilience was viewed as a psychological phenomenon in the 1970s. Back then, resilience was interpreted as a beneficial psychological outcome despite exposure to serious, risky situations (Rutter, 2006). In terms of other disciplines, scholars agreed that resilience stood for the ability to bounce back from setbacks and tragedies (Buzzanell & Houston, 2018).

Communicative resilience was defined as the ability to adjust to changing situations and create a new normality after disruption (Amankwah, Gyamfi & Oduro, 2022, p. 5627). Analyzing articles on communicative resilience, Adwoa Sikayena Amankwah, Prince Adu Gyamfi, and Abigail Narkie Oduro (2022) came to the conclusion that communication fosters resilience. It appears in daily lives during disasters, wars, deaths, violent incidents, and job losses, accompanied by anxiety and stress (Buzzanell & Houston, 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic, a global and national crisis, emphasized the importance of communicative resilience. Due to this crisis, scholars examined the communicative theory of resilience to enable people to develop the ability to handle such and other disasters (Amankwah, Gyamfi & Oduro, 2022).

Ukrainian scholars have also been doing research on resilience for the past few years. As Ukrainians have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, military conflicts, natural disasters, and other dangerous situations, people have to deal with such dangers, adapt, and keep living and thriving (Соловей-Лагода, 2024, с. 33). G. Lazos (2018) first defines the term "resilience" as a biopsychosocial phenomenon that comprises personal, interpersonal, and social experiences and is the outcome of different stages of development over time. Additionally, it is the ability to recover from difficult conditions. O. Kokun and T. Melnychuk aim to differentiate the notions of resilience and vitality. In their views, resilience is an adaptive process of returning to the initial functioning after a disruptive period (Кокун & Мельничук, 2023, с. 6). E. Grishin interprets it as a person's resource to overcome stress and adapt to new life circumstances after a traumatic experience, and it leads to a person's full functioning (Грішин, 2021). S. Kuzikova and T. Shcherbak (2022) investigate resilience and stress resistance in the context of pedagogical activity. Based on their theoretical analysis, resilience is defined as a positive adaptation and recovery after stressful situations (Кузікова & Щербак, 2022). O. Solovei-Lagoda gives examples of resilience models that scholars often use to analyze this phenomenon: Community-Resiliency-Model by E. Miller-Karas that highlights the importance of social support and collaborative action to deal with stressful situations; Risk and Resilience Model by B. Daniel and S. Wassell; Ecological Model of Resilience by U. Bronfenbrenner which highlights the interaction between an individual and their close circle; Five Cs Model by B. Benard, theoretical and methodological model of resilience by G. Lazos; Resilience model by O. Romanchuk and others (Соловей-Лагода, 2024).

Ukrainian scholars carry on examining resilience in teaching and learning environments. Ukrainian teachers and students have been living against the backdrop of the war and adapting to constant power cuts and life-threatening attacks. O. Ivanova acknowledges how essential it is to develop the communicative competence of teachers as a way of increasing resilience. It's extremely relevant during the war because teachers do not just communicate; they need to find understanding with others, resolve conflicts, and interact with different groups of people (Іванова, 2022). Besides, students need to study, although they lack sleep, have trouble concentrating, and have problems communicating with their peers (Olendra, 2023). Therefore, they require certain mental and emotional coping skills to recover from life difficulties and setbacks. Further research states how essential it is to develop students' resilience, as only 42% of first-year psychology students had a higher resilience level than average (Яланська & Єфименко, 2025).

Overall, communicative resilience is a vital skill to communicate efficiently and overcome life and studying setbacks. According to scholars, communication fosters resilience. Having said that, spontaneous communication may even prevent students from increasing their resilience, as foreign language interactions include students' language levels and communication purposes. If students lack certain structures or words to express themselves or are not able to support or reassure others appropriately, it will result in anxiety, speaking barriers, and sounding rude. Therefore, structured communication based on pertinent communicative strategies alleviates stress levels and enables learners to develop relevant communicative resilience skills.

Purpose and aims of the study

The purpose of the article lies in determining the role of the Practical Course of Spoken English in developing university students' communicative resilience with the help of communicative strategies. We aim to:

- examine the Practical Course in Spoken English as a favourable environment for developing communicative resilience;
- describe the features of implementing interactional and metacommunicative strategies in educational communicative situations;

Presentation of the main research material

Learning a Second Language is a challenging process, as learners will definitely face difficulties related to encountering new words, grammar structures, and navigating through unfamiliar cultural norms. Furthermore, they will deal with fear of making mistakes, explaining their opinions despite the lack of vocabulary items, and speaking in front of others. Such factors often lead to stress, anxiety, disappointment, and other negative emotions. As a result, being resilient is vital to adjust to demanding learning situations as well as to difficult life situations (Chen, Zhou & Cai, 2025, p. 2).

Martin and Marsh (2006) point out five components of academic resilience, such as confidence, coordination, control, composure, and commitment. Confidence stands for the belief to overcome learning challenges; coordination means planning and coping with learning tasks; control helps to tackle problems and their effects on learning outcomes; composure involves regulating stress and pressure; commitment helps to stay focused on learning goals despite failures. Having higher resilience,

students can develop confidence, determination, and control their emotions when learning a foreign language (Chen, Zhou & Cai, 2025, p. 2).

Realizing the crucial role of resilience, Ukrainian teachers designed a coursebook to develop English language skills and promote resilience and motivation. The coursebook comprises classwork activities, independent work, and practical application of knowledge. It contains such topics as self-awareness, positive thinking, goal setting, communication, problem-solving, resilience in relationships and the workplace, self-care, and well-being (Федорів, Фіногіна & Пірoженко, 2023).

Our study pursues the aims of developing relevant communicative resilience skills of university students on the basis of certain communicative strategies. As a result, students will be able to use practical skills in learning situations, at the workplace, and during personal interactions.

Depending on the perspective, researchers define the term 'communicative strategy' differently. In terms of interaction, Tarone (1980) sees communicative strategy as mutual attempts to agree on the meaning in the situation when necessary meaning strategies do not seem to work (Tarone, 1980, p. 420). According to it, successful communication is the responsibility of both a speaker and a hearer.

Realizing a misunderstanding, interlocutors turn to a wide range of strategies such as paraphrasing, avoidance, transfer and others [Weigh, 2011, p. 12]. The learner may not be aware of some forms to share certain information; therefore, they deliberately use verbal and non-verbal tools to give a message [Weigh, 2011, p. 12]. Færch and Kasper (1983) interpret communicative strategy from a psychological perspective, which is a conscious plan to solve a problem during interactions to achieve a communicative goal (Færch & Kasper, 1983, p. 36). Such a definition suggests two ways to solve the communication problem: achievement and avoidance strategies (Weigh, 2011, p. 12).

Communicative strategies are divided into two main categories: compensation and interactional strategies. Compensation strategies are viewed as learners' attempts to make up for the gaps in their knowledge of the target language (Littlemore, 2001). A few taxonomies were suggested to outline compensation or achievement strategies. Poulisse's (1993) singles out substitution, substitution plus, and reconceptualization. Færch and Kasper's (1983) taxonomy includes code-switching, interlingual strategies, L1-based strategies, cooperative strategies, and non-verbal strategies.

Interactional strategies focus on oral communication and the way people interact to achieve a communication goal (Hvit, 2025, p. 1). Dörnyei and Scott (1997) provide a taxonomy of interactional strategies for language learners, which includes appeal for help, comprehension check, own-accuracy check, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, guessing, expressing non-understanding, interpretive summary, responses such as repeat, repair, expand, confirm, rephrase, and reject. Cohen (2011) points out that interactional strategies encourage students to collaborate, which develops their language confidence.

Apart from these, metacommunicative strategies are considered of great importance. The concept of metacommunication appeared in the 1950s and included statements shared by interlocutors during a communicative act (Bateson, 1972). Bateson (1972) emphasizes two parts of metacommunication, such as the comment on

the content of communication and the reflection of internal relationships between speakers, when their viewpoints are related to each other, the situation, and the conversation topic. Zhanazarova, Kulgeldinova, and Islam (2018) justify the importance of foreign language students to master metacommunicative competence. Possessing such a competence, students will be able to understand the communicative situation as a whole and its separate parts and evaluate their own and other interlocutors' utterances. DeVito, J. A. (2012) and Sawyer, K. R. (2003) claim that metacommunicative skills help to clarify information, keep the conversation going, and reach an agreement. Certain metacommunicative strategies influence communication effectiveness, such as sharing and explaining one's feelings, paraphrasing, asking for clarification, using metacommunication to talk about one's communication, and giving previous information to predict future messages (Grabovska, 2019, p. 67-68).

Metacommunication involves back channeling to support the speaker and express understanding, acceptance, and consent. Back channeling is reflected by short responses Yes? You did? Really? [Goffman, 2009, p. 35]

On the whole, interactional strategies play a crucial role in developing communicative resilience because learners need to manage interactions, cooperate, sound polite when setting boundaries, and negotiating problems. Additionally, metacommunicative strategies are equally essential for learners as interactional strategies. They will be able to talk about their feelings and explain them, deal with problems and distressing emotions, and solve conflicts better.

However, this study will not employ compensation strategies because they are focused on English knowledge gaps. We attempt to engage learners in communication despite their insufficient language knowledge to develop certain skills that can be used outside the classroom. As a result, they will be prepared to deal with certain situations without much pressure and fear.

Although the Practical Course in Spoken English contributes to the enhancement of students' spoken language proficiency, its broader pedagogical function extends to supporting learners' ability to perform effectively in cognitively and emotionally demanding communicative contexts. Rather than prioritising linguistic accuracy alone, the course provides a structured instructional environment in which students can develop adaptive communicative behaviours, self-regulatory capacities, and sustained interactional competence.

Building on this resilience-oriented framework, the English conversation course employs a range of communicative task types specifically designed to promote stable and adaptive spoken performance. Through structured discussions, role plays, and problem-based situations, students are exposed to authentic, dynamic, and interactionally demanding communicative scenarios. These task formats require learners to respond spontaneously, negotiate meaning, manage interpersonal dynamics, and sustain interaction under varying degrees of cognitive and emotional pressure.

While communicative tasks create the conditions for developing resilient speaking behaviour, the effectiveness of learners' performance within these tasks largely depends on their ability to employ appropriate **interactional and metacommunicative strategies**. These strategies function as key mechanisms for

sustaining communication, managing conversational flow, and ensuring mutual understanding in dynamic spoken interaction.

Interactional strategies enable students to maintain active engagement in conversation by facilitating turn-taking, signalling attentiveness, requesting clarification, and managing topic development. Through the systematic use of these strategies, learners become more capable of guiding the progression of discourse, responding constructively to interlocutors, and sustaining coherent and meaningful interaction. As a result, interactional strategies contribute to greater conversational stability, improved communicative control, and enhanced effectiveness in spoken English.

Complementing this, **metacommunicative strategies** support learners in consciously regulating communication by verbalising intentions, clarifying meaning, addressing misunderstandings, and managing communicative tension. By encouraging students to reflect on and articulate the communicative process itself, these strategies promote greater awareness of interactional dynamics and foster the ability to cope with uncertainty or breakdowns in communication. In this sense, metacommunicative strategies play a crucial role in reducing anxiety, mitigating communicative pressure, and reinforcing learners' confidence and resilience in spoken interaction.

To foster communicative resilience, Practical Course in Spoken English incorporated scenario-based tasks that simulated emotionally challenging and socially sensitive real-life interactions. Within the course the students covered the following language areas: *encouraging and reassuring, giving negative feedback or bad news, saying no politely, complaining about something.*

To demonstrate how these language areas were addressed in practice, the course included a set of structured role-play situations. These scenarios served as examples of real-life communicative challenges and allowed students to apply interactional and metacommunicative strategies in guided yet realistic contexts.

Encouraging and reassuring

Student A: *Living in the halls of residence, your classmate had a sleepless night because of the air raid alarm. Therefore, they are tired and disorganized and can't focus on their English homework. Encourage your friend to continue doing exercises and reassure them.*

Student B:*You had a sleepless night because of the air raid alarm and are feeling tired, disorganised, and unable to focus on your English homework. Explain your situation to your classmate, describe how it affects your ability to study.*

This role-play task engaged learners in emotionally sensitive communication that required sustaining supportive interaction under conditions of stress and fatigue. When performing the role of Student A, learners applied interactional strategies such as active listening, turn-taking, and affiliative feedback to ensure conversational continuity and provide reassurance. Alongside these, they used metacommunicative strategies to signal supportive intent, moderate emotional tone, and manage interpersonal dynamics within the exchange.

Learners in the role of Student B developed communicative resilience by verbalising personal difficulties, acknowledging emotional strain, and maintaining engagement in the interaction despite fatigue, anxiety, or frustration. The task

challenged them to regulate emotional responses, remain receptive to support, and continue participating in communication even under cognitive or emotional overload.

Giving negative feedback or bad news

Student A: *Your classmate has been stressed out recently because of frequent air raid alarms. As a result, your friend has failed their composition during peer assessment. Introduce the subject gently, imagine how they feel, and offer to help.*

Student B: *You have just received negative news about yourself: you failed your composition during peer assessment. React to this news in a realistic and appropriate way. Show your emotional response without being aggressive or defensive. Acknowledge the situation, reflect briefly on how it makes you feel, and respond respectfully to your classmate.*

This conversation required both students to engage in interactive and metacommunicative functions while communicating about a personally distressing academic outcome. Learners in the role of Student A practiced managing interpersonal meaning by introducing a sensitive topic carefully, anticipating their classmate's emotional state, and explicitly signaling supportive intentions through empathy and offers of help. These strategies contributed to maintaining a safe and respectful communicative environment.

In the Student B role, students showed metacommunicative awareness by recognizing the negative feedback, articulating their emotional response, and regulating their reactions to avoid defensiveness or aggression. By responding respectfully and remaining engaged in the interaction, they supported conversational continuity and mutual understanding. Overall, the task fostered the development of interactive metacommunicative competence, enabling learners to manage emotional content, adjust their language strategically, and sustain constructive dialogue in situations involving vulnerability and evaluation.

Saying no politely

Student A: *Your classmate suggests going shopping after classes at university. Refuse the invitation politely. Include an apology and a brief explanation about needing to retake a failed test because of an air raid alarm and a sleepless night. Say thank you after refusing.*

Student B: *Invite your classmate to go shopping after classes at university. React politely to their refusal. Show understanding and empathy for their situation, wish them good luck with the retake, and suggest going shopping another day instead.*

In this scenario, learners were required to manage communication in the context of competing priorities and social expectations, with particular emphasis on expressing refusal in a polite and appropriate manner. The task raised awareness of interactive functions, such as turn-taking, responding, and sustaining dialogue, as well as metacommunicative functions related to clarifying intent, managing tone, and signalling politeness. In the role of *Student A,* learners focused on softening refusal through apologies, brief explanations, and expressions of gratitude in order to maintain positive social relations. In the role of *Student B*, students practiced empathetic and supportive responses, adapting their reactions to their partner's circumstances. On the whole, the activity supported the development of communicative competence by

highlighting how interaction and metacommunication jointly shape effective communication.

Complaining about something

Student A: *You notice your partner hasn't done their part of the project. However, you've agreed on the deadline. Explain the problem as objectively as you can without blaming your partner.*

Student B: *You didn't get enough sleep yesterday, as you spent half of the night in the shelter. Apologize and suggest a way of solving the problem.*

In this situation, both participants make use of metacommunicative and interactive functions to manage the interaction effectively. Student A employs metacommunicative strategies to frame the complaint objectively, signal non-blame, and mitigate potential face-threatening effects, while also engaging interactive functions by initiating the exchange and keeping the discussion oriented toward the shared task and deadline. Student B likewise is supposed to integrate these functions by offering an apology, providing contextual explanation, while interactively responding to Student A's concern, sustaining the exchange, and moving the dialogue forward through the suggestion of a solution. Together, these functions enable participants to balance interpersonal sensitivity with task resolution in a socially appropriate and cooperative manner.

To evaluate the development of students' communicative resilience in English, a structured questionnaire was administered at three key stages of the course: at the beginning (pre-test), in the middle (mid-test), and at the end (post-test). The instrument measured learners' perceived ability to manage emotionally demanding communicative situations, including giving negative feedback, expressing disagreement, refusing requests politely, handling conflict, and maintaining emotional self-regulation in English. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale, allowing for the comparison of group-level trends across time and the identification of changes in specific communicative competencies.

COMMUNICATIVE RESILIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Rate how much you agree with each statement using the scale:

1 — Strongly disagree
2 — Disagree
3 — Hard to say / Neutral
4 — Agree
5 — Strongly agree

1. I feel confident when I need to support a conversation partner in English.
2. I can respond appropriately to the emotional state of a partner in English.
3. I maintain emotional balance when delivering unpleasant information in English.
4. I can clearly and appropriately express negative feedback in English.
5. I can politely refuse in English without feeling strong tension.
6. I feel confident in situations where I need to say "no" in English.
7. I can express a complaint or dissatisfaction in English in a constructive way.
8. Even in a conflict situation, I control my tone and speech in English.

9. I am aware of how my speech affects the course of a conversation.
10. I can change my communication style if the situation becomes more difficult.
11. Communication difficulties do not unsettle me during conversations in English.
12. I quickly regain confidence after a difficult conversation in English

The Communicative Resilience Questionnaire was administered to 25 students at three time points: the beginning, midpoint, and conclusion of the course. Quantitative analysis of mean scores across the 12 questionnaire items demonstrates a consistent upward trend in students' self-perceived communicative resilience over time. At the initial measurement, mean scores ranged from 2.54 to 3.18, indicating a moderate baseline level of confidence in managing emotionally and pragmatically demanding communication in English. The lowest initial scores were observed on Item 6 (M = 2.54) and Item 8 (M = 2.62), suggesting particular difficulty in areas associated with emotionally controlled response and communication under tension.

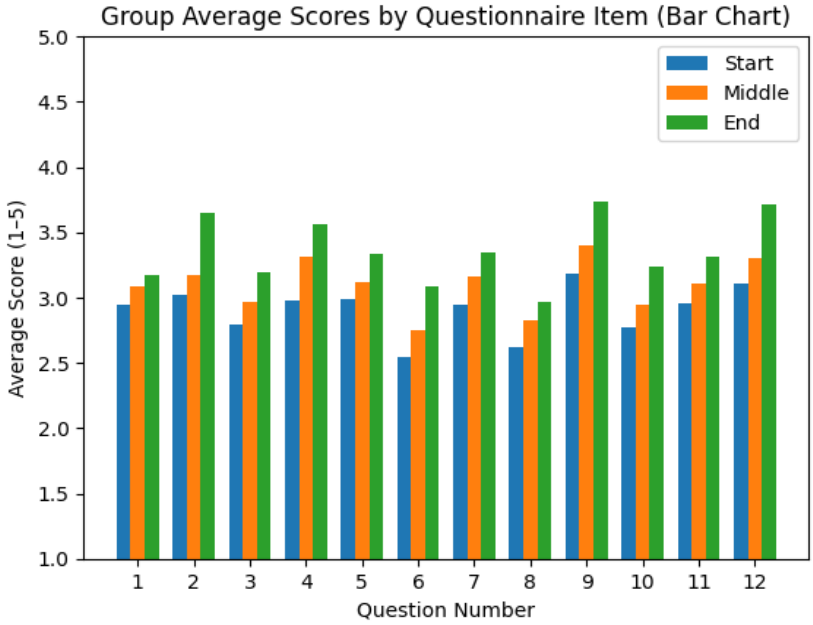


Chart 1.

By the mid-course assessment, mean values increased across all items, with scores ranging from 2.75 to 3.39, reflecting gradual improvement and consolidation of communicative strategies. However, the magnitude of change during this phase remained moderate, supporting the interpretation of a transitional or stabilization period in which students internalized newly introduced pragmatic and emotional regulation skills.

At the final assessment, a more substantial improvement was recorded, with mean scores rising to a range of 2.97 to 3.73. Notable gains were observed on Item 2 (+0.63), Item 12 (+0.60), and Item 4 (+0.59), indicating marked progress in areas related to assertive communication, pragmatic confidence, and emotionally balanced message delivery. Overall item-level gains ranged from +0.23 to +0.63, with an average improvement of approximately +0.46 points, reflecting meaningful yet realistic development.

Importantly, progress was not uniform across all competencies. Items associated with more complex emotional control and conflict-sensitive communication, such as Item 8 (final M = 2.97), exhibited smaller absolute gains, highlighting the persistent challenge of mastering high-affective pragmatic skills in a second language.

Nevertheless, the absence of score regression and the steady upward trajectory across all questionnaire items indicate sustained and stable development.

Taken together, the numeric evidence suggests that the course exerted a positive and measurable impact on students' communicative resilience, strengthening their ability to manage emotionally demanding interactions in English. The moderate effect sizes and item-level variation further enhance the credibility of the findings, portraying an authentic learning trajectory characterized by gradual, domain-specific progress rather than artificial uniform improvement.

Conclusion. This study explored the role of the Practical Course in Spoken English in developing communicative resilience among students of a Faculty of Foreign Languages through the use of communicative strategies. The findings suggest that the course provides a meaningful environment in which learners can practice managing communicative challenges while remaining attentive to interactional, interpersonal, and emotional dimensions of language use. The findings indicate that students effectively integrated interactional and metacommunicative strategies, such as empathy, explanation, and negotiation, to sustain interaction and manage potentially face-threatening situations. This strategic flexibility reflects the development of communicative resilience as a practical capacity to adapt communication to challenging conditions.

Future research could extend this work by examining how communicative resilience manifests across different communicative domains and social settings, including digital and online communication, intercultural interaction, and professional contexts. Exploring how strategic behavior varies across these environments would contribute to a more nuanced applied understanding of communicative resilience beyond a single instructional setting.

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Статтю надіслано до редколегії / Recieved 20.02.2026 р. Статтю рекомендовано до друку / Accepted 16.03.2026 р.
Опублікованно / Published 16.05.2026 р.