

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRODUCTIVE SKILLS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The following article is dedicated to the importance of speaking in learning foreign language. The author considers some characteristics of speaking and introduces major tips of speaking skills in teaching foreign language.

Keywords: speaking, communication, practice, skills, competence, productive, progress, confidence, interactive, accuracy, skillfulness, comprehension, interactive.

INTRODUCTION

Language is primarily speech. A very large number of languages in the world are only spoken with no writing script. Majority of languages even with writing scripts use their spoken forms more than the written ones. It is an agreed fact that language is learnt by speaking it first after a lot of listening to the sounds, words, phrases and sentences from the surroundings.

Speaking and Writing are by far the most eminent skills that play a significant role in improving students' communications, especially in a foreign language setting. Actually, EFL learners basically rely on these skills to acquire knowledge as the FL is seldom spoken outside the classroom. Nevertheless, students tend to handle writing and speaking without adequate skillfulness, and this negatively affects their speaking and writing accuracy and causes comprehension deficiencies that are not easy to discern.

It has been established beyond the shadow of doubt that EFL students, in general, endure serious writing and speaking difficulties which are mainly caused by the lack of writing and speaking accuracy.

As it's known that Speaking and writing skills are called productive skills. They are crucial as they give students the opportunity to practice real-life activities in the classroom. These two skills can be used as a 'scales' to check how much the learners have learned. Teaching speaking is vital unless someone is learning English purely for academic reasons and does not intend to communicate in English, which is quite rare. Good command on speaking skills develop a real sense of progress among learners and boosts their confidence.

Speaking is not the oral production of written language, but involves learners in the mastery of a wide range of sub-skills, which, added together, constitute an overall competence in the spoken language.

Rizvi (2006) also states that speaking is an interactive communicative process that involves speakers and listeners. During the communication, speakers need to learn to adapt their talk to the listeners; use a range of ways to express themselves; use talk to clarify their ideas and sustain their talk to develop thinking and reasoning. Nunan (1999) and Burkart & Sheppard (2004) argue that success in learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language. As Nunan (1999) and Celce-Murcia(2001) speaking can raise general learners' motivation and make the English language classroom a fun and dynamic place to be.

From our point of view, we can develop our students speaking skills by various speeches. There are different types of speech, depending on the purpose. Such as, informative, explanatory, persuasive and so on.

Informative speech tells students what they know about a particular topic. (Literature, famous people, countries, food, subjects, mass media, health, culture, personality, character, gardening, space, technology and others);

Explanatory speech shows students how something works or why its effective.(mobile phones, internet, iron, vacuum cleaner, computer, laptop, washing machine, TV, fridge);

Persuasive speech try to win them over and persuade them to take action. Of course, speeches can be a mixture of these types. (Cosmetics, learning centres, presentations, advertisement)

Here are some tips for preparing and giving a successful speech:

- Know your audience;
- Organize your points logically;
- Plan your speech (Introduction, body, conclusion);
- Speak in a slow, clear, but natural way;
- Stress certain words or main key points;
- Manage your time;
- Rehearse your speech;
- Sum up what you have said.

While making speech students should take into consideration these tips and techniques. In introduction part learners should state the topic and its importance than catch the audience attention with a provocative statement or question, a surprising fact or trend, a new discovery, an anecdote, joke or quotation. Then state your aim, outline structure of your speech. In body part students should develop their ideas step by step. Such as in chronological order, from the least to the most important idea, alternate arguments for and against a certain idea, connect problem with solutions. Moreover, giving examples in order to support your statement is one of the effective way of making speech. In conclusion part students should come to a convincing end. Ex.g. a short summary, a quotation, a call for action, a look into the future.

However, it was proved by researchers that learning speaking can help the development of reading competence (Hilferty, 2005), the development of writing (Trachsel & Severino, 2004) as well as the development of listening skills (Regina, 1997). Speaking requires that learners understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language ("sociolinguistic competence") (Burns & Joyce, 1997; Cohen, 1996 and Harmer, 2001: 269-270).

We totally agree that speaking skills help students to develop their reading or visa versa, if they can easily speak fluently, students can improve their writing, so listening always integrated with speaking skills, because its integral part of language skills. Language skills should be taught in integrated form not in isolates in order to develop communicative competence.

To sum up, speaking is one of the fundamental and active skills, in order to accelerate it, students should work on themselves, make a speech and presentation. In order to make effective speech they should take into consideration tips and techniques of speaking. As we know practice makes perfect.

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