Review Of Research

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PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES IN DEVELOPMENT OF SPEAKING SKILL AMONG LEARNERS OF E.S.L

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ABSTRACT

This paper throws light on essential aspects of effective speaking. Speech is a process of social activity we need to study speech in order to develop effective and satisfactory social behavior of the four language Skills, speaking is the most crucial for it helps a person to interact with others. Exchanging ideas becomes significant in the era of globalization. Our culture must be transmitted to others. This type of exchange of culture is possible only when we interact with the people of varying cultures. In order to interact with them, we need a common language and English is the second largest spoken language in the world. We, in our nation too learn English as a second language. Learners find it very difficult to communicate in English, though they learn it for years together, as it is tought as a knowledge subject and not as a skill subject. Hence enhancing communication skills in English becomes the need of the hour. This paper is a result of my personal experience with teachers of the secondary school level. I'll try to bring out problems of teachers to develop speaking skills and the methods adopted to train them in imparting speaking skills.

Keywords : _social activity , era of globalization , communication skills._

INTRODUCTION:

Speech is the natural form of a language. In speech, we make use of oral signs that are addressed to the ear. A child acquires the power of speech by responding to the sounds made by people around him and by imitating them out of his need for communication. In the teaching of English as a second language, after having given the learner a chance to listen to the language, the learner must feel the need for communication. This paper focuses on the aspects of developing the speaking skills.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Speaking skill is extremely important. It is a voice into pupils' writing. It also does wonders for enhancing self esteem and for building confidence among the speakers. According to Nunan (1991) "Success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language". In our daily life most of us speak more than we write. Yet teachers of English at the undergraduate classes donot seem to have taken this aspect to their heart either on teaching or in assessing these skills.

In the world of globalization, English has increasingly become the medium in every domain of communication, both in local and global

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contexts. As a result, the demand for speakers using English effectively has increased. But graduates passing out of our universities are found to be unsuccessful and ineffective communicators. Many graduates from B.A / B.Sc and B.Com streams are unable to get absorbed due to the deficiency in their communication skills.

Penny Ur (1996) in her "A Course in Language teaching : Practice and Theory| states that of all the four key language skills, speaking is the most important in learning a second or foreign language. She continues to state that speaking includes all other skills of knowing that language. It is only through speaking skills that one exhibits linguistic, strategic and communicative competence.

NEED FOR TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS

Some raise doubts whether teaching speaking skills is required on the ground that every one has one's own strategies to communicate as and when called for, depending upon the situations. And therefore there is no need for teaching speaking skills are too amorphous to be taught especially in the large classes with mixed ability students.

The first doubt, I would argue, is the result of the lack of training in setting the goals for teaching speaking skills. In his article, "Training speaking: Misconceptions about Teaching Speaking Skills in English" Minda Mora, argues that the goal of teaching speaking skills is to communicate effectively. Teachers should aim at enhancing learner's ability to make them understand and to make use of their current proficiency to the fullest. They should avoid confusion in the message due to faculty grammar/ or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation.

The second doubt, I think, is the result of a lack of exposure to the nature of spoken discourse and lack of training in identifying the sub skills involved in spoken communications.

Once the goal of teaching speaking skills is set, it is not difficult to proceed to identify the sub skills needed for effective communication. It is quite relevant to know the nature of speaking. According to Burns & Joyce (1997), "Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information". The form and meaning of speaking are dependent on the contexts in which it occurs. It includes the participation themselves, their collective experience, the physical environment and the purpose for speaking. Language functions that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (such as declining an invitation, or requesting time off from work) can be identified and these functions can be taught.

Another definition of speaking is that "It is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in variety of contexts". This definition points at the communicative skills; what is ultimately needed is that teaching speaking should improve students communicative skills; what is that teaching speaking should aim at improving communicative competence.

Some of the speaking skills that can be identified for teaching purpose are basic greetings in English, addressing people in English conducting conversation through telephone, making oral presentation before selected audience and public speaking in addition to these, communication skills in reporting, negotiating, clarifying and problem solving can also be identified for teaching. Research findings also point that teaching vocabulary or lexis in context is highly beneficial to improve speaking skills.

TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS.

1. The Learners may be introduced to the sound system of English. Phonetic script may be introduced to them. Their attention may be drawn to the difference between the phonemes in their mother tongue and the target language. Most of the Indians make mistakes in English pronunciation because most of the Indian languages have a consistent relationship between the sounds and the letters used to represent them. This is not always the case with English. So the use of phonetic script may be very useful to help learners overcome this difficulty.
2. The second language learning situation in India does not provide the learners with situations to speak the language. So the teacher must create situations in the class. Group activity may be used effectively.

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The class may be divided into groups consisting of ten or twelve in each group. Each group may elect a leader who is to control the group activity. A topic is given for discussion by the group. Each member may be encouraged to contribute his share in the discussion.

3. The use of composition can give the learners a chance to speak. This is very useful in lower classes. For example, the students may be taken to a garden. They may be initiated into a conversation through properly framed questions Then they continue this conversation. At the end they may be asked to write what they have said.

4. Dramatization may be used to train the learners in the art of speaking. This makes the students active and the class interesting. Each student may be assigned to play the role of a character.

5. Dialogue pattern drill approach can be used to give the second language learners experience in listing and practice in speaking. Properly prepared dialogue based on an interesting story or incident is prepared. The difficult words are explained to the students. Then the dialogue is read. It is better to present it, acting out the various roles. It is repeated a number of times so that the second language learners memorize or internalize the dialogue. After this, speaking practice begins.

PROBLEMS OF TEACHING SPEAKING PROBLEMS.

- Lack exposure of students to English Communication environment
- The socio-economic background of the learners.
- Fear of difficulty of forcing language
- Limitation of time to emphasize on speaking skill.
- The failure of examination system in assessing communication skills.
- Teaching methodologies followed in ELT.
- Lack of confidence
- They are afraid of speaking. They fear that they might to wrong and make mistakes.
- They become nervous while using English.

The above problems can be grouped as attitudinal, phonological and vocabulary problems. The attitudinal problems can be overcome by reduction of stress in mind; they may be asked to concentrate on what they listen to, whether it is a group discussion or a news item on radio or TV by developing confidence in them and by thinking in English While speaking English, many of them think in their vernacular and translate into the target language i.e., English and this causes stress and fear, because of which they lack confidence.

The second problem is related to phonological factors. English is foreign language. When we want to articulate the language we may have an impact of the sound systems of our own vernacular.

MATERIALS FOR TEACHING SPEAKING IN ESL CLASSROOMS:

In India English is tought as a second language. He students may not have got the maximum or even adequate exposure outside our classrooms. So it is necessary for the teacher to teach speaking in English with the help of these tasks. Task is a meaningful and viable unit of analysis which will have a bearing on all steps of programme design. Before selecting a task the teacher has to keep in mind the needs of the learners, syllabus or content. Tasks may contain some input data which may be a verbal clue like a dialogue, questionnaire, schedule or a passage or else a non-verbal clue like picture sequence. The task will also have a goal and role for the teacher and learners. The frame work of the task can be explained as follows
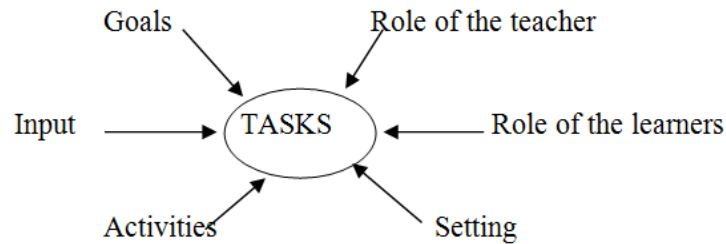
While selecting materials for a classroom task we need keep in mind relevance, authenticity, focus on the processing, feasibility in classroom particularly the level of the learners.

SIMULATION AND ROLE PLAY

Simulation is, as Oxford dictionary explains "pretend to be". It is not easy to differentiate between simulation and role play. The participants are given an imaginary situation to there may be some discussions to arrive at a proposal. In a sense simulation may include role play.

For example: In your street, there are no electric lights. There are many problems and the corporation is not taking any remedial measures. Decide what facilities you'd like to provide to light your street.

Role play on the other hand involves a conversation among many people. They imagine that they are the roles.

For Example:
a) One student imagines that he / she is a farmer. Other students ask her/him questions about her/his daily routine.
b) A group of students imagine they are friends planning a holiday together. They try to decide where to go and what to do.
c) We can ask the students to play the role of a doctor and a patient.

CONCLUSION:

Teaching Speaking skill is a challenging task, in view of special needs of students with different social and educational background. To master the speaking skill, teacher wants to inculcate context based learning along with varies activities with conversational syllabus. Practice is needed through various activities related to speaking skill. The teacher by choosing the method and materials, on the basis of the need of the learner can enhance the speaking skill. Task based activities and skill based teaching, definitely yield good result in developing speaking skill.

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