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IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH STORYTELLING TECHNIQUE

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: In recent years, the ongoing reforms in the field of education have been noticeably felt in Uzbekistan. The creation of new educational institutions, the opening of modern areas of education and training specialties, as well as correspondence and evening departments, an increase in admission quotas to higher educational institutions are important reforms in this direction. At the same time, great importance is given to reforms related to the study of foreign languages.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking in English teaching is referred as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information . Furthermore, Richards states that the mastery of speaking skill in English is seen as a priority for many EFL learners across the world because learners often evaluate their success in language learning based on how well they have improved in their spoken language skill.

Consequently, different approaches have been implemented in order to increase the performance of the speaking skill in EFL learners, especially for young learners.

The storytelling method incorporates the four communicative skills along each session and it integrates almost two communicative skills in each activity. Storytelling as a learner centered method takes into a count student's characteristics such as the age and conceptual level of learners, their needs and interest, their language level and previous language-learning experience .

In storytelling, it is crucial to catch learner's attention by presenting them some previous activities to increase vocabulary, practice pronunciation, body language techniques and vocalization (Peck, 1989). While the story is developed, some dramatic pauses take place in certain times accompanied with voice changes and body movements to act characters and especial situations of the story.

One method used in order to improve communicative skills in the target language is STORYTELLING.

We need to go beyond traditional form-focused approaches because students need to be prepared for the communicative use of the language, since it is its purpose, and storytelling gives the opportunity to recycle language forms, and learners are engaged in the stories to make the links between form, meaning, and use.

In order to motivate students to produce orally, EFL teachers must implement learning strategies in the storytelling process, such as warm up activities, games, videos and images related to the story to engage learners to be aware of the main objective of a tale .

Subsequently, this leads to more lively participation role in the teaching speaking ability. The relevance of previous activities is that learners are exposed to vocabulary, context, expressions and pronunciation used in the oral production; then learners are provided with body language techniques vocalization and overstatement of pronunciation in order to increase students setting about what they produce when telling a story .

Additionally, not only speaking skills are developed, also listening, reading and writing become an important part of the learning process and abilities of the learners . Besides, as stated by our teachers, telling stories in educational environments raises students' consciousness by engaging them in thinking critically and deeply about social issues. This process will have an influence on their discourse and reflections of the students, helping them to create relationships between themselves and their teachers while children develop individual perspectives.

A diversity of approaches has been implemented in order to increase the performance of the speaking skill in EFL learners. Given the fact that many languages do not have a written form, speaking is considered as the only source for communicating. It was argued that language is "primarily what is spoken and only secondarily what is written" .

On the other hand, teachers found that the practical results fell short of expectations; students were sometimes unable to produce outside the classroom, and considered the audio-lingual procedures to be boring and unpleasing .

An approach that has had a great impact on oral production is the Communicative language teaching (CLT). Unlike the audio-lingual method, the CLT helps students to create meaningful phrases instead of repeating and memorizing grammar structures. The communicative function of the language is seen as the main objective rather than the perfect knowledge of the system.

The CLT encourages the development of the speaking skill by promoting interaction as a mean for learning a language. It instigates learners to use the knowledge of the formal aspects of the language to communicate successfully in real-life situations.

Nunan mentions that one of the principles of CLT is to emphasize on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language . On the other hand Harmer adds that “the Communicative approach makes emphasis on a balance between fluency and accuracy and it is the most appropriate for those learners who want to improve and gain confidence with their speaking skills”

According to Taylor storytelling is a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture in oral telling, in which things are repeated with more redundancy, especially if the students are having difficulty following. Furthermore, Ellis adds that presenting vocabulary in a clear context and using illustration help to convey meaning and make it easy to remember .

In addition, Zaro argue that storytelling requires a certain level of interaction between storyteller and audience and between individual and listener .Besides, McKeough et al (2008) state that storytelling is the transmission of events in words and images, used in every culture as a means of entertainment, cultural preservation, education and inculcating moral values.In addition to this, Flora (2011) added that storytelling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners and this emerges from the interaction and cooperative, coordinated efforts of teller and audience.

Blaine articulates storytelling approach focused on speaking skill. The storytelling guides teachers to tell personalized stories to the learners in their foreign language, in this case English, this language teaching method is implemented by teachers all over the world especially in the field of Teaching English as a foreign language. This powerful foreign language teaching method empowers teachers to find that they can teach the language holistically without having to teach grammar rules .

According to Blaine in storytelling grammatical accuracy is taught but not in the traditional way through verb conjugations. Language is learned by understanding messages in the target language. That means language is achieved through comprehensible input. This input refers to listening and reading materials that are understood by the learner .

Richards & Rodgers stated that grammar is not explicitly taught, but is learned by induction. It means that students are expected to acquire subconsciously the grammatical structure of the language by being exposed to spoken language input .

The pedagogical basis of Storytelling methodology is in The Natural Approach.

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