

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Didactic Problems of Developing Speech Activity in English In General Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The development of speech activity is one of the most important objectives of English language teaching in general secondary schools. In modern educational systems, communicative competence has become a key indicator of successful language learning. However, many schools continue to face significant didactic challenges in developing students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills effectively. These challenges are related to teaching methods, curriculum design, teacher preparedness, learner motivation, classroom environment, and technological integration. This article examines the major didactic problems associated with the development of speech activity in English language instruction in general secondary schools. It also discusses effective pedagogical approaches and innovative solutions that can enhance students' communicative competence and language performance.

KEY WORDS

Speech activity, English language teaching, communicative competence, didactic problems, secondary education, language skills, motivation, educational technology.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, English has become an international language of communication, science, technology, and education. As a result, the ability to communicate effectively in English is considered an essential skill for students worldwide. General secondary schools play a crucial role in laying the foundation for learners' communicative competence. Therefore, the development of speech activity in English language teaching has become a primary educational objective.

Speech activity refers to the process through which learners use language for communication. It includes four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are interconnected and contribute to the overall communicative competence of learners. Despite numerous reforms in language education, many students graduate from secondary schools with insufficient communicative abilities.

This situation indicates the existence of various didactic problems that hinder the effective development of speech activity.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the didactic challenges affecting speech activity development in English language teaching and to propose practical recommendations for improving language instruction in general secondary schools.

Theoretical Foundations of Speech Activity Development

The concept of speech activity has been widely discussed in linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical research. According to communicative language teaching theory, language learning should focus on meaningful communication rather than the memorization of grammatical structures. Scholars such as Dell Hymes emphasized communicative competence as the ability to use language appropriately in different social

contexts.

Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlights the importance of interaction and collaboration in language learning. Through communication with teachers and peers, learners gradually develop higher cognitive and linguistic abilities. Similarly, Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis suggests that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current level of proficiency.

Modern language education recognizes speech activity as a complex process involving cognitive, emotional, and social factors. Therefore, effective language teaching requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, communicative practice, learner motivation, and supportive learning environments.

Major Didactic Problems in Developing Speech Activity

1. Traditional Teaching Approaches

One of the major didactic problems is the continued reliance on traditional grammar-translation methods. In many secondary schools, English lessons focus heavily on grammar rules, vocabulary memorization, and written exercises. While these elements are important, excessive emphasis on form often limits opportunities for meaningful communication.

Students may achieve good results in written examinations but struggle to express themselves orally. As a result, they develop passive knowledge of English rather than active communicative competence. Teachers need to shift from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered communicative approaches.

2. Limited Classroom Interaction

Speech activity develops through regular practice and interaction. However, classroom environments often provide insufficient opportunities for authentic communication. Large class sizes, limited lesson duration, and rigid curricula reduce the amount of time available for speaking activities.

In many cases, teachers dominate classroom discourse while students remain passive listeners. Consequently, learners lack confidence in expressing their ideas and become reluctant to participate in discussions. Creating interactive learning environments is essential for fostering speech activity.

3. Low Student Motivation

Motivation is a critical factor in language learning success. Many secondary school students perceive English as a difficult

subject rather than a practical communication tool. This perception negatively affects their engagement and willingness to participate in speech activities.

Several factors contribute to low motivation, including fear of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, limited exposure to authentic language use, and insufficient connection between classroom content and real-life situations. Teachers should employ motivational strategies that make learning meaningful and enjoyable.

4. Insufficient Language Environment

Language acquisition is more effective when learners are surrounded by meaningful language input. In many educational contexts, students encounter English only during classroom lessons. Outside school, opportunities for authentic communication are limited.

The absence of an English-speaking environment restricts learners' exposure to natural pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and communicative patterns. Schools should create language-rich environments through clubs, projects, multimedia resources, and extracurricular activities.

5. Inadequate Teaching Materials

Teaching materials play a significant role in developing speech activity. However, some textbooks prioritize grammatical exercises over communicative tasks. As a result, learners have limited opportunities to practice real-life communication.

Effective teaching materials should include dialogues, role-plays, problem-solving activities, discussions, and project-based tasks that encourage active language use. Authentic materials such as videos, podcasts, and online resources can further enhance learners' communicative competence.

6. Assessment Challenges

Traditional assessment methods often focus on written knowledge rather than communicative abilities. Standardized tests may measure grammar and vocabulary proficiency while neglecting speaking and listening skills.

This assessment imbalance influences teaching practices, encouraging teachers to prioritize test preparation instead of communicative development. More comprehensive assessment systems should evaluate all aspects of speech activity, including fluency, accuracy, interaction, and comprehension.

7. Teacher Professional Development

Teachers are central to successful language instruction. However, some educators may lack sufficient training in modern communicative methodologies and technology-enhanced language learning.

Continuous professional development programs are necessary to equip teachers with innovative teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and digital competencies. Well-trained teachers can create engaging learning experiences that promote speech activity development.

The Role of Educational Technologies

Technological advancements have created new opportunities for enhancing speech activity in English language education. Digital tools provide interactive, personalized, and engaging learning experiences.

Multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, language learning applications, and online communication platforms expose students to authentic language use. Artificial intelligence technologies can offer personalized feedback, pronunciation assessment, and adaptive learning pathways.

Virtual classrooms and online collaboration tools enable learners to communicate with peers and native speakers beyond traditional classroom boundaries. These technologies support communicative practice and increase learner motivation.

However, effective technology integration requires adequate infrastructure, teacher training, and pedagogically sound implementation strategies.

Effective Strategies for Developing Speech Activity

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching emphasizes meaningful interaction and real-world communication. Students participate in pair work, group discussions, interviews, and role-playing activities that simulate authentic language use.

Task-Based Language Learning

Task-based learning engages students in completing meaningful tasks using the target language. Examples include problem-solving activities, presentations, surveys, and collaborative projects. Such tasks encourage active participation and communicative competence.

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning promotes creativity, collaboration, and language use in meaningful contexts. Students conduct research, prepare presentations, and develop projects that require extensive communication.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning strategies encourage peer interaction and mutual support. Through collaborative activities, students gain confidence and develop both linguistic and social skills.

Integration of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials expose learners to real-world language use. Newspapers, videos, podcasts, social media content, and literary texts provide meaningful contexts for communication and discussion.

Motivation-Oriented Teaching

Teachers should create positive learning environments that reduce anxiety and encourage participation. Recognition of student achievements, meaningful tasks, and learner autonomy contribute significantly to motivation enhancement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis presented above, the following recommendations can improve speech activity development in general secondary schools:

Increase the use of communicative teaching methods.

Create student-centered learning environments.

Integrate educational technologies and digital resources.

Promote collaborative and project-based learning.

Improve teacher professional development programs.

Develop communicative assessment systems.

Expand extracurricular English language activities.

Foster learner motivation through meaningful and authentic tasks.

Provide greater exposure to authentic English language input.

Encourage continuous interaction in English both inside and outside the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The development of speech activity is a fundamental goal of

English language teaching in general secondary schools. Despite significant progress in language education, various didactic challenges continue to hinder the effective development of communicative competence. Traditional teaching approaches, limited interaction, low motivation, insufficient language environments, inadequate materials, assessment limitations, and teacher-related factors all contribute to these difficulties.

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive educational reforms that prioritize communicative competence, learner-centered instruction, and innovative teaching methodologies. The integration of educational technologies, authentic materials, and motivational strategies can significantly enhance students' speech activity development. By creating supportive and communicative learning environments, schools can better prepare students for successful participation in the global community.

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