

SPEAKING AS ONE OF THE MAIN LANGUAGE SKILLS

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Changes in teaching approaches lead us to learn and practice more about alternative and untraditional ways of teaching, since they have not been used for long time in current educational systems at primary and secondary schools. Now people of different specialties need learning English because the knowledge of foreign languages opens before them the wide road to the world. The search for different interactive methods and techniques in teaching English as a foreign language is one of the urgent issues; it requires the search for the innovative methods, the use of modern pedagogical and informational technologies.

Thus, different approaches may be used for developing conversation skills (or speaking). Speaking is one of the main language skills together with other language skills as reading, listening, and writing. It is impossible to teach speaking and conversation without communication. One of the difficult questions is to bridge the gap between the artificial use of language drilling and its natural (real) utilize outside the classroom. There is a movement from pseudo-communication to real communication where the students can use the language in real situations, they should express their personal ideas and needs. Teaching speaking is the most difficult part in language learning process and it can take many different forms.[1. 67]

Nowadays the knowledge of foreign languages, especially English as a means of international communication is very important and it requires the search of various effective methods and techniques in learning and teaching.

In this article we analyze some new effective techniques for developing such language skill as speaking. All language skills have their peculiarities and difficulties while learning and teaching them. Speaking is such language skill which is more difficult for mastering comparatively with other language skills, such as reading, listening and writing. The final aim of learning English is to be able to speak in this language and to use it as a means of communication.

Four language skills are regarded as separate items, but they are closely connected and interacted. Speaking is one of the main language skills together with other language skills as reading, writing and listening. It is impossible to teach speaking and conversation without communication. Communicative Approach views language as a complex network of habits, which can be built up step by step, as an aggregate of skills which do not separate out into four neat segments. I.L.Bim emphasizes that “The basis lies in the process of communication in a foreign language” [2.104].

Conversation practice is probably the most reliable route to real communication.

Most students are eager to converse in the new language, and conversation practice therefore assumes primarily importance in their learning experience.

Teachers of English still face a situation described by Julia Dobson: “Language teachers lead their students down the road of pattern practice, only to find themselves confronted by a great chasm at the end. On the other side lies real communication, but the group is stranded on the other side of drills because the teacher sees no strong bridge across” [3. 98]

It is as if students are given the tools but not the chance to use them. The biggest problem for the teacher is to bridge the gap between the artificial use of language drilling and genuine use outside the classroom. One of the main tasks in teaching speaking is to help students move from pseudo-communication, in which their use of English is fictitiously concocted and predictable, to communication where they express their personal ideas and needs in the context of reality. Teaching speaking is the most difficult part in language learning process and it can take many different forms.

Before teaching the conversation practice, students must be familiar with some grammar patterns and vocabulary words- how these are pronounced and how they are combined to form meaningful utterances. If students have learned the basic patterns of English in a formal classroom context, these were taught through one of two major methods or a combination of both: the audio-lingual approach (sometimes called the aural-oral method), and cognitive-code learning. There are, of course, other language teaching methods in use today. The Audio-Lingual Approach is based on the premise that learning a new language means learning a new system of habits. It is an outgrowth of behaviorism, a school of psychology which proposes that all learning is a process of conditioning – a process based on stimulus – response – reinforcement – and structural linguistics; a school which looks upon language as a structured system of sounds learned through stimulus – response – reinforcement.

The Cognitive - Code learning is in some respects a modern version of the classic Grammar-translation method. It is gaining favor as more language teachers become familiar with transformational (generative) grammar theory. Language learning especially speaking is more than a matter of habit formation, it is a creative process, and therefore students should be given the opportunity to be as mentally active as possible in all assigned work.

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