

LISTENING TECHNIQUES FOR COMPREHENSION APPROACH



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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to show the importance of listening and speaking skills in the classroom in order to get a perfect acquisition of the second language. Although these skills have been explained separately, they are really connected and it is really important to put into practice together and integrate them with the rest of skills. Specially, for Uzbek speakers, listening and speaking tend to be more complicated than the acquisition of other skills, such as reading or writing, since the former are quite difficult to practice when the student does not live in an English speaking country. For this reason, this paper deals with some activities to develop with the students in order to develop these skills and show why it is important to develop and the difficulties the learners have.

Keywords: Listening, speaking, importance, development, difficulties, activities.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Цель этой статьи — показать важность навыков аудирования и разговорной речи в классе для идеального овладения вторым языком. Хотя эти навыки объяснялись отдельно, на самом деле они взаимосвязаны, и очень важно применять их на практике вместе и интегрировать их с остальными навыками. В частности, для носителей узбекского языка аудирование и разговорная речь, как правило, более сложны, чем приобретение других навыков, таких как чтение или письмо, поскольку первые довольно сложно практиковать, когда учащийся не живет в англоязычной стране. По этой причине в этой статье рассматриваются некоторые виды деятельности, которые необходимо развивать вместе с учащимися, чтобы развить эти навыки, и показать, почему это важно развивать, и трудности, с которыми сталкиваются учащиеся.

Ключевые слова: Аудирование, говорение, важность, развитие, трудности, деятельность.

INTRODUCTION

English has spread widely all over the world, first because of the influence of the British Empire and, second due to the pre-eminence of North American influence

in the world. In Europe, English has advanced as an international language especially after World War II, leaving behind other preeminent languages such as French. English is now used by millions of speakers for a number of communicative functions across Europe. It has become the preferred language in a number of ambits like international business or EU institutions. Time and again it is also the language chosen for academic discussion as most scholars face the need to read and publish in English for international diffusion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

English is also directly influencing other European languages at different levels but it is especially obvious in the field of technical terms – lexical borrowings are often introduced in many languages without the slightest adaptation. English seems to have been adopted as the language of globalization these days as the language of global culture and international economy. Proficiency in English is seen as a desirable goal for youngsters and elderly people in all EU countries and in many parts of the world, to the point of equating inability in the use of English to disability. A better knowledge of European modern languages will facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans and will promote mobility and mutual understanding. The EU has already taken some action regarding the second/foreign language teaching and learning within the member states, and in a White Paper published in 1995 (Teaching and learning: towards the learning society) it is stated as a general objective that everyone, irrespective of his/her academic training should gain proficiency in two languages apart from their mother tongue so that they can communicate in those languages. It supports that “Proficiency in languages helps to build up the feeling of being European with all its cultural wealth and diversity and of understanding between the citizens of Europe” [White paper 1995: 47]

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is a document that provides a practical tool for establishing certain standards at successive stages of learning and evaluating language knowledge. It aims at providing the basis for setting common standards within the EU at an international level and supplies the basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications within the EU. The Framework describes:

- a) The competences necessary for communication;
- b) The related knowledge and skills and

c) The situations and domains of communication

The Framework paves the way for a comprehensive definition of teaching and learning objectives and methods and is, therefore, of special interest to the academic community as a whole. We have to bear in mind that nowadays university education has changed, and the Uzbek universities have been integrated in the European Space, so students will need a second language (B1 in CEFR) to finish their careers.

In spite of the fact that Uzbek students spend a lot of years studying English, from school to University, it has been always said that English is not well spoken in Uzbek and some of the learners can assure that they are not capable of speaking and expressing fluently in English. Uzbek people are not generally considered good at learning English, specially, when we refer to listening and speaking skills. Although most Uzbek people start to study English when they are children, in some cases when they are in Preschool Education and they usually go to language schools since they are three or four years old and they also study at school but in spite of it, English is an unsolved matter in our country.

One of the problems that Uzbek students suffer and other countries do not is that when students finish their English lessons, they forget the language. They are not in contact with the language because all the things that surround them are in Uzbek : television, films, TV series... A good option for the students to acquire and learn English is to study at a bilingual school because they allow children to get immersed in it naturally.

The aim of this study is to analyse the importance of listening and speaking skills in a foreign language acquisition in the Secondary Education classrooms in Uzbekistan. This research also proposes possible activities to be used by new generations of English teachers in order to facilitate a linguistic and cultural immersion essential for the acquisition of the English language. The main objective of this section is to explain the difference between listening and speaking skills and to justify their importance in a foreign language acquisition process. To do this, the section has been divided into different subsections to have a general overview about the listening/speaking processes, the way of teaching English through them and their assessments.

Comprehending and understanding a language is necessary when students are learning a new language due to the fact that people always need to communicate and interact with others in different moments or situations in their life. This paper will focus on listening and speaking skills, but always combined with grammar,

as a way of helping learners to understand the language system and to develop their ability by using it to communicate successfully inside and outside the classroom. Communication skills comprise receptive skills and productive skills. Listening and reading are receptive skills while speaking and writing are productive skills. Receptive skills are these in which students receive and process the information but do not need to produce a language to do this, while productive skills require the production, for instance, a speech [Hope, Geoffrey R 1984].

First of all, this paper mentions the most significant differences between listening and speaking skills and later, it offers an approach to how it is possible to integrate them. Listening, as we know, is the skill of understanding spoken language. Listening is an essential skill, present in most of the activities we carry out throughout our lives.

It has taken many years to give the listening skill the importance it deserves in second and foreign language learning among the teaching profession. Rivers (1966: 196) claimed, “Speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is said is comprehended by another person.

Teaching the comprehension of spoken speech is therefore a primary importance of the communication aim is to be reached”. However, Morley (1972: 7) notes, “perhaps an assumption that listening is a reflex, a little like breathing - listening seldom receives overt teaching attention in one’s native language – has marked the importance and complexity of listening with understanding in a nonnative language”. Contrary to what everybody thinks about foreign language learning, listening competence is wider than speaking competence. This is the reason why; recently, the language teaching profession has brought into focus on listening comprehension. According to Nunan, (2001: 23) Listening is a six-staged process, consisting of Hearing, Attending, Understanding, Remembering, Evaluating and Responding. These stages occur in sequence and rapid succession. The first one is Hearing and has to do with the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; hearing is the perception of sound, not necessarily paying attention, you must hear to listen, but you need not listen to hear. For this, we have Attention. It refers to a selection that our brain focuses on. The brain screens stimuli and permits only a select few to come into focus. The third stage is Understanding, which consists of analyzing the meaning of what we have heard and understanding symbols we have seen and heard. We must analyze the stimuli we have perceived. Symbolic stimuli are not only words, they can be sounds like applause or even sights, like a blue uniform

that have symbolic meanings as well. To do this, we have to stay in the right context and understand the intended meaning. The meaning attached to these symbols is a function of our past associations and of the context in which the symbols occur for successful interpersonal communication: the listener must understand the intended meaning and the context assumed by the sender. After following with the next stage, it is necessary to make a remark: as it has mentioned previously, the background knowledge is important and people have to take into account several points: general factual information, local factual information, socio-cultural knowledge and knowledge of context. With these factors, the information will be correctly received.

The next step, Remembering, is an important Listening process because it means that an individual, in addition to receiving and interpreting the message, has also added it to the mind's storage bank, which means that the information will be remembered in our mind. But just as our attention is selective, so too is our memory, what is remembered may be quite different from what was originally heard or seen. In the penultimate stage, Evaluating, the listener evaluates the message that has been received. It is at this point when active listeners weigh evidence, sort fact from opinion and determine the presence or absence of bias or prejudice in a message. The effective listener makes sure that he or she does not begin this activity too soon, as beginning this stage of the process before a message is completed results in no longer hearing and attending to the incoming message and, as a result, the Listening process ceases. Finally, we have Responding, a stage in which, according to the response, the speaker checks if the message has been received correctly. This stage requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal or non verbal feedback, because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received. Therefore, it is sometimes complicated as we do not have the opportunity to go back and check comprehension [Nunan: 2001, 23].

CONCLUSIONS

After my experience as a teacher, I have noticed that these skills are a very important part in relation to the acquisition of English and I have also asked my students in order to know their thoughts in relation to my hypothesis and they assure that these skills need to be developed because students, during all the courses, study English but based on the development of reading and writing skills and sometimes, the teacher suggests doing some listening because the majority of the student's books include the typical listening (such as conversations) with the corresponding exercises which are very useful to check the listening comprehension but, they think they need

to know how to be a good listener or speaker because if they travel abroad, they are going to communicate through listening and speaking and not reading or writing.

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