
IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS WITH THE AIDS OF DISCUSSIONS AND DEBATES

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Annotation. The article is dedicated to the study of the specific peculiarities of improving speaking skills with the aids of discussions and debates for intermediate level learners. Developing speaking skills has always been one of the most important, essential and disputable issues of methodology of foreign languages, namely the English language. It is common knowledge that teaching speaking skills has become an actual matter of teaching methodology at present day.

Key words: debate, discussion, communication, self-expression, eye-contact, body language, decision-making, envoys, debaters, multi-task.

Аннотация. Статья посвящена изучению особенностей совершенствования навыков говорения с помощью дискуссий и дебатов для учащихся среднего уровня. Развитие навыков говорения всегда было одним из наиболее важных, существенных и спорных вопросов методики изучения иностранных языков, а именно английского языка. Общеизвестно, что обучение навыкам говорения стало актуальным вопросом методики преподавания в наши дни.

Ключевые слова: дебаты, дискуссия, общение, самовыражение, зрительный контакт, язык тела, принятие решений, посланники, участники дебатов, многозадачность.

Teaching foreign languages, specifically the English language has become one of the most actual issues in our country recent years as the state government of the Republic of Uzbekistan has been paying a special attention at the development of educational system at present time. Furthermore, it is evident from our president's sayings that a great deal of attention paid to develop to this process. The first president of the Republic of the Uzbekistan Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov speaking about the future of Uzbekistan underlines that "Harmonious generation is the future guarantee of prosperity"¹. While teaching English language at the intermediate stage, the pupil's pedagogical, psychological features, their ages and their background knowledge must be taken into consideration. It must be considered whether they have learnt English language before or not. Communicative competence is in the initiative position in teaching English at every stage. This way of teaching is on the base of stage standards of education. Not every pupil can have an ability for communication and to speak in a fluent way. Thus, it is of great importance for pupils, especially, intermediate ones to acquire speaking skills with the lots of accepted ways in practical English classes. Generally, there are some common difficulties in speaking. We can see them in detail. Among four important skills, speaking is considered to be the most essential skill that must be mastered well in learning a new language. Mastering speaking skills is the only necessary aspect of knowledge for most learners and. Furthermore, Patel and Jain claim that "the basic functions of language are communication, self expression and thinking"².

The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency to the fullest. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to faulty pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, and to observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situation. Top tips for developing speaking skills are the following:

- o Be good listener
 - o Use simple vocabulary
- o Try to avoid errors – but think about your fluency too
- o Keep developing your intonation

- o Think positively about the topic
- o Think of ways to help other people to understand you
- o Practice frequently
- o Practice tongue twisters
- o Think about your pronunciation
- o Make eye-contact – and smile
- o Use positive body language
- o Think about the use of passport of your research.

Using debate in teaching is a strategy to increase oral communication and critical-thinking abilities. Debate is ultimate multi-task ability because it involves all four skills, that is, writing, speaking, listening and reading. We know that debating is an effective pedagogical method because of the level of responsibility for learning and active involvement required by all pupils' debaters. Debate can motivate pupils' thinking, as well as if they must defend their ideas, stand or opinion that is in contradiction with conviction themselves. Classroom debate was helpful for the learners to get involved in the intellectual practices which illustrate critical thinking. In other words, classroom debate helped learners to feel more confident to communicate their target language and improve speaking ability.

Before the discussion, it is crucial that the teacher sets the purpose of the discussion material. In this way, the discussion's points are relevant to this purpose, so that pupils do not spend their time chatting with each other about irrelevant things. For instance, pupils can become involved in agree/disagree discussions. In this type of discussions, the teacher can make groups of learners, preferably 4 or 5 in each group, and provide controversial sentences like "people learn best when they read, people learn best when they travel". Then each group works on their topic for a given time period, and presents their opinions to the class. It is essential that the speaking should be equally divided among group members in debate. A discussion can be held for different causes after a content-based lesson. The pupils may aim to reach their conclusion, share opinions about the exist event, or find solutions in their discussion groups. Finally, the class decides on the winning group who defended the opinion in the best way. This activity promotes critical thinking and quick decision-making, and pupils learn how to express and justify themselves in polite ways while disagreeing with the others. For efficient group discussions, it is always better not to make large groups, because calm pupils may avoid getting together large groups. The teacher can either assign these group members or the pupils may determine it by themselves, but groups should be rearranged in every discussion activity so that pupils can work with various people and learn to be open to different ideas. In last, n class or group discussions, whatever the aim is, the pupils ought to be always encouraged to ask questions, paraphrase ideas, express support, check for clarification, and so on. The use of debate technique has been advocated in teaching speaking process. Typically, debate is very interested to be implemented to improve speaking skill. Pupils have a lot of opportunity to practice speaking and have active involvement in debate. However, they worked very cooperative and tried to defend their team, and they were more active to speak in classroom. Teaching speaking through debate can be enjoyable experience for both teacher and learner.

In fact, pupils can improve their speaking skill after being taught by debate technique. It can be seen by learners' achievement in speaking test in each cycle.

Using a variety of approaches also plays to different learners' strengths, giving space for quieter pupils to find room for expression rather than having to fight for it. We prefer to give six varied approaches to organizing discussions and debates:

1. Debate around the room
2. Envoys
3. Writing before talking

4. Only question
5. Socratic circles
6. Statements to debate⁵

The most essential task for the researcher was to teach speaking skills to the school pupils using such techniques as discussions and debates which was quite new challenge for her as she had never taught at a school before. Although the researcher had observed several classes of different teachers of English before it was still difficult for her to conduct the lessons with the pupils of school. Besides teaching speaking skills by means of discussions and debates, the researcher has to overcome the psychological problems of behavior, for example, how conduct the lesson with adults who are pupils in intermediate level at school.

Even though most of the pupils took an active part during lessons, some pupils still were passive which made the researcher frustrated and nervous. In order to overcome these problems, the researcher decided to use certain warming up exercises to attract the pupils' attention which mostly related to their personality, their interests, hobbies that helped her involve them. This was one of the ways of motivating the learners as they usually like to speak about themselves. Despite the difficulties experienced during the research the author of the present qualification paper learnt much about teaching, namely teaching speaking skills by means of discussions and debates and an experience of teaching English as a foreign language which will be helpful in her future work of teaching.

References:

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