

**TEACHING CHILDREN LISTENING AND SPEAKING**

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**ABSTRACT**

Knowing English involves not only producing the language correctly, but also using it for particular purposes. Fraser (in Richards, 1983:30) states that when people use language, they characteristically do three things: they say something, they indicate how they intend the hearer to take what they said, and they have definite effects on the hearer results. In this context, it can be said that language means something spoken. People usually speak or share their opinion with one another by using it.

**INTRODUCTION**

Speaking and listening are deemed to be two core language skills. Most children's time is spent for listening to their teachers and speaking to them to respond to the questions given. Oral communication skills are of paramount importance both within the classroom and society (Henderson, n.d). Listening and speaking skills are therefore considered to be essential in the educational sector.

Listening is one of the most basic language skills in both teaching and learning process. Listening itself is the ability of identifying what others say. And this includes the speaker's pronunciation, dialect, grammar and vocabulary (Howatt & Dakin, 1974). Willis ranks micro-skills of listening which are called enabling skills by her. These are:

Predicting what people are going to talk about

Guessing at unknown words or phrases without panic

Using one's knowledge of the subject to help one understand

Identifying relevant points, namely, note-taking, summarizing...

Recognizing discourse markers

Recognizing cohesive devices

Understanding different intonation patterns and uses of stress, which give clues to meaning and social setting

Understanding inferred information

Listening is the first pivotal language skill as acquisition of any language begins with listening, then speaking, then reading and writing. For this reason listening comes out top while teaching the language. Vandergrift (1999) states that listening sequences boost learners' meta-cognitive abilities. There are many different strategies of teaching listening skill. The most prominent

strategy is divided into three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening and there are specific purposes of each stage.

Pre-listening activities help to hear and give some clues about the activity expectations. During pre-listening phase teachers should recognize that all students are not likely to be the same intelligent and they bring different background experience to the listening topic. There are some criteria for pre-listening activities. Teachers should follow these criteria while preparing pre-listening activities:

The time available

The materials available

The interests of the students

The ability of the students

The content of the listening task

The language ability of the students

A study conducted by Zohrabi et al. (2015) shows that the students who are exposed pre-listening activities performed much better than those who do not.

There are several strategies for teaching pre-listening.

**CONTEXTUALIZATION.** This means to place in a context. Distributing context to the students before the listening activity enables them to be ready for the lesson. Therefore, students are to connect to text, and teachers should find the way to create and make the lesson relevant and meaningful.

**ACTIVATING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE.** It is irritating to begin with listening activity before activating topic knowledge of the students. Teachers should be able to urge students to share their background knowledge on the topic before the listening. For example, topic is about black hole. Teachers, in this case, might ask several questions about the topic. What do you know about black hole? What kind of problems are people facing with, today? Or, teachers may use some pictures which are related to the theme before the listening task. This rise the students' concentration towards the topic.

There are several things that should be avoided during the pre-listening stage

Tasks of this stage should not be too long but they should be precise and clear

Activities should not include too much information about the listening text.

Teacher should talk less: he or she should let the students share their students.

The tasks should not be too general. They should be related to the topic (Wilson,2008)

While-listening activities are held to develop the learners' comprehension skill of spoken language. These activities are directly related to the listening text and students implement the task during the listening or immediately after the listening. While-listening activities require some effort from teachers. So the teacher should pay attention to the followings:

Students should be allowed to listen to the voice two or three times

Students should be urged to focus on the general meaning, and teachers should pause the listening and ask details from the students

Language knowledge of students should be taken into account while choosing and preparing while-listening tasks.

According to Wilson (2008), well-designed while-listening tasks help students to comprehend the listening text, urge them to respond correctly, permit them to understand the structure of the text. As an example Wilson (2008) shows the activity called Bingo. Indeed, it is a good activity for selective listening even if it hinders listening extensively.

Post-listening stage gives students a chance to work in detail applying both top-down and bottom-up strategies to link up the classroom activities and their real lives (Wilson, 2008). The purpose of this phase is to determine the gained knowledge of students from while-listening tasks. As Rixon(1986) and Underwood(1989) claimed the post-listening activities take much more time than while-listening tasks so that students are able to think, discuss, write. Different strategies might be used for post-listening, namely, problem-solving activities, summarizing, jigsaw, story reconstruction and others.

Listening awareness can be achieved by macro and micro listening skills. Brown's (2007) listening comprehension micro-skills for conversational discourse are as follows.

1. Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory.
2. Discriminate among the distinctive sounds of English.
3. Recognize English stress patterns, words in stressed and unstressed positions. rhythmic structure, intonational contours, and their role in signaling information.
4. Recognize reduced forms of words.
5. Distinguish word boundaries, recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance.
6. Process speech containing pauses, errors, corrections, and other performance variables.
7. Process speech at different rates of delivery.
8. Recognize grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.
9. Detect sentence constituents and distinguish between major and minor constituents.
10. Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms".

Brown's (2007) macro-skills for conversational discourse are:

1. "Recognize cohesive devices in spoken discourse.
2. Recognize the communicative functions of utterances, according to situations, participants, goals.
3. Infer situations, participants, goals using real-world knowledge (pragmatic competence).
4. From events, ideas, etc., describe, predict outcomes, infer links and connections between events, deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations such as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
5. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.
6. Use facial, kinetic, body language, and other nonverbal cues to decipher meanings.
7. Develop and use a battery of listening strategies, such as detecting key words, guessing the meaning of words from context, appealing for help, and signaling comprehension or lack thereof".

### Speaking

Students learning language is considered to be successful if they can communicate effectively in their second or foreign language. Hadfiels (1999:7) says that speaking is a kind of bridge for learners between classroom and the world outside. In order to build the bridge, in the speaking

activities, the teacher must give them practice opportunity for purposeful communication in meaningful situation. It means learning to speak in a second language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate. Thus the teacher must give the learners practice to actualize their speaking skill. By mastering speaking, they can carry out conversation with others, give ideas and change the information with interlocutors. Speaking is a kind of bridge for learners between classroom and the world outside (Hadfield, 1999:7). It is vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and business. It is also a medium through which much language is learnt..., (Bygate, 1997: vii). To know the language learners can speak, it is necessary to get them to actually, say something. To do this they must act on knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. The application of this knowledge can be realized by speaking practice.

Briendley (1995:19) makes specification about oral. Here oral can be defined as speaking. He believes that oral is to:

Express oneself intelligibility

Convey intended meaning accurately with sufficient command of vocabulary

Use language appropriate to context

Interact with other speaker fluently.

He also rates oral into four areas that are interactive communication for fluently effect on listener, intelligibility for pronunciation or prosodic features, appropriacy for pragmatic competence or register, and accuracy for structures and vocabulary resources. It mans speaking demand fluency, intelligibility, appropriateness, and accuracy.

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that speaking is a complex cognitive skill which demands fluency, intelligibility, appropriateness, and accuracy in its process.

According to Lingual links Library (1999), there are three kinds of speaking situations:

Interactive Speaking

Interactive speaking situations conclude face to face conversations and telephone calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking and we have a chance to ask clarification, repetition from our conversation partner.

Partially Speaking

It is kinds of speaking situations when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience doesn't interrupt the speech.

Non-interactive Speaking

It happens when recording a speech for radio broadcast.

Besides, New Webster Dictionary (1994: 932) states that speaking is an act to express idea, feelings, and thought orally. It is also called oral communication. According to Syakur (1987: 5), speaking is a complex skill because at least it is concerned with components of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency. Speaking is an act that is done naturally by people in their life. Sometimes they share their problem to someone they believe in. They have a freedom to express what they want to say.

Teacher Roles

According to Byrne (1997:2), the teachers also need to know their roles in teaching speaking. They have specific roles at different stages, as follows:

The presenting stage (when the teachers introduce something new to be learned), the teachers play a role as informant.

The practice stage (when the teachers allow the learners to work under their direction), the teachers have a role as conductor and monitor.

The production stage (when the teachers give the learners opportunity to work on their own).

Besides these three roles of each stage, there is another key role that cuts across them: namely, the teachers as motivator. The teachers must be able to motivate their students in order to arouse their interest and involve them in what they are doing. There are some factors which determine their ability to motivate their students, namely: their performance (the mastery of teaching skills, the selection and presentation of topics and activities, the teacher's personality). The goal of teaching speaking is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency to the fullest. They also should observe the social and cultural rules that apply in each communication situations. According to Ur (1999: 120), there are some characteristics of a successful speaking activity:

Learners talk a lot.

As much as possible of the period of time allotted to the activity is in fact occupied by learner talk. This may seem obvious, but often most time is taken up with teacher talk or pauses.

Participation is even.

Classroom discussion is not dominated by a minority of talkative participants: all get a chance to speak, and contributions are fairly evenly distributed.

Motivation is high.

Learners are eager to speak: because they are interested in topic and have something new to say about it, or just because they want to contribute to achieving a task objective.

Language is of an acceptable level.

Learners express themselves in utterance that is relevant, easily comprehensive to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy.

Problems with Speaking Activities

According to Ur (1996:121), there are some problems faced by the learners in speaking activities. The problems include inhibition, the lack of theme to be spoken, the low of participation, and the use of mother tongue. Those problems can be explained as follows:

Inhibition

Unlike reading, writing and listening activities, speaking requires some real time exposures to an audience. Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, such as worried about mistakes, fearful of criticism, or shy of the attention that their speech attracts.

The lack of theme to be spoken

Some learners get the difficulties in thinking of anything to say, they have no motivation to express themselves beyond the guilty feeling that they should be speaking.

The low participation

Only one participant can talk at a time if he or she is to be heard. In a large group, this means that each one will have only very little time to talk. This problem is compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

#### The use of mother tongue

In a number of classes, the learners share the same mother tongue. They may tend to use it because of some reasons. Firstly, it is easier. Secondly, it feels unnatural to speak to one another in a foreign language. The last, they feel less “exposed” if they are speaking their mother tongue. If they are talking in small groups, it can be quite difficult to keep using the target language.

#### Solutions for the Problems of Speaking Activities

There are some solutions which can be selected to overcome the problems in speaking activity (Ur, 1996:121-122). These are:

##### Use group work

This increases the sheer amount of student talk going on in a limited period of time and also lowers the inhibitions of students who are unwilling to speak in front of the full class. It is true that group work means the teacher can not supervise all students speech, so that not all utterances will be correct, and students may occasionally slip into their native language; nevertheless, even taking into consideration occasional mistakes and mother tongue use, the amount of time remaining for positive, useful oral practice is still likely to be far more than in the full-class-set up.

##### Base the activity on easy language

In general, the level of the language needed for a discussion should be lower than used in intensive language learning activities in the same class. It should be easily recalled and produced by the participants, so that they can speak fluently with the minimum of hesitation. It is a good idea to teach or review essential vocabulary before the activity starts.

##### Make a careful choice of topic and task to stimulate interest.

On the whole, the clearer the purpose of the discussion the more motivated participants will be. A good topic is one which students can relate using ideas from their own experience and knowledge. It should also represent a genuine controversy. Some questions or suggested lines of thought can help to stimulate discussion. A task is essentially goal-oriented. It requires the group, or pair, to achieve an objective that is usually expressed by an observable result such as brief notes or lists, a rearrangement of jumbled items, a drawing, and a spoken summary.

##### Give some instruction or training in discussion skills

If the task is based on group discussion then include instructions about participation when introducing it. For example, tell students to make sure that everyone the group contributes to the discussion appoints a chairperson to each group who will regulate participation.

##### Keep students speaking the target language

Teachers might appoint one of the groups as monitor, whose job is to remind participants to use the target language, and perhaps report later to teacher how well the group managed to keep it. Even if there is no actual penalty attached, the very awareness that someone is monitoring such lapses helps participants to be more careful.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research is conducted through teaching and learning in the classroom. The researcher chooses this class as the subject of the class because the pre-observation reveals that the students in this class has great enthusiast in English, especially encounter new things, for example when they know that they will be taught by the researcher in speaking class. Most of them seem eager to study. Most of their parents have middle economic level, so their study is fully financially supported by their family.

### Technique of Analyzing of the Data

In analyzing the qualitative data, the researcher analyzed the result of observation done during the TL process by using constant comparative method as suggested by Glasser and Srratus. The data analysis process of constant comparative method includes four steps (1967: 105-113), as follows:

### Comparing incidents applicable to each categories

It is started by coding each incident in the data into as many categories of analysis as possible. Some categories will be generated, some from the language and data of the research situation.

### Integrating categories and their properties

The constant comparative units change from comparison of incident with incident to comparison of incidents with properties of the category that resulted from initial comparison of incidents.

Diverse properties will starts to become integrated

### Delimiting theory

Here the theory is delimited and generalized more as continued to make constant comparisons against it. The number of categories will be reduced. Then, the researcher only needs to code enough to fulfill the properties of the categories. The categories were evaluated and the theory are emergent by moving on to new comparison groups.

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