THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Annotation. *Listening and speaking, as discrete skills within language teaching, are recognized as a difficult skill to learn and teach. They have perhaps become more challenging recently due to the current emphasis on using 'real' language, with background noise, at a natural speed, with hesitations, interruptions, fillers etc combined with the use of a variety of accents. Our article is devoted to the importance of integrating listening and speaking skills in teaching English as a foreign language.*

Key words: *listening, speaking, methods and learners.*

INGLIZ TILINI CHET TILI SIFATIDA O'RGATISHDA TINGLASH VA GAPIRISH KO'NIKMALARINI INTEGRATSIYALASHNING AHAMIYATI

Annotatsiya. *Tinglash va gaprish, tilni o'rgatishda diskret mahorat sifatida, o'rganish va o'rgatish qiyin mahorat sifatida tan olinadi. Ehtimol, so'nggi paytlarda "haqiqiy" tilni, fon shovqini bilan, tabiiy tezlikda, ikkilanishlar, uzilishlar, to'ldiruvchilar va boshqalar bilan turli xil urg'ulardan foydalanishga e'tibor qaratilayotganligi sababli yanada qiyinlashdi. Bizning maqolamiz ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rgatishda tinglash va gapirish ko'nikmalarini integratsiyalashning ahamiyatiga bag'ishlangan.*

Kalit so'zlar: *tinglab tushinish, gapirish, metodlar va o'rganuvchilar.*

INTRODUCTION

In real-life communication, people use a variety of language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. "When people learn a foreign language, they usually want to make use of that language to communicate with people who speak the same language. They can find themselves in the need of understanding them and talking to them. As Raimes states, "listening and speaking are, regardless of who the people using the language are, at least as important as the other skills to communicate". Byrne states that "one should keep in mind that these skills are normally integrated in real life". The term that integrated skills is frequently used as if it were almost synonymous with reinforcement. Viewed in this way, the process of integrating language skills involves linking them together in such a way that what has been learnt and practiced through the exercise of one skill is reinforced and perhaps extended through further language tasks which bring different skills into use. Here, the use of any skill may quite naturally lead to the use of other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is essential for students to understand the language they are exposed to and to respond appropriately so that they can become competent users of that particular language. Seferolu and Uzakgöre claim that "listening is usually an interactive process". The listener does not always just listen to, but she or he also reacts to the speaker or asks questions for clarification. The most essential issue for the students should be to understand what they are listening to and to be able to give appropriate responses orally. This aim brings us to the integration of listening and speaking while teaching, as our main consideration should be not only learning the grammar of the target language but also communicating in that language, which highlights the importance of the integration of these two skills. As a result, it may be said that the more the skills are taught individually, the less communication will take place in the classroom. To avoid this, the skills should be taught in integration to guide learners to develop their oral communicative competencies [1,67].

Dell Hymes defined communicative competence as a term in linguistics which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately. Within this process, communicative competence is a way of describing what a language speaker knows which enables him or her to interact effectively with others. Therefore, teachers should give more importance to teaching of the skills in integration in order to encourage the individuals become communicatively competent.

Speaking and listening skills have been regarded as being too difficult to cope with so generally students are not willing to participate in tasks focusing on these two skills. When they are integrated through information-gap tasks, students might see the actual outcome and become more willing to practice to achieve more success in communicating their ideas. Some instructors do not prefer information-gap tasks thinking that the class may get out of control which may cause barriers in communication process. Teachers should sweep away the boundaries and create a safe stress-free environment to encourage and motivate the students to speak. An information-gap task is a task where learners have the lack of the needed information to complete a task and they are in need of listening or speaking to each other in order to complete the task as in real- life. Information gap tasks are beneficial in a foreign language setting for various reasons. To start with, they both enhance the opportunity of speaking practice and highlight the real communication, therefore; the motivation of the students is high. One of the challenges that teachers meet in the classroom is motivating the students to speak in the target language. Active and confident students always participate, but the others who are less confident are not willing to speak. As Lightbown and Spada suggest "speaking in the target language requires more than one mental task at one time like choosing words, pronouncing them, and stringing them together with the appropriate grammatical markers" [2,76]. In order to perform these operations while communicating, complex and nonspontaneous mental operations are required and failure to do so may lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic, similarly with respect to listening. "The instructor should be the facilitator in the classroom to create an unthreatening environment" [3,12]. Hence, another important feature of information-gap tasks is that each student has only part of the information they need to complete a task, so they must cooperate and share their information by speaking or listening to each other. Within this framework, in the

learning process the students talk to one another, not exclusively to the teacher, which provides the involvement of all students into the tasks while at the same time fostering student-centered learning in the classroom [4,34].

Integration of skills exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. By this way, English becomes a real means of interaction and sharing among people. In addition to this, it allows the teacher to color his/her lesson with varieties because the range of tasks is wider. "Real success in English teaching and learning is when the learners can actually communicate in English inside and outside the classroom".

METHODOLOGY

All the tasks involved in the study were information-gap tasks. As Krashen pinpoints, "learners are exposed to language only in the classroom where they spend less time in contact with the language, covering a smaller discourse type". The limited exposure to the target language and lack of opportunities to practice speaking do not let the communicative abilities of learners fully develop and result into embarrassment and stress for them, so the teachers should use real life materials through information-gap tasks to increase the motivation of the students. Errors in social settings are mostly overlooked if they do not interfere with the meaning because people consider it and face-threatening to interrupt and correct somebody who is trying to have a conversation with them. Interlocutors only react to an error if they cannot understand the speech and try to adjust their speech with the speaker in their effort to negotiate for meaning. It is mostly the classroom environment where feedback on error is provided; this leads many learners to frustration. In this study, during the implementation process, teachers just reacted to an error if they couldn't get the meaning as the aim of these tasks is developing communication skills of the students.

The tasks given to the first group were mainly focusing on listening and speaking separately, however; the tasks developed for the other group involve the integration of these two skills. As is mentioned before, all of them were developed through information-gap tasks. They were adapted to be carried out separately and integratively. Later, these tasks were ordered so that students could move from sentence level to paragraph level. The aim of preparing the tasks in this order is to make students familiar with the skills before asking them to do more complicated ones. Moreover, to activate participation in the classroom, it was ensured that students were provided friendly, informal and learning-supportive environments. This was obtained by teachers' friendly, helpful and cooperative behavior while the students were dealing with a task. In order to reinforce students, the tasks provide reasonable commitments for successful language learning. When the teachers said that the lesson would be about listening or speaking, most of the students did not want to be involved as they believed at first that it would be difficult. So, the first tasks were just a small warmer to motivate the students before going on with the more challenging ones. By the end of the first tasks, the students seemed to be more willing to participate in the other ones and they became more familiar with the skills. During the following tasks, it was observed that students did not feel anxious anymore about forming sentences while speaking or listening. Generally, most of the tasks were autonomous as there were student-students or students-student interaction. There was an information-gap between the students so they were communicative tasks.

People need this kind of information in real life, which fosters student involvement in the classroom. All through these tasks the students had the opportunity of working together and they were very active which supported the authentic atmosphere of learning. The tasks were ordered from the controlled to free ones in order to guide students but later on they became more autonomous. The tasks not only considered these two skills but also covered practicing the sub skills such as listening for the main idea, listening for the detailed information, predicting and comprehending. Generally, the tasks took 20 or 30 minutes to complete in the actual classroom setting. In parallel with the aims of the study, integration of the skills accustoms the learners to combining listening and speaking, in natural interaction through information-gap tasks.

RESULTS

In order to compare the results of the same test given to both groups, the t-test technique was used for two independent samples. But this technique requires a sample feature which is normally distributed. Therefore, it was necessary to study the distributions of these two samples first and see whether their distribution were normal or not. If they were not normal, nonparametric tests to compare these samples could be used, however; the analysis made reflected that t-test would be applicable for the interpretation of the test administered to the two groups.

According to our studies, we have got this result:

Before experiment

GROUPS	CLASS	NUMBER OF PUPILS	PUPILS WHO RECEIVE HIGH SCORE (5-4)	PUPILS WHO RECEIVE LOW SCORE (3-2)
Experienced group	6-'A'	18	5	13
Non-experienced group	6-'B'	20	6	14

After experiment

GROUPS	CLASS	NUMBER OF PUPILS	PUPILS WHO RECEIVE HIGH SCORE (5-4)	PUPILS WHO RECEIVE LOW SCORE (3-2)
Experienced group	6-'A'	18	12	6
Non-experienced group	6-'B'	20	7	13

As can be seen in the first table, if 27% of the pupils got a higher results, according to initial test, the experimental results obtained from a nine-month study indicate a significant improvement in the experienced group, with a rise to 66% in their listening and speaking

skills. This empirical evidence underscores the effectiveness of integrating listening and speaking skills in language instruction and reinforces the importance of continued research and innovation in language education.

In conclusion, it is seen that the comes about of the test appear that students' victory increments when these two aptitudes are instructed in integration through information-gap assignments. In addition, practicing the abilities through information gap errands carry up student involvement and inspiration primarily since these sorts of errands are related to genuine life and hence leads to communication. It may be said that the listening and talking abilities are at slightest as critical as the perusing and composing abilities. This think about proposes that students' victory rises when tuning in and talking aptitudes are coordinates through information-gap tasks. This article has been made as a direct for instructors of English as an outside dialect to create the understudies´ capacities within the dialect. It is the application of a joining approach for the development of communicative abilities within the classroom, in which the four abilities in the acquisition of information of a remote dialect can be taught in a coherent way, and practiced in, conjunction with a qualification of the significance of one upon the others. With cautious reflection and arranging, any educator can coordinate the dialect aptitudes and fortify the embroidered artwork of dialect educating and learning. When the embroidered artwork is woven well, learners can utilize English successfully for communication.

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