

Recommendations

Taking into consideration students/ teachers opinions and perceptions vis a vie the teaching of the Oral Expression course, and based on the findings obtained through introducing storytelling activities as a basic technique during a period of three months exposure to this latter, we shall present a list of suggestions and guidelines to be adopted by teachers of this course for a better achievement, reinforcement or a change in the actual situation of teaching listening and speaking skills.

Teaching Listening

Developing students` listening abilities is one of the most challenging tasks for teachers , students as well as course designers . As a matter of fact , by developing students` listening abilities , they are expected to produce more accurately , refine their understanding and develop their own vocabulary .

Generally speaking , a listening comprehension session should be divided into three main stages:

- Pre-listening phase during which students are prepared to listen. Teachers at this stage should set certain objectives to be achieved. These are:
 - *Motivation*: this could be realized by selecting a listening passage that students will find interesting accompanied by tasks that will arouse students` motivation and curiosity
 - *Preparation*: teachers set tasks devoted for students while they listen or to prepare them for the coming phase ,by presenting for them specific vocabulary or expressions that they will need. It`s vital that teachers cover this before setting their learners to the listening phase as the create a challenge within the lesson.
 - Careful attention should be given to the following:
 - the quality of recording which has to be clear and good or its better to adopt laboratory based teaching as the main instructional setting since this latter offers certain facilities that can not be found in a typical classroom.
 - the diversity in the tapes` content (dialogues , interviews , extracts , stories...) as well as the language used to present it which mustn`t go beyond the learners linguistic competence with an ordinary speed of speech.

- while listening: during which students are asked to focus their attention on the listening passage and guide the development of their comprehension.

Students should be presented to the listening passage a number of times` this will help them to cope many constraints they may face such as :the accent of the native speakers, the speed of speech , the tone of voice ...ect

Tasks designed at this stage should be graded in terms of difficulty (from the easiest to the most difficult). Students shouldn't be put under too much pressure at this stage . Listening to a foreign language is a demanding activity That's why it is very important for students to have a thinking space between listening, not only to have a break but also to check their understanding with a peer.

Post listening:

During which students are asked to integrate what they have acquired from the listening passage into their actual performance.

The tasks designed during this stage focus on two main aspects which are: students `reactions towards the content of the listening passage and the analysis of the linguistic features used to express the content.

- Reaction to the listening passage: it involves discussion of the topic treated, comprehension questions...
- Analysis of the linguistic features: it involves focusing students on language forms used to express the content passage. It could take the form of an analysis of verbs form, expression opinion, giving advice, forms of request...ect .

Teaching speaking

Teaching speaking is a very important part of foreign language learning. in this trend , learners success depends greatly on developing their ability to communicate clearly and effectively using the target language Therefore , it is essential that language teachers pay a considerable attention to teaching and creating a rich environment where a meaningful communication can take place .

- When teaching any new concept, skill, provide slow , step-by – step Instruction.

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- Teachers should provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by ensuring a rich environment that contains collaborative work, authentic materials and tasks , and share knowledge.
- It is important to do regular speaking activities in class to develop general speaking skills with trying to involve each student in every speaking activity. Teachers should introduce their speaking activities by explicitly stating the focus and the purpose. Students have to be involved in the various speaking activities not only in class but also out of class.
- When speaking to students, the teacher has to face them, pause between phrases for processing time , use simple vocabulary , limit sentence or clause length and give the student the opportunity to request repetition or clarification. The teacher should be aware of when their students have become inattentive or look confused, he has to repeat what he said or otherwise reinforce the message.
- Reduce teacher speaking time in class while increasing students speaking time.
- Provide situations in which pretend play and role playing are encouraged as well as the other forms of interaction such as classroom discussion in case of having students as reluctant speakers ,the teacher should get them involved in pairs or groups in a short discussions just to share information then he can implicitly introduce other longer and more directed speaking activities and tasks.
- To encourage students to be responsible for including all members of the group in their discussions, incorporate them in debates, formal presentations so to contribute together to manage these speaking forms effectively.
- Teacher should encourage students to practice speaking on their own even though there is no response or feedback, simply speaking gives the opportunity to try different ways of saying things,this fact can help them to increase confidence , this is particularly useful when those learners try to gain the ability to speak at length on a topic ,this latter which is difficult for them to acquire and needs practice.
- To recognize the importance of presenting the speaking activities `needed vocabulary beforehand
- To not correct students pronunciation mistakes very often while they speak.
- Assign small projects and require students to present them in small groups.

Introducing storytelling activities to teach listening and speaking

After all what has been said in favor of implementing storytelling technique, the primary goal is to assist students in gaining proficient use of their language abilities. Using storytelling technique exemplifies everything which an educational remedial strategy is committed. It is the most natural and realistic way to develop those critical speech and language skills to assist students in the evolving process of becoming effective communicators and active listener who can convey their thoughts, ideas and feelings intelligently, convincingly to others across different contextual settings.

While storytelling is extremely useful in strengthening the detailed aspects of language structure, here are some guidelines to be followed by our Oral Expression teachers.

- Introduce the technique in a way to make students comfortable with the idea of storytelling.
- Finding the right story for you class is very important, story selection should meet a definite objective criteria: level, interest, need , motivation.
- The teacher may use a story that contains motivation creates interest and communicative enthusiasm to his learners.
- Stories used in classroom should be adopted in a way to facilitate comprehension and construct meaning.
- Provide students with simple stories, including few characters, a clear plot, presented in a well polished language.
- Tell the story over many times.
- Try to create a free atmosphere of learning through the story, encourage imagination and let students visualize the settings and the characters , imagine location , details of colors , shapes, mental picture of each character ...
- While storytelling , you should push your students to recognize the effectiveness of the use of pauses , intonation , phrasing, certain sound effects , timing repetitions ...
- While listening to the story , encourage students to predict the outcomes or the next events ,Afterwards , ask them to evaluate their prediction.

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- You may make your students touch on both the moral lessons as well as the cultural aspects treated in the story by invoking different questions such as ' what did you learn from it'...
- Encourage story retelling to facilitate generation of ideas for speaking.
- Vary the storytelling based activities ,since this latter provide the learners with helpful opportunities to develop their listening and speaking abilities through ensuring the interdependence between the two levels.
- Teach students to infer meaning that is not given in the story.