

LISTENING FOR THE SAKE OF SPEAKING OR VICE VERSA

СЛУХАННЯ ЗАРАДИ ГОВОРІННЯ ТА НАВПАКИ

The purpose of the article is to reveal the interconnection between listening and speaking skills which are essential for mastering communication skills. The ability to communicate in at least one foreign language has become a top priority for most students. Thus, it is teachers' responsibility to provide students with everything necessary to master the language. Although communication skills involve four competences students should acquire, such as reading, writing, listening and speaking, the process of communication is conducted in terms of speaking and listening. Being involved in a communication process one becomes a listener and a speaker at the same time, so these skills are interrelated and are learned and taught simultaneously. Various activities used in the classroom for encouraging students to speak and listen will inevitably benefit students.

Key words: speaking skills, listening skills, debate, discussion, storytelling, speech, authentic audios, authentic videos.

Метою статті є виявлення взаємозв'язку між слуханням та говорінням, які необхідні для опанування комунікативних навичок. Здатність спілкуватися принаймні однією іноземною мовою стала найважливішим пріоритетом для більшості студентів. Таким чином, відповідальність викладачів полягає у наданні студентам необхідних матеріалів для вивчення мови. Хоча комунікативні навички включають чотири компетенції, які повинні опанувати студенти: читання, письмо,

говоріння та слухання, процес спілкування ведеться через говоріння та слухання. Учасник комунікативного процесу водночас стає слухачем і мовцем, тому ці навички взаємопов'язані і вивчаються одночасно.

Ключові слова: говоріння, слухання, дебати, дискусія, розповідь, промова, автентичні аудіоматеріали, автентичні відеоматеріали.

Целью статьи является выявление взаимосвязи между слушанием и говорением, которые необходимы для освоения коммуникативных навыков. Способность общаться хотя бы на одном иностранном языке стала важнейшим приоритетом для большинства студентов. Таким образом, ответственность преподавателей заключается в предоставлении студентам необходимых материалов для изучения языка. Хотя коммуникативные навыки включают в себя четыре компетенции, которыми должны овладеть студенты: чтение, письмо, говорение и слушание, процесс общения ведется за счет говорения и слушания. Участник коммуникативного процесса одновременно становится слушателем и говорящим, поэтому эти навыки взаимосвязаны и учатся одновременно.

Ключевые слова: разговорная речь, слушание, дебаты, дискуссия, рассказ, речь, аутентичные аудиоматериалы, аутентичные видеоматериалы.

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Introduction. Becoming an outstanding professional nowadays cannot be possible without the knowledge of at least one foreign language. Communicating with foreign peers, using foreign sources of information, doing research and being up-to-date professionally is an integral part of any successful career and leads to the necessity of mastering a foreign language [1].

Thus, learning a foreign language is one of the top priorities in today's fast developing society and the core point, which has to be paid attention to.

Presenting main material. To master the language, you have to be skillful in the four key competences such as reading, listening, writing and speaking which together create a communicative competence. All of these should be obtained in complex by students. It should be mentioned that one of the vital problems of language teaching is acquiring communicative competence and the ways to master it, since not being physically in the natural language environment among the native speakers can complicate the learning process. Under no circumstances should the role of any of the four communicative skills be diminished, however, it is of vital importance to develop speaking skills with the aim to convey the message. Listening and speaking skills have a prominent place in universities syllabi around the world with Ukraine not being an exception. Being engaged

in any professional sphere the need for people to express themselves arises and the ability to interact in a foreign language orally is a necessity. Thus, teaching students to communicate in all spheres of life is essential and should be the main objective for university teachers. Being a "crucial part" of any language learning speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts [2; 3].

Teaching communicating is underestimated by some teachers as they regard it as mere repetition of phrases or memorizing textbook dialogues and passages for the sake of enriching vocabulary and improving the ability to speak. However, students rarely use this information when it comes to real conversation. Thus, such approaches to teaching speaking are worthless and out-of-date. In other words, students are unable to engage in "on-going, interactive, mentally satisfying conversation" [4]. They don't take the initiative to say more, they satisfy themselves with short answers, they are not able to keep up long turns in conversation due to a lack of conversational skills. The ability to take part in a conversation is "believed to be a part of learner's communicative competence, the ultimate goal of second language learning" [5].

In order to encourage students to speak teachers should follow some important principles which

will facilitate the process of learning speaking, help overcome language barriers and evoke the students' desire to speak a real language.

1. Students and teachers should focus on fluency more than on correctness. It is natural for the students to make mistakes and they should not be afraid of making them and as a result be discouraged from speaking by constant teachers' interruptions. The main purpose should be conveying the message to the audience, using relevant vocabulary and grammar tenses although teacher's feedback afterwards is also important.

2. The topics students discuss should be available for them, as the lack of vocabulary for more sophisticated issues or simply not being knowledgeable in the sphere might prevent them from voicing their opinion. In this case lesson will not serve them any good. Discussing controversial statements and debating will teach the students to express their ideas and points of view concerning the topic, either favorable or not, but it will be a practical way of learning to communicate and reach an agreement.

3. Having students work in pairs or in groups of three is more efficient than making them respond to teacher's questions in person. Having the support from peers and a chance to discuss beforehand what is going to be said will increase their confidence and help them speak more eagerly. Working in groups creates the environment which seems more natural as mostly conversations both formal and informal take place in small groups. Besides, being given a chance to speak up while the rest of the class are listening will also be a good practice for public speaking when larger groups of people are involved.

4. There is an obvious difference between everyday and academic conversation. As for the former one student will likely be able to hold it with few difficulties, as they will not need to use extended vocabulary or complex grammar structures. However, being university students their future profession will need more fluency in English, so it would be useful to give students some key phrases which help to introduce the topic of conversation, draw attention to the main points, ask for opinion, share their own thoughts or give examples.

5. Students should also be able to differentiate between formal and informal communication, the appropriateness of certain words or set phrases. Knowing some strategies about this will help them avoid confusion in real out-of-classroom environment.

6. Giving feedback at the end of speaking sessions, debates or discussions will be more beneficial than interrupting students all the way through. Major mistakes should be pointed out with the aim of remembering them, but the assessing itself should be more holistic. Under no circumstances should students be discouraged from speaking as a result of teacher's criticism.

Taking these principles into account teachers should provide the students with a range of speaking activities to choose from. The diversity of those is vital as it reveals different ways of applying speaking skills. Debates, discussions, speeches, storytelling, role play, dialogues, oral narratives, poem recitations are those numerous activities which can be used during the lessons.

1. There are several advantages of using debate in the classroom as students are encouraged to find out and learn some information, relate it to their background knowledge and highlight only the noteworthy points. Debate promotes a variety of critical thinking skills, as the students have to analyze and evaluate the credibility of a source, distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information, compare and contrast, and assess solution to problems. This activity reinforces both listening and speaking skills, boosts their knowledge and improves their public speaking skills, as well as encouraging students to cooperate with each other as such tasks need a lot of preparation and are usually done in small groups [6].

2. Developing group discussion skills is useful for everyday life as students communicate with their foreign friends, take part in exchange programs. Additionally, group discussions are increasingly being used in the job market during interviews thus it will be beneficial for students to practice these skills. Group discussions offer an opportunity for extended speaking and listening practice by all the participants and according to the format they can include making decisions, sharing ideas, reaching conclusions or solving problems so the skills learned this way will be invaluable.

3. As a learning tool storytelling is a practical powerful tool in the fact that it initiates students to discuss about the target culture, it offers them full opportunities to engage in listening tasks through their interaction with story and teller and their discussion when dealing with storytelling activities. Storytelling and speeches require monologues thus becoming a springboard for practicing public speaking, giving presentations to large audiences.

As stated above the process of communication is a two-side process which involves both speaking and listening skills. The teaching of listening has attracted more interest in the recent years than it did in the past. The availability of online audio resources such as music, films, webinars, news etc. has aroused this interest and served as a mover for including listening into various kinds of language exams as well as in the university syllabi. Thus, it is acknowledged that listening skill is a core component of a foreign language proficiency.

In terms of learning and second language learning in particular listening is a key to language development: understanding what is said in a particular situation helps to provide important models for language use.

Students must be acquainted with authentic speech elements, understand the speaker and be able to respond competently in any possible language environment. To obtain these skills it is necessary to use authentic video and audio resources such as films, TV and radio programs, recorded dialogues, speeches etc. Choosing any of the sources it is advisable to take into account the level of language complexity, the language level of students and the objectives we set. Using these makes the process of learning easier, more interesting and stimulates students' motivation. It is stated that auditory perception helps to apprehend 15% of information, visual perception helps to learn 25%, while using both approaches leads to 60 % of information apprehending. Verbal units and visual images are closely connected. The word is said to supplement the image, enhance it and make it more precise, while the visual image creates natural environment and helps to form associations helping the students to memorize the vocabulary easily and practice it in everyday life.

There is a wide variety of resources available nowadays which are easily accessed and can be used in the classroom to serve the specific needs of the diversity of students.

It should be stated that one of the means used whilst teaching a foreign language is authentic video whether it is an extract from a film or a short commercial from YouTube. Video isn't just a passive form of entertainment, it's also the mode of delivery for interactive communication, and for information accessed on a daily basis. Students are accustomed to using video, and teachers can use that to their advantage. Since learning a foreign language is not taking place in a natural language environment, using authentic videos can make up for the lack of it and provide the conditions closely related to real life situations in which the learners take an active part.

As mentioned above one of the essential aspects of mastering language is development of listening skills, which is the key tool of developing perceptive and cognitive capabilities of understanding spoken language and responding in the communicative environment. In terms of learning and second language learning in particular listening is a key to language development: understanding what is said in a particular situation helps to provide important models for language use [7].

Conclusions. Thus in the process of communication both listening and speaking are involved simultaneously and being effectively taught in the classroom environment leads to students' successful mastering the language, ability to respond in both every day and academic environment, give presentations, deliver speeches, take part in discussions, listen to lectures, communicate over the telephone, understand televi-

sion and radio programs, understand the interlocutor and voice their own opinion, be able to adjust to professional and everyday speaking environment using appropriate communication tools. By means of various authentic resources teachers may provide students with essential foundation which develops their capabilities to compete successfully in their chosen professional area via using a foreign language at the highest level. The notion of English as an international language has also prompted a revision of the notion of communicative competence to include intercultural competence. This shifts the focus toward learning how to communicate in cross-cultural settings, where native-speaker norms of communication may not be a priority. At the same time, it is now accepted that models for oral interaction in classroom materials cannot be simply based on the intuitions of textbook writers, but should be informed by the findings of conversational analysis and the analysis of real speech.

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