

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS IN THE YOUNG LEARNERS CLASSROOM

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ANNOTATION

Special methods, strategies and techniques of teaching speech have been showed. In this regard, I will try to perform the following tasks in my professional work, first of all, to provide information about the types of methods that work on the development of speaking skills, to demonstrate how to use modern technologies in the educational process, to analyze new types of exercises according to the text, and most importantly, to Information is given on what difficulties students face in the process of speaking and how to prevent them.

Keywords: *non-verbal communication, lesson, distance, facial expression, gestures, emotion*

Young learners are like sponges, they soak up everything we say and how we say it. Thus clear and correct pronunciation is of vital importance, since young learners repeat exactly what they hear. What has been learned at an early stage is difficult to change later on. One of the rules that applies here is: slowly and steadily, through constant revision and recycling. Furthermore, I always strive to achieve a positive and relaxed atmosphere in my young learners' classroom, as this proved a decisive factor in achieving maximum results. With the help of mixed activities, such as dialogues, choral revision, chants, songs, poems and rhymes students' speaking abilities grow, their pronunciation gets better and their awareness of the language improves. When applying the above-mentioned tools into my teaching practice, I try to keep in mind

that interaction is an important way of learning. Therefore, increased oral emphasis should be included in our teaching to give the students as much speaking time as possible.

Many textbooks for young learners offer shorter texts written as comics, introducing characters learners can relate to and through which they get to know the language, the culture and the people of a certain country. Instead of simply following the text (with books either open or closed), I often divide the class into various parts or teams (e.g. A and B, depending on the number of roles in the comics) and then the learners read with the tape. Choral reading has always proved a lot of fun and children are excellent at imitating, thus producing brilliant copies of the original. Do not forget to change roles after the text has been read a few times. Further on, as you see learners getting familiar with the topic and vocabulary, make them work in pairs. If they want to, they can also perform in front of the class – keep in mind that at an early age they are mostly extroverts and love showing off their English. However, there may be students who are terrified of being exposed, some are in the so-called silent phase – never force these students to speak in front of the whole class. Instead, give them some other role – e.g. they "act" as a ringing phone in the comics, appear as the voice of a dog or the like. I can tell from my own experience that this does bring results and eventually also these students come out of their shell and express themselves in English. Needless to say, each and every attempt should be accompanied by our approval and appraisal, the same being the case with other speaking activities the learners are involved into. Do encourage them constantly as this builds their motivation and self-awareness.

Textbooks are usually filled with situation dialogues, helping the students learn language in real-life situations, therefore offering them the tool which opens many doors to various subjects. But learning these dialogues by heart is a definite no-no. It is much better and far more useful to substitute the words so that they are true to students and their world. Thus each student uses his/her own variation, there is an obvious transition from pure imitation to conscious changing, which speeds up

remembering and offers varied communicative opportunities. By imitating, sharing and discussing students benefit – modeling, understanding and picking it up seem to be natural. Through imitating, interacting and internalizing the process is later on understood explicitly on a higher level, by practising social phrases in everyday situations the learners are building a basis on top of which new information is to be added from lesson to lesson. Note: with young learners, grammatical points should be taught implicitly only, after they are 11 and up, the explicit approach can be used as well.

Songs, Poems, Rhymes and Chants

Throughout our English lessons students are learning to speak, express ideas, share opinions and exchange information. Using songs, poems, rhymes and chants is a wonderful way of making students sing/talk and at the same time (unconsciously) work at their grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation. Try to include the above-mentioned activities by providing learners with those that require total physical response, shortly known as "TPR". Year by year, children get highly enthusiastic about songs like: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes") where (excessive) body movements are required. Confidence and motivation are built through the process. Sometimes new lyrics can be added to traditional songs, making things a bit different and out of the expected. e.g. "Row, row, row your boat" can easily be changed into "Fly, fly, fly your plane" the movements change accordingly and so does the rest of the lyrics. It is basically the teachers' call what and how to change the song, and it is always welcomed by the learners.

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