

THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCUSSION SKILLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the importance of developing discussion skills and teaching them in English language. The ability to discuss something in English means that the student is able to communicate in this language using all the knowledge that has been gained.

Key words

EFL/ ESL classrooms, community language learning, post-discussion.

INTRODUCTION

When one student tries to learn a language, except the grammar, vocabulary, the main four skills of it, also tries to learn how to act himself/herself to speak like a native speaker. In this case they should study how to display their thoughts and feelings so that it will be useful for them to practice their knowledge. In order to do that they should be taught how to discuss several topics due to interact with many other students in the language they are learning.

As an example, in teaching EFL (English as a Foreign language) the use of discussion can mostly be not developed. Because the students whose native language is not English, but trying to learn it, there is a slow development of the discussion skills. They should firstly learn the whole grammar, all the necessary vocabulary, including idioms and phrasal verbs, and then try to discuss something with the help of their knowledge.

When it comes to teaching ESL (English as a second language) it is easier to teach discussion skills for ESL classrooms. Because the students who are already familiar with English language, need a little effort to find the way to speak out their thoughts, as a consequence they are easily taught to discuss any topic.

MAIN BODY

The word “discussion” can also be accepted as an “interaction” , as during the process of discussion people communicate with each other and interact. That’s why interacting with other people in the language being learned is vital.

In order to be able to interact with others in English language, teachers should teach their students main skills with the help of which students can confidently speak and express their opinions. As an example, the Community language learning method in teaching can be applied to teaching discussion.

This method was developed by Charles A. Curran. Curran was a specialist in counseling and a professor of psychology at Loyola University, Chicago. His application of psychological counseling techniques to learning is known as Counseling-Learning. Community Language Learning represents the use of Counseling-Learning theory to teach languages. Even if Community language learning (CLL) was primarily designed for monolingual conversation classes where the teacher-counsellor would be able to speak the learners’ L1, the intention was that it would integrate translation so that the students would disassociate language learning with risk taking. This method is not all about teaching discussion but teachers can learn some principles of this method to apply in teaching discussion.

For instance, before doing discussion teacher should divide students to several groups containing 3 or 5 members. Then, teacher will give them topic, students should talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the topic, for example. So in that way discussion begins. Teacher can take a video of the process of discussion in order to show it later to students. This principle is from Community language learning. Because students will learn something while discussing the topic, that’s you

community language learning method is effective in the development of discussion skills.

During the discussion students use many gestures and work stress in order to make their speech colorful and interesting, as body language also takes crucial place to impress the listener. So these kind of techniques should also be taught by teachers.

Post-discussion is reviewing the whole process. For example one student collects all the videos which were taken while discussing some topics, and after some years the student can review his/her development in pronunciation, body language or fluency and, of course, in the discussion skills.

CONCLUSION

In the learning process the analysis of what you have learned means a lot. Especially the result of your learning, is usually visible when you talk and express your interests and opinions fluently without doing any mistakes and splits. In order to be confident while speaking with other people whom we met for the first time, of course, we need to know how to interact with them; the discussion skills can be the basis of the ability to speak confidently. So, nowadays many teachers try to organize many activities in order to develop speaking and discussion skills which makes learning a language entertaining and educating.

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