

A Study On The Effect Of Collaborative Learning Techniques To Enhance Speaking Skills

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Abstract- English language has been now hooked up as a language of world verbal exchange and a language of opportunities. A high diploma of talent in English and brilliant communication skills decorate students' employability. The study discusses the problems of speaking skills among Bharathiar Engineering College students. Before the interference pretest has been conducted to know their problems in speaking skills using questionnaire. Based on an analysis of the questionnaire Collaborative learning techniques has been implemented in order to enhance students speaking skills. The techniques implemented helps students to enrich their speaking skills since it is a group work students find at ease and participate actively in order to complete a task. At the end posttest has been conducted using questionnaire as a tool where positive comments have been given by the students. Thus, Collaborative learning techniques upholds student learning and educational accomplishment.

Keywords-Speaking skills, Collaborative learning, Techniques

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1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is the skill that makes human beings extraordinary from and most beneficial to the species of living beings. Speaking is a complicated cognitive and linguistic skill. A toddler learns to talk via interplay with the humans around him in his native language. An adult can talk in his native language without effort and this ability is natural one. But speaking in a foreign language is no longer natural and it requires conscious effort in the course of the total process. Speaking is a production talent that includes listening skills. Without this, speaking is not possible and the relationship between these two abilities is integrated.

Importance of Speaking

At an early age, the infant commenced to pay attention and needless to say it began to respond through speaking. Speaking and Listening are the coronary heart of children's learning. Children want to be confident communicators and lively listeners in order to learn about the world they stay in. Language capabilities are decisive, and youngsters begin to

increase these from birth. Before adolescents can study to examine and write they want to confident in their speaking and listening skills.

Problems of Speaking skills

Learners feel comfortable in writing in English because it gives time to think and come up with correct grammatical sentences, helps in vocabulary, punctuations and typically when we type on supercomputers. Computers spot-on our errors but it is difficult when we are speaking in English. It is highly challenging when we are forced to speak only in English. Searching for the right vocabulary, phrases, fear of making mistakes and audience, knowledge of the topic, and so on are the common problems faced by the learners when they speak in English. Finally, everything get fouled and thus listeners failed to comprehend.

Selection of the Sample

In the primary and secondary level of education, language skills are not given much importance. The learners in schools prepare themselves only for the purpose of scoring high marks in examination. During their tertiary level they feel difficulty in their language skills, which is indispensable. Hence the researcher has tried to develop speaking skills among the first year under graduate students of Engineering College. The researcher has taken the students of Bharathiar Engineering College as the population. The samples include the first year Electrical and Electronics Engineering College students and there were 40 students.

Tools Used

The researcher gave the students pre-test to find out their skill of speaking before teaching and learning activities. Post-test was given to the students to find out their ability of speaking after teaching and learning activities.

The Questionnaire

The first questionnaire has 30 questions. The main purpose of this questionnaire is to know about the knowledge of students in language and language skills. The second questionnaire is for pre-test. The questionnaire has 30 questions. All the questions based on speaking, problems and difficulties of students while speaking. From these questionnaires the researcher could identify the problems of learners' speaking skills.

Analysis of The Questionnaire

On the basis of the students' response to the questionnaire, the problems of students have been identified. The problems are,

1. Lack of self-confidence and stage fear
2. Fear of making grammatical mistakes
3. Problems in pronunciation
4. Less practice
5. Lack of Vocabulary

Collaborative Learning and its techniques

Collaborative learning is an approach which use groups to enhance students' learning. Groups of two or more learners sit and work together in order to solve complex problems, far-reaching tasks, share new ideas and information. This approach actively engages learners to process and blend information and perceptions, instead of reiterating facts and figures.

Learners work as a group on the given task and they ought to collaborate to comprehend the notions are being presented to them. As a group, learners work better than as an individual. They learn to interact each other, broadening learners' ideas, listening and obtaining to others views, contemplating in completing given tasks and so on.

1. *Robin Round Technique*

Description

Robin round is a brainy practice in which learners create thoughts however they don't intricate, explicate, appraise the ideas. Members in group take turns to response the questions with a word, phrase or short sentences. Everyone gets an opportunity in order to response the question. This technique is quite effective for generating ideas because it allows the learners to participate and it daunt comments that disturb the stream of ideas. It also confirms equal contribution among the learners.

Preparation

The main purpose of this technique is to create widespread a list of ideas. Exploring instant ideas can generate rich collection of answers which can be expressed rapidly and concisely is predominantly significant. Repeated practice and thinking ahead of time motivated learners to generate more responses.

Procedure

- ✓ Students are asked to form a group consist of four to six.
- ✓ Group contributors will take turns, shifting clockwise, and reply to the question. They inform learners to prevent interrupting or inhibiting the drift of ideas, they have to refrain from assessing, enquiring or conversing the ideas.
- ✓ Allow the learners to assign their role during the activity.
- ✓ Ask one student to commence the exercise via pointing out thoughts. The next pupil continues the brainstorming session with the aid of pointing out a new idea. The activity continues, transferring from one to another in sequence till all learners have participated.

2. *Buzz Groups*

Buzz group is a technique to limbering up to the entire class discussion. Learners are divided into different groups consists of four to six to respond course related queries. All the groups are allowed to discuss the same and respond to many questions. During discussion they exchange their ideas and it is in informal. They gather more ideas and share thoughts in short period of time. Both introvert and extrovert get opportunities to converse their opinions freely and the discussion becomes richer and active participatory.

Preparation

Before coming to class, learners are asked to find out what the groups will discuss. Learners are asked to prepare question which is more conceptual rather than factual and that will kindle more ideas and thoughts. When they respond to the questions to themselves so that their confident level increases and they make a variety of response. The mode of questioning should be chosen such as activity sheet, projector or other technology.

Procedure

- ✓ Learners are asked to form groups and the prompts and time limits are explained prior to the discussion.

- ✓ They are asked to exchange the ideas in response to the prompts.
- ✓ The researcher checks intermittently to see whether the groups are active and make sure they should not deviate from the topic. Time limit can be adjusted based on spot topic and off topic.
- ✓ Students are asked to engage themselves in whole-class discussion and to participate actively.
- ✓

3. *Think-aloud Pair Problem Solving (TAPPS)*

Description

In TAPPS technique, learners receive a sequence of problems and roles such as problem solver and listener. The role problem solver to solve problems listed to them and the listener has to listen and follow the steps. The latter can comprehend it and offer suggestions if there are slipups. Sharing one's own problem solving process and listening to them helps learners to increase the awareness and their critical thinking skills.

Preparation

To prepare this technique, learners spend enough time to develop field-related problems. Make sure the learners can solve within a short period of time. Learners identify the basic problem, nature of the problem, identifying and analyzing solution to the problem. At the end it decides whether they are going to be a problem solver or listener.

Procedure

- ✓ Learners are asked to form pairs and their roles are explained.
- ✓ The role of the problem solver is to solve the assigned problem and the listener has to encourage and listen to the former.
- ✓ At the end, they both exchange their roles and solve all the assigned problems.

Analysis and Interpretation

On the basis of learners' response to the questionnaire, the researcher has identified the learners' problem is speaking skills when compared to other language skills.

Fig. 1

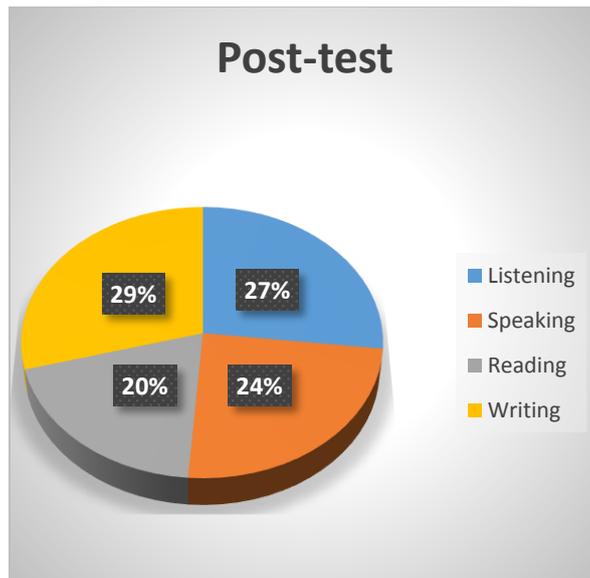
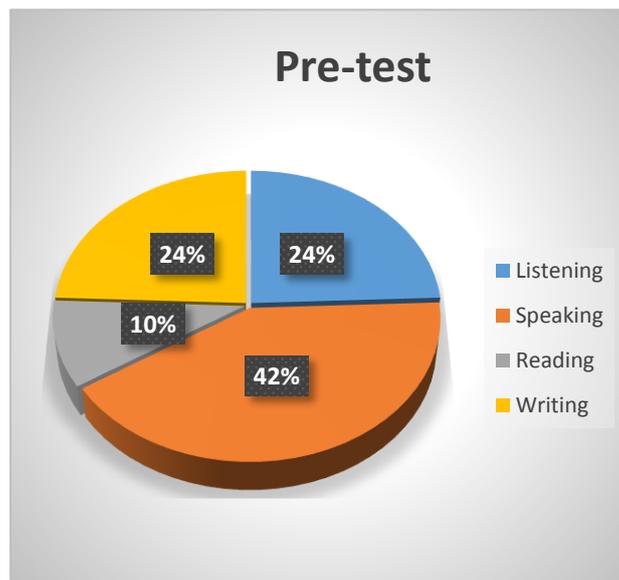


Fig. 2



The graph representing the difficulty level of learners' language skills. Before the intervention, learners felt that speaking was their difficult skill and they found it difficult in acquiring it which we could see from the fig. 1. After the intervention, when the collaborative techniques were implemented in the classroom learners improve their level of confidence in speaking which could be seen in fig. 2.

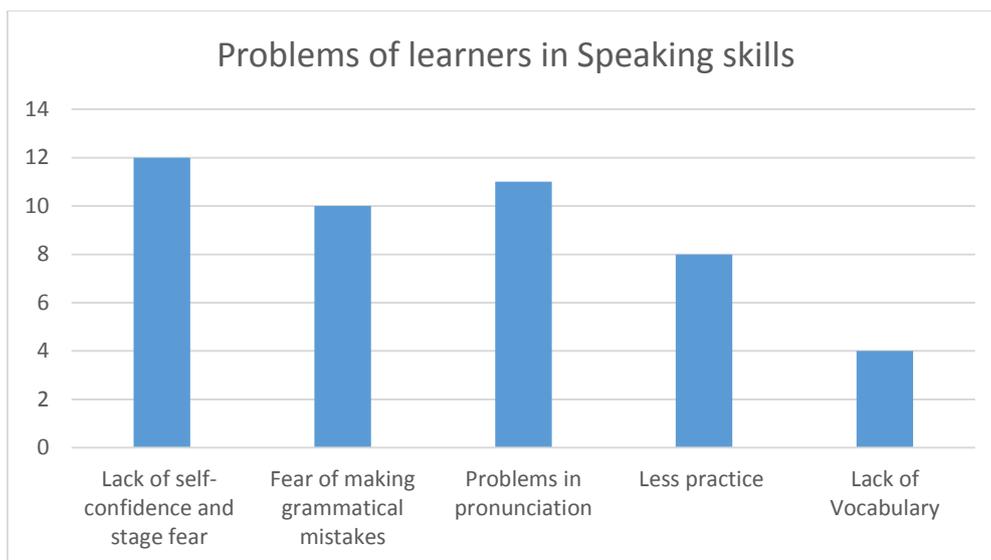


Fig. 3

The above graph representing the problems of learners' speaking skills. From the questionnaire the researcher has identified that 12 students who are lacking in self-confidence and fear of speaking in front of the audience. 10 students who have fear in making grammatical errors and 11 students who face problems in pronunciation. 8 students say that they don't practice well and 4 students says that they are poor in vocabulary.

Students Response

All three Collaborative Techniques works well in improving learners' speaking skills since it is group activities where learners were able to complete the task successfully.

- ✓ Robin round technique helped the learner to generate more ideas and made all the learners to participate in the task. As a group, when they share their thoughts they gain confidence and they learn additional vocabulary.
- ✓ In Buzz Groups, students were more comfortable while speaking since it was informal during their conversation. They find little difficult when the researcher gave spot topic but students managed when they response to the queries. Since there were prior preparation students could speak better without stage fear.
- ✓ In Think-aloud Pair Problem Solving, students found little difficult in solving problem but they were at ease while giving solution for it. Students enjoyed their roles as a problem solver and listener.

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

All three techniques helped learners to overcome their problems of speaking. Though learners found it difficult to speak in Robin round techniques they were at ease speaking in last technique. This is because they work as a group and practice regularly. The learners should not stop with these activities and they should reiterate it in order to overcome their difficulties. Once they practice regularly they could enhance their vocabulary and improve their pronunciation. These collaborative techniques made learners to interact actively and they were more responsible to the group members.

3. SUGGESTIONS

In order to cope up with the problems of speaking skills the following suggestions and remedies have to be advocated,

- ✓ Teachers should include more classroom activities regularly.
- ✓ Activities can be done with TED-ED, TED TALKS, one-minute English, a 5-minute English, Voice of America, and so on in order to enrich their vocabulary and pronunciation
- ✓ .

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