

Pedagogical Model of Developing Oral Speech Competencies in Future English Language Learners

Alaudinova Dilnoza Rustam qizi

Lecturer, Termez state university

Annotation: English language skills should be deeply reinforced in the curricula of all types of education, especially at universities in an attempt to have graduates holistically formed, so that they become relevant, employable and productive in the national and global economy. To help students achieve this outcome teachers and lectures should become models in relation to all areas of their profession. In this paper the authors are presenting a proposal of tasks for the students' English oral communicative competence according to their teaching professional profile. These tasks, which enclose an interdisciplinary perspective in their conception, have the main purpose of developing this oral communicative competence in the future teachers in the process of their formation.

Keywords: Oral communicative competence, Task-based teaching, Differentiating teaching, learning styles, Work-integrated education, Interdisciplinary work.

Introduction

English language skills should be deeply reinforced in the curricula of all types of education, especially at universities in an attempt to have graduates holistically formed, so that they become relevant, employable and productive in the national and global economy. To help students achieve this outcome teachers and lectures should become models in relation to all areas of their profession, as well as, in the communicative one. At teaching universities curricula include communication skills courses since this is a very important skill teachers and lecturers should develop. As a consequence, research works have been developed by these lecturers to assist students to overcome the challenges they have been facing. In this paper the authors are presenting a group of tasks for the students' English oral communicative competence according to their teaching professional profile. These tasks, which enclose an interdisciplinary perspective in their conception, have the main purpose of developing this oral communicative competence by the future teachers in the process of their formation. Work integrated learning and values formation are at the base of the Task-based teaching approach that is used with this proposal.

Literature Review

The theoretical background of this brief experience is found in sciences like Psychology, Linguistics and Pedagogy mainly. From Psychology this research takes some of the most important ideas of Humanism since it places the learners at the centre of the process, considering their needs, interests and aspirations in relation to their future work, in this case about what they will need to communicate orally. The students' responsibility and autonomy are stimulated at the time they are asked to decide on the topics of the tasks and to elaborate them, always thinking on the different types of intelligence and learning styles they can find in their future classes, in order to give a special attention to the diversity of students they are going to work with. At this time, they are going to apply the knowledge the PC 401 education course outline is asking them to learn just from the theoretical point of view, so that when putting into practice that theory they are constructing new knowledge, considering their previous experience in their already developed teaching practice

and the knowledge they have on environmental issues from the Geography courses, as well as, their previous linguistic abilities.

The Socio-cultural theory of Vigotsky (1931) and his ideas of the Proximal and Potential Development Zones support here the stimulation of the learners' autonomous learning at the university and once they are graduated. This theory also provides the basis for the relation between thought and language (Vygotsky, 1982) and its importance for the teaching and learning of a language, the role of education in the development of each personality and the fact that learning becomes significant for the learners because it arises from their social activity; that is why, it is necessary to develop the learners' oral communicative competence about topics related to their future professional activity. The theory of verbal activity of A. A. Leontiev, 1981 (cited by Faedo, 1988) is very important for the proposal, since it holds how in this communicative activity in the classroom the learners interact; this allows to have a cooperative learning activity and a participatory process, being the lecturer a facilitator. From the linguistic point of view the notion *communicative competence* is derived from the critics made by Hymes, D., (1972), mainly to the concepts of *competence* and *performance* provided by Chomsky, N., (1957) in his book *Syntactic Structures*, who identified *linguistic competence* to *communicative competence*. Studies realized state that the concept of *communicative competence* goes further than the knowledge of the linguistic aspects and that it should be understood as the capacity to know what to say, to whom, when to say it and how to say it, that is, it goes to the use of the language (Acosta, 1994; Lomas, 1992; cited by Montero, M., 1998). On his part, Cano E., (1993) defined the *communicative competence* as the ever growing capacity of using the language efficiently in different contexts and with different educational purposes. About this concept, in his book *Profesor en Acción*, Arno Giovannini et al (1996), state that *communicative competence* is the group of linguistic, psychological, cultural and social rules, necessary for an individual to use the language adequately in each situation. Accordingly, all this tells teachers and lecturers that the level of the students' and learners' communicative competence should be assessed according to the use they make of the language depending on the context or communicative situation. In this experience the context is the learners' future Geography lessons and the topic is about environmental issues. Pedagogically, it is relevant to remind that, according to Giné, (1995) with the access to the schools of all persons, of students of different backgrounds, with different capacities, different learning styles, motivation and pace in learning, diversity at schools is not new. For her what is new is the intention of educating those diverse classes since it does not only imply to consider, diagnose and tolerate the individual differences, but also to take them as points of departure within the teaching learning process. For the Humanists the students are individual beings, completely unique and different from the others and in the academic activity this singularity or special nature of the students should be respected and fostered (Ramachek, 1987; cited by Faedo, 1988). As a result, differentiated instruction should be fostered at schools in all types of education, to give students an opportunity to reach their individual potential, to have success. In differentiated instruction students are placed at the centre of the teaching and learning process. In this process the students have the right to be taught in a personalized way according to their learning needs; that is why, it is important to consider their types of intelligence and learning styles. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences proposed in 1985 includes: Linguistic, Bodykinaesthetic, Spatial, Logical-mathematical, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, and Naturalistic types of Intelligences. Logical/Mathematical Intelligence is the ability to use reason, logic and numbers. These learners think conceptually in logical and numerical patterns making connections between pieces of information. Always curious about the world around them, these learners ask lots of questions and like to do experiments. The skills and strategies employed are problem solving, classifying and

categorizing information, working with abstract concepts to figure out the relationship of each to the other, handling long chains of reasons to make local progressions, doing controlled experiments, questioning and wondering about natural events, performing complex mathematical calculations, working with geometric shapes.

Visual/Spatial Intelligence is the ability to perceive the visual. These learners tend to think in pictures and need to create vivid mental images to retain information. They enjoy looking at maps, charts, pictures, videos, and movies. Skills and strategies of this type are employed by the persons having this type of intelligence: puzzle building, reading, writing, understanding charts and graphs, a good sense of direction, sketching, painting, creating visual metaphors and analogies (perhaps through the visual arts), manipulating images, constructing, fixing, designing practical objects, interpreting visual images. Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence is the ability to use words and language. These learners have highly developed auditory skills and are generally elegant speakers. They think in words rather than pictures. Some of the skills and strategies employed are listening, speaking, writing, storytelling, explaining, teaching, using humour, understanding the syntax and meaning of words, remembering information, convincing someone of their point of view, analyzing language usage. Bodily/Kinaesthetic Intelligence is the ability to control body movements and handle objects skilfully. These learners express themselves through movement. They have a good sense of balance and eye-hand co-ordination. (e.g. ball play, balancing beams). Through interacting with the space around them, they are able to remember and process information. Within this intelligence the skills and strategies are: dancing, physical co-ordination, sports, hands on experimentation, using body language, crafts, acting, miming, using their hands to create or build, and expressing emotions through the body. Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence is the ability to produce and appreciate music. These musically inclined learners think in sounds, rhythms and patterns. They immediately respond to music either appreciating or criticizing what they hear. Many of these learners are extremely sensitive to environmental sounds (e.g. crickets, bells, dripping taps). Various skills and strategies are employed by people having this intelligence: singing, whistling, playing musical instruments, recognizing tonal patterns, composing music, remembering melodies, and understanding the structure and rhythm of music. Interpersonal Intelligence is the ability to relate and understand others. These learners try to see things from other people's point of view in order to understand how they think and feel. They often have an uncanny ability to sense feelings, intentions and motivations. They are great organizers, although they sometimes resort to manipulation. Generally, they try to maintain peace in group settings and encourage co-operation. They use both verbal (e.g. speaking) and non-verbal language (e.g. eye contact, body language) to open communication channels with others. The skills and strategies employed here are: seeing things from other perspectives (dual-perspective), listening, using empathy, understanding other people's moods and feelings, counseling, co-operating with groups, noticing people's moods, motivations and intentions, communicating both verbally and nonverbally, building trust, peaceful conflict resolution, establishing positive relations with other people. Intrapersonal Intelligence is the ability to self-reflect and be aware of one's inner state of being. These learners try to understand their inner feelings, dreams, relationships with others, and strengths and weaknesses. Intrapersonal intelligent people make use of the following skills and strategies: recognizing their own strengths and weaknesses, reflecting and analyzing themselves, awareness of their inner feelings, desires and dreams, evaluating their thinking patterns, reasoning with themselves, understanding their role in relationship to others.

The Naturalistic Intelligence is related to the recognition and appreciation of the natural world around us. It involves such capacities as species discernment and discrimination, the ability to recognize and classify various flora and fauna, and the knowledge of and communion with the

natural world. On this same line, it is of paramount importance for this research that learning style refers to a preferred way of learning. There are different classifications of learning styles, the following is one of the most widely used and the one this lecturer has worked with the learners in the classroom, so that they used them for the elaboration of the tasks: Visual (spatial): the person prefers using pictures, images, and spatial understanding. Aural (auditory-musical): the person prefers using sound and music. Verbal (linguistic): the person prefers using words, both in speech and writing. Physical (kinaesthetic): the person prefers using your body, hands and sense of touch. Logical (mathematical): the person prefers using logic, reasoning and systems. Social (interpersonal): the person prefers to learn in groups or with other people. Solitary (intrapersonal): the person prefers to work alone and use self-study According to the prevailing learning styles there are also different classifications of types of students; however, there are three major types of learners: visual, auditory and tactile /kinaesthetic (Gardner, 1985).

Visual Learners learn through seeing. These learners need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. They tend to prefer sitting at the front of the

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