Improving Speaking Fluency of Tertiary level students through Communicative Approach

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Abstract

In recent years, the communicative approach is trending in second language learning. Communicative language teaching is more often student centered approach, because learners play a vital role in the classroom. This study aims to enhance the speaking fluency of tertiary level learners, because fluency is the base in language learning. A learner can correct his errors, only when a learner speaks. This study help the learners to identify their own learning difficulties and researcher suggests possible ways to solve their problem. The researcher has chosen Communicative approach for this study. The researcher has used qualitative method to study this problem. The study concluded that speaking activities has reduced the anxiety of the learners and improved their confidence level.

Keywords: *Fluency, video recording, anxiety, confidence*

Introduction

Speaking fluency is a primary skill in any language, because it is essential for an individual to have a pleasant conversation. Speaking is not just uttering the words, but it should make sense to the receiver. Second language learners find it difficult to speak a sentence. Fluency in a language gives a confidence the speaker, so this study aims to develop the fluency of second language learners. Fluency phase can also be called as Production Phase.

Objectives

1. To improve the oral fluency of the learners
2. To promote confidence to the learners
3. To enhance the vocabulary of the learners

Significance of the Study

This research focuses on improving speaking fluency of the tertiary level vernacular medium students learners may have good vocabulary knowledge and grammar, but they find it difficult to communicate with others.

First aspect of this study is to boost up the confidence level of the learners. They should not feel shame or gets frightened to speak in second language. Learners should feel free to share their thoughts or information in .

Second aspect of this study is help to prepare learners for public speaking. Drafting a speech is a beginning step in a public speaking, so learners should be able to prepare a speech. This study helps learners in drafting a script for the presentation.

Third aspect of this study is to help students in enhancing their vocabulary. Through the speaking activity, learners expose to lot of words. Learners can learn high number of words through

Delimitation of the Study

This study encourages the learners to communicate fluently in target language. Fluency is the primary focus, but accuracy is also concerned in this study.

Research Questions

Can Communicative Approach improve speaking fluency?
Can learners speak meaningfully in a context?

Review of Literature

Gholamhossein Shahini and Fatemeh Shahamirian (2017) have studied speaking fluency among different level of learners. He adapted qualitative analysis and found that age was major factor in language learning. He said that the education system had not developed learners speaking fluency and they didn't get an ambivalence of learning English. In addition, impact of mother tongue is a barrier for language learning. He suggests teacher should create a

learning atmosphere for the students and they should motivate the learners to speak in target language.

Yun, Xiao (2016) have discussed the importance of course design to improve oral fluency. He says that reading ability is a base to improve oral fluency; in addition literary texts can be used as the study material to improve reading skills of the learners. Different strategies of reading should be implemented in language classroom and teachers should make use of language games to enhance the speaking fluency. In addition, it creates an opportunity for learners to enhance their oral fluency. He also suggests that sharing a feedback between learner and learner can support the language learning.

This research is a kind of an activity, where learners get a chance to share their ideas with their own classmates. The students speak English in a formal situation. and helps the learners in job market because fluency is a important to grasp an employment in a contemporary society.

Methodology

The researcher has adapted the communicative language teaching methodology for this study. The researcher felt that CLT is an appropriate method to improve the speaking fluency of the learners.

Harmer (2001) has described the characteristics of communicative Approach. A communicative activity should have following criteria.

(i). Communicative tasks should provide a desire to communicate
(ii). Communicative tasks should provide a purpose to communicate
(iii). Learners should focus on meaning rather than form
(iv). Learners should provide freedom to use the language
(V). Intervention of teachers are not allowed

Method
Materials
Video recorder, paper and pen

Activity
The students are allowed to choose any topic for the speaking activity. After deciding the topic, students should frame the written script for the activity. Then, learners should video record their speech in a mobile. The video should run for four minutes. Each learner should submit two speech videos to the teacher. After the submission, learners should present the same speech before the class.

Participants
The study was conducted in English for life skills course. The researcher has taken 15 students for this study. They belong to Department of Economics, Loyola College, Chennai. In schools, their language of medium is Tamil.

Pre Test
Researcher gives a common topic to all the students. Students are allowed to prepare a speech draft. Each student has given two minutes to speak before the class.

Post Test
Researcher has interviewed participants of the study and collected the feedback of the learners. Learners shared their problems, experience and outcome of the activity.

Data Analysis
The researcher has chosen qualitative method like participant observation and interview to analyze the data

Learner's Problem
Anxiety
In the Pre test, learners faced anxieties like fear, etc. They didn't speak more than two words. Some learners couldn't frame a sentence. Learners look dull and frustrated and they couldn't communicate effectively. Words got stumbled and voice was not audible to the audience.

Increase in Pauses
There was lot of pauses in learners speaking activity. Learners took lot of time to speak in target language. They struggled to recollect the ideas and to present in front the class. Learners struggled to frame the sentences.

Poor Eye Contact
Learners were not confident to face the audience. Their eyes contact was rolling in all comers of the class and the focus is not in a fixed position. They looked at the top and bottom of the class and so the audiences were not ready to listen to the presentation.

Use of Mother Tongue
In the beginning stage, mother tongue influence was high. Learners were not confident to speak in target language.

They tried to speak in native language, but later they managed to speak in English.

Methods Adapted to Solve the Problem

Researcher has adapted several methods to solve the problems in this study.

Pair Task

Learners were separated into the pairs. Each learner should share the feedback with another partner. Learners were allowed to evaluate the fluency of his partner. One learner finds out mistakes of his partner and corrected it. This method is known as Learner-learner feedback. It was proposed by Tony Lynch in his book Communication in the Language earners Classroom.

Guidelines to the Learners

The researcher helps the learners, in framing a written script for the speaking activity. He guides the learners, in the introductory part, greeting the audience and introducing the topic and in the final stage, summarizing the topic. The researcher gave the inputs to the learners. This method has shown an effective result in this study.

Effectiveness of speaking activity
Motivation

Learners were highly motivated because they never bothered about the number of audience. They spoke whatever came to their mind and didn't worry about committing the errors. They felt comfort to express their ideas and spoke for more than four minutes.

Vocabulary Enhancement

Learners have spoken large number of vocabularies in their presentation. They managed to replace a word with another word in a sentence. The pronunciation of words needs a improvement and it also sense to the audience. Learners can recollect large amount of words in a speaking activity. In pre test, learners face a difficulty to frame a sentence but in the presentation, they built the sentences and spoken effectively.

Coherence

There was coherence in the presentation of learners. Learners logically connected one sentence to another sentence. Learners express their opinions in a simple language and audiences were able to understand it. The language of learners is at acceptable level and the communications make sense to the audience.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The researcher concludes that speaking activity has shown a slight improvement in the fluency of Tertiary level second language learners. The learners are capable to speak fluently in target language. Motivation is an important factor and it helps the teacher to reduce the anxiety of learners. There are few suggestions for further research. Grammar should be concerned in speaking actives. The activities should incorporate the accuracy and fluency. Activities should not be conducted in a traditional classroom, because the atmosphere should create a comfortable zone for the learners. Teachers should be a role model and a motivator to the students. Speaking Activities should be framed for a long term of study.

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