

The Skill Based Challenges of Language Learning, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

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Abstract: The four major skills of language learning, **listening, speaking, reading and writing** provide the right key to success. Teaching of English language while ensuring focus on all these four skills provides a platform for the learners to hone their proficiency in this language well.

I. INTRODUCTION

LSRW

Language is never learnt. It is acquired. If one want to acquire language, he/she should follow natural way of learning things. See how we learnt our Mother Language (MT/L1). As a child, we 'Listened' language spoken around us for 3 years. At the second stage, we 'spoke' in broken words and sentences for couple of years. At the third stage, we 'read' some picture books. Even alphabets were remembered as pictures. It is only in the last and fourth stage that we learn to 'write'. Thus, to say, L-S-R-W is natural way of acquiring language.

- L stands for Listening
- S stands for speaking
- R stands for Reading
- W stands for writing

Communication skills have a great impact on the success of an individual. A person's ability to stand apart in a crowd is more often than not determined by his/her communication skills, even so more with his/her proficiency in English language. Be it career or relationships, the harsh truth in today's global scene is that the future of any person is affected strongly by his communication skill in English.

The four major skills of language learning, listening, speaking, reading and writing provide the right key to success.

Teaching of English language while ensuring focus on all these four skills provides a platform for the learners to hone their proficiency in this language well. An ideal programme for teaching-learning of English as a second language would involve content for all the above mentioned four skills. Yet, it is observed that somehow the reading and writing skills are given more importance over the other two skills.

Ideally, listening and speaking should take prominence over reading and writing when any language is being learnt. The benefits of naturally acquiring language can be enhanced phenomenally when the opportunity to listen to and speak in the target language is accelerated.

Content designed specifically for providing ample teaching material is important for this purpose. Digital language learning labs with audio based content allow the learners to listen

to authentic and appropriate sounds of the target language, in this case English. This helps them with listening to the right pronunciation of words and with ample access to audio based passages and articles.

This intensive listening ultimately helps the learners to pick up the exact pronunciation of words. Listening to a lot of audio based articles also allows the learners to understand the spoken language even when the pace of speech, accent or tone varies. This proves beneficial for them in the real world, where the control over such factors is minimal. Good digital language labs like the **Words Worth English language lab**, also allow the learners with practice on intonation and voice modulation, vital to good communication skills.

These and other paralinguistic attributes like voice quality, volume and tone, articulation and pronunciation, offered by digital language labs enable the learners to improve their speaking skills and thus express fluently in English.

Reading and writing are skills normally addressed amply in a regular and an average classroom scenario. Yet, when taught with a teaching-learning emphasis on inferring the meaning of the context, it actually coaches the learners to deduce meaning of any unseen text they may face in future whether it be in audio or in the written form. Skimming texts and reading and understanding of textual materials could be introduced in the classroom to acquire effective reading skills.

Writing skills may be improved through giving exercises on composition and creative writing. Learners should be encouraged to arrange their thoughts on a giving topic or composition. The importance of sequencing their thought groups should be shown to them to bring cohesiveness and coherence in their writing.

A. Listening

Listening is a receptive language skill which learners usually find the most difficult. This often is because they feel under unnecessary pressure to understand every word. The listener has to get oriented to the listening portion and be all ears. The listener is also required to be attentive. Anticipation is a skill to be nurtured in Listening. In everyday life, the situation, the speaker, and visual clues all help us to decode oral messages. In due course of listening, be in a lookout for the sign post words. Thirdly one should be able to concentrate on understanding the message thoroughly. Listening Skills could be enhanced by focusing on making the students listen to the sounds of that particular language. This would help them with the right pronunciation of words. To equip students with training in listening, one can think about comprehending speeches of people of different backgrounds and regions. This intensive listening

will ultimately help a student to understand more on the accents to be used and the exact pronunciation of words.

B. Speaking

Language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well. We must take into account that the level of language input (listening) must be higher than the level of language production. In primary schools elocution and recitation are main sources to master the sounds, rhythms, and intonation of the English language through simple reproduction. The manifestations of the language in games and pair work activities are encouraging source to learn to speak the language. This assists the learners to begin to manipulate the language by presenting them with a certain amount of choice, albeit within a fairly controlled situation. This skill could be improved by understanding para-linguistic attributes such as voice quality, volume and tone, voice modulation, articulation, pronunciation etc. This could also be further enhanced with the help of debates and discussions.

C. Reading

Reading is a learning skill. It helps you improve all parts of the English language – vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and writing. It helps to develop language intuition in the corrected form. Then the brain imitates them, producing similar sentences to express the desired meaning. Using skimming or scanning technique to read quickly is highly effective. While reading underlining of key words is a must. Reading Skills help the students grasp the content and draw conclusions. The students should also make it a point to familiarize themselves with the jargons and new words by making reading a habit be it reading newspapers, articles, books, magazines etc

D. Writing

Writing provides a learner with physical evidence of his achievements and he can measure his improvement. It helps to consolidate their grasp of vocabulary and structure, and complements the other language skills. It helps to understand the text and write compositions. It can foster the learner's ability to summarize and to use the language freely. To write flawless language one should excel in the Writing Skills with the help of various methods. Importance should be given to composition and creative writing. One should also focus on coherence and cohesiveness when it comes to writing a language.

With these four skills addressed equally while learning English, the learners can be assured of having good communication skills, a great necessity in today's competitive world.

CONCLUSION

With these four skills addressed equally while learning English, the learners can be assured of having good communication skills, a very great necessity in today's competitive world.

Communication skills have a great impact on the success of an individual. A person's ability to stand apart in a crowd is more often than not determined by his/her communication skills, even so more with his/her proficiency in English language. Be it career or relationships, the harsh truth in today's global scene is that the future of any person is affected strongly by his communication skill in English.

WORK CITED

- [1] <http://www.englishmate.com/blog/developing-four-essential-skills-listening-speaking-reading-writing/>