

TEACHING LISTENING TO MIXED-ABILITY CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

This paper is devoted to explore various listening materials and tactics that can be utilized to teach English more useful and engaged learners in mixed-ability classes. First of all, general terms and their meaning, how to teach listening by using integrative way, the point of views of the scientists on this topic and problematic situations then, some types of helpful tactics and strategies are given to engage every differentiated level students, how to take into account their interest and their learning methods to suit their listening activities.

KEY WORDS: teaching listening, heterogeneous classes, engage learners, effective method, receptive skills, learning methods, materials, diverse complexity, strategy, monitoring.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching foreign languages by using integrative methods is modern teaching method in this contemporary society. Unlike traditional methods which is grammar translation, teaching every aspects of languages such as, receptive and productive skills is the modern approach to teach languages. Teaching listening skills is one of the most challenging and offer patience from learners. Unlike other skills, it does not have any rules or specific tasks to improve the skill. For instance, grammar and writing have their own rules to learn and improve. But it does not mean that there are not ways to develop your listening skills[1]. But it is challenging to quantify for learners. Any group of learners are mixed-ability classes, heterogeneous classes, their capability of learning, background knowledge are differentiated from each other. Because it depends on their interests, abilities, learning methods and genes. First of all, to teach effectively and engaged every learner, teachers must check their background knowledge on this language for teaching any aspect of the language. By this way, they can inform every student's interests, abilities and learning methods and prepare their approaches, materials according to their learning methods. To teach mixed ability classes, instructors take the material for all groups' level then adapt it to every students level.

For explaining the topic , engaging every student to the lesson, teacher must adapt materials by clarifying or simplify them according to their levels and learning methods. It facilitates them to engage every student and improve efficiency of the lesson. For instance, podcasts, TED talks , interviews and dialogs is the main materials for teaching listening, but how to make them more attractive and more efficient depends on the teacher.

MAIN BODY

Listening is challenging and crucial in learning a language .Because it is spoken language part,so it is acquired by more practice and time-consuming than other skills. While listening, learners decide that they have not understood what they are telling.At that time, they persuade that they are unable to understand spoken English and make troubles for themselves[2]. The key to succeed in listening skills that it is Ok not to understand. Another important key is that it is used to teach multilevel students to listen English as often as possible, but short periods of time[3]. Teachers must encourage them to watch a film or cartoon, to listen TED talks and dialogues time to time.Doing them usually, help the learners to develop listening skills. The listening is developed by practicing. Firstly, it is practiced by short and easy videos and films, but at that time anything is not understandable for learners after some months, their results is seen . Listening is vital skills “it enables language learners to receive and communicate with the language input and give the chance to improve other skills “(Vandergrift&Goh,2012) [4]. According to their views, listening is crucial because it facilitates to understand oral speech, interact with the english language and their speakers orally, by this way, it helps to develop other receptive and productive. Because it aids language learners to understand the target language ,simultaneously to improve proficiency in the language(Richard, 2005).It is clear that without understanding the language , to make progress in the learning is difficult.Because of importance of listening , listening materials must involve the need in comprehension simultaneously, acquisition (Richards,2005)[5]. Field states that listening is one principal of language means by listening, learners improve their spoken knowledge in the target language[6].

The term “mixed-ability” and “heterogeneous class” is used to a class which students vary according to their mother language, learning styles and age but are together in one group. In this article, it means to demonstrate different level students in proficiency .High achievers and low achievers are like two sides of one coin.

According to the fact that most EFL classes are multilevel classes.In teaching these classes, teacher have some challenges : firstly, how to engage different level students , next one is what kinds of listening materials would be beneficial to diverse ability classes’ learner. Drawing on suggestions of Hess and Ur in teaching english to mixed ability classes ,it is believed that the problem can be resolved by utilizing

multilevel tasks with the same coursebook-provided input materials[7] [8].Bell states that teachers can assign students to "different tasks to varying complexity, but choose a task that allows everyone to contribute to the same finished product"[9]. According to these point of views, teachers can utilize the coursebook materials which is diverse complexity. According to their levels , the instructor must simplify or clarify these listening materials , in other words, teachers must adapt it to these classes to engage and attract students' attention . If these tasks were complex and confusing, it would result in disappointing students from listening skill and tiresome lesson. Richard advises teachers to "improve diverse level tasks with the same listening texts[10]. The primary responsibility of listening , teachers in mixed-ability classes is to guarantee that some learning occurs by making an effort to include every student in the process through task differentiation and adaptation.

It takes a deliberately strategy to teach listening skills in mixed ability classes because all students have the chance to improve their listening skills and meet a variety of learning requirements.Also, their levels and learning strategies are differentiated from each other. Before teaching these classes, instructors must take into account their proficiency level and learning methods. There are some tips and methods that are useful in engaging and teaching mixed ability classes: varied listening activities and materials which provide a selection of listening resources differentiated in difficulty. These may be podcasts, TED talks, audio recordings, or interviews. These type of diverse materials help to engage all students. Pre-listening activities are also crucial in creating students get ready for the listening tasks. This could provide important language, talking about the subject or make predictions about what will be covered in the listening material. Checking comprehension which ensure our understanding what we are hearing, strategically pause the audio at key moments. This makes it possible for every student to keep track of their comprehension and offers chances for clarification when necessary.Teachers pause the audio to check and monitor their understanding also give the opportunity to clarify their needs. Another method is giving differentiated tasks which is based on ability of the students. For instance, advanced pupils may be asked to explain the main concepts while others may be asked to identify specific details. Visual support is another key listening material which provide visual aids or transcripts especially for visual learners who can gain knowledge by seeing the information that has been heard aloud. Helpful techniques: peer pairing is one of the most crucial technique which helps to students support each other by pairing varied ability learners.This helps them to work collaboratively simultaneously, the opportunity to work and support stronger students with their peer.

Vocabulary support is the next helpful technique which teacher give the key vocabularies and glossaries before giving listening task to aid students comprehend the listening material more effectively. The next one is post listening discussions. It

encourages students to ask questions , express their comprehension, and reflect on the material through post-listening discussions. Every student has the chance to participate and make a contribution. Assessment is also important in students' success. Teacher must provide individualized feedback to support every student's listening development .This may involve constructive feedback on particular listening techniques as well as guidance for development. Self- evaluation and reflection is very crucial to improve their listening skill. Assign students to evaluate their own listening abilities and consider their areas of strength and improvement.Because this gives students the freedom to be responsible for their own education. By establishing these strategies and taking into account every student's needs in mind, teachers can create a supportive and inclusive learning atmosphere where every student have the opportunity to improve their lisatening skills, regardless of ability. Dornyei states that there are three useful and successful tactics teacher use to develop to learners . They are:

Give students several chances to succeed in language class.

Tasks should be modified from difficulty ones to easy one to match the students abilities ; challenging assignments should be balanced with easier ones.

Create assignments that highlights students' abilities rather than their limitations and offer opportunitiesfor development.

These concepts appear to be particularly relevant to teaching listening in mixed ability classroom. As an instructor, teachers must provide diverse opportunities rather than only one , this may give a chance to improve their language skills and motivate them.Also, teachers must design the tasks and tests according to their developments and previous topics , because it motivate learners to learning, rather than new unknown topics. Teachers must change the tasks to students' ability.

CONCLUSION.

To conclude, we can say that, because of aids to develop and comprehend oral speech and other skills, listening is vital, simultaneously it is difficult to comprehend the foreign language's oral speech rather than written language. To teach listening to the class, it demands full of energy from teachers because it is more challenging rather than other skills and their levels are varied from each other. To engage every learner to the lesson, it takes a lot of effort from the teacher because every material should be adapted to the levels of each student. Teachers must use diverse interactive methods and tactics during the lesson.

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