

PRACTICAL-BASED TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION IN EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

It is obviously clear that, due to the requirement of foreign language competence in every sphere of society, the degree of learning foreign languages such as English has been increasing for a decade. In this case, modern language teaching pedagogy is expected to provide students with a more effective, interesting, and easy way to achieve language competence. Teaching English pronunciation is in high demand as a productive and receptive skill, but it is extremely difficult for non-native speakers. This paper aims to describe pronunciation skills and some effective techniques for developing pronunciation in learners.

Keywords: L2 class, pronunciation, teacher, student, technique, role play

INTRODUCTION

In learning foreign languages, learners pay attention to speaking and writing to express feelings and thoughts, as well as reading and listening to understand the texts or speakers. Nonetheless, a fifth important skill is required: pronunciation. Pronouncing words is the first step to utilizing the language in oral communication in a real-life atmosphere. When the learners have good pronunciation in speaking or reading, they feel confident and motivate themselves, whereas incorrect pronunciation influences the learners' learning process and might cause them to avoid using the language while communicating. Of course, teaching unmotivated students is difficult for teachers as well. In this case, teachers assume responsibility and design their lessons with adaptable, interesting, and instructional methods and techniques to improve students' pronunciation. In the following, descriptions of pronunciation, its role in language teaching and learning, as well as ways of improving it, will be discussed with analysis.

METHODOLOGY

Cook (1996, as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016) defined pronunciation as the production of English sounds. According to Yates (2002, as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016), pronunciation is the production of sounds that are used for making meaning.

Pronunciation is learned by repeating sounds and correcting them when they are produced incorrectly. In spite of learners' good grammar or other skills being acquired, incorrect pronunciation remains their weak point. Good pronunciation is considered one of the key points of good speaking skill, interaction with people, and self-confidence, which are essential in real life. Therefore, scholar Morley (1991) emphasized that learners develop functional intelligibility and functional communicability. increased self-confidence, speech monitoring abilities, and speech modification strategies. Some teachers witness that if the learner can speak like a native speaker, he or she can learn the language easily and faster because they feel themselves as native speakers, develop their self-esteem, and even monitor themselves when speaking.

According to Yates and Zielinski (2009), much attention to English pronunciation indicates that pronunciation has a key role in learning English. If teachers don't present the general rules and principles toward comprehensible pronunciation to their EFL learners, nobody will certainly do it.

Additionally, scholar Hismanoglu (2006) stated that "pronunciation instruction is very important for oral communication." It is also a significant part of communicative competence. Although the role of English pronunciation is important in the English language, many teachers do not pay enough attention to this important skill.

RESULTS

The problems of pronunciation instruction have been demonstrated by some researchers. Morley (1991) said that "it is necessary for teachers to teach English pronunciation in ESL and EFL classes, although many teachers do not pay attention to it in their instruction." There are billions of different kinds of internet sources, websites, models, and books to enhance L2 pronunciation in EFL and ESL classes. Also, some productive techniques are designed, adapted, and adopted to achieve this goal by scholars and instructors. The task of teachers is to conduct these techniques correctly and motivate students to learn L2 pronunciation.

In traditional classrooms, teachers utilize reading aloud, imitation (repeat after me), articulatory exercises, or minimal pair activities (this versus these). However, some techniques should be exploited in L2 classes to develop pronunciation. one of them with the help of technology. Instructional technologies, including audio, video, software, and internet resources, are valuable tools to enhance instruction. Audio recordings are important to correct and teach pronunciation. It can allow students to listen to multiple

pronunciation models, monitor pronunciation, and receive real-time feedback. For example, “Forvo” is a user-generated pronunciation guide in which native speakers submit audio clips of themselves saying certain words or phrases. You can look up a word, learn its definition, and listen to how different people from different places say it. There are also pronunciations for whole sentences and phrases as well! Forvo is well-liked because real people are the ones speaking the words. You can also see how certain speakers are ranked in their pronunciations; the ones with the most likes may be the ones you should focus on. Because the audio submissions can come from all over the world, you can listen to how the same word is said in different regional accents. The importance of this will be discussed in more detail later on.

In addition, drama techniques, especially role play activities plays a crucial role for pronunciation development in L2 classes. Larsen Freeman explains that “role plays are important in the communicative approach because they give learners an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and different social roles.” Role –play activities involve in interaction, collaboration and self –confidence of learners by performing in different roles (sales assistant, manager, doctor –patient, teacher, friends) in stage. It can allow students to perceive peer correction, self –correction and especially create a friendship atmosphere in the classroom that can correct their pronouncing words, phrases or sentences randomly and slightly.

DISCUSSION

According to Morley (1991), teachers do not teach but rather facilitate learners' learning of pronunciation. The role of teachers is like that of a coach, a speech coach, and a pronunciation coach. The pronunciation coach has the critical role of checking and guiding modifications of spoken English at two levels: (a) speech production and (b) speech performance. Using specially created apps, video-audio materials, movies, and short clips has a significant role in pronunciation teaching and learning. Because they are created by native speakers and learners are facilitated how is the real pronunciation. They are easy to remember and repeat together. Furthermore, teaching pronunciation should be a long-term, step-by-step, efficient process that remains in learners' minds indefinitely.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be noted that pronunciation should be viewed as more than the correct production of individual sounds or words. Exploiting various techniques and activities such

as technological tools and drama activities in L2 classes is essential to cultivate pronouncing words correctly. In this case, teachers should take responsibility for their shoulders and support their students. Also, students ought to try to avoid their pronunciation mistakes as much as possible and follow instructions.

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