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Ways of making students fluent speaker

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Abstract

This study focuses on find the ways of making students fluent speakers. This study involves different parts as: introduction, a brief information about the students' problems that why they cannot speak fast. Literature review, different ideas of various authors about fluency. Analyzation, which talks about the problems and lack of fluency. Teaching solution, this part focuses about the ways that make students fluent speaker. Suggestion, in this part we have suggested some ideas for having better speech. Final the conclusion part which rephrase the whole study.

Keywords: Making students, fluent speaker

Introduction

The aim of this study is to find better ways for having students speaking fluency. Because, I am teaching conversation of sophomore English class I have found some difficulties about students speaking skill. Most of them cannot speak fluently; even they cannot use more vocabulary in their speech. When I went to the class at the begging of the semester I asked them to introduce themselves. Some of them introduced themselves at least about three minutes, but most of them were not able to speak. I asked them to write their expectation in my subject. So they wrote and asked me to find the ways that should help them to be fluent speakers in the future. Also, they requested me to make them to talk in the class as much as possible.

So, in preparation for this essay first I asked myself how to find the ways to help them to become fluent speakers of English language in the future. And in this essay I have mentioned some ways to help my students to be fluent speakers when they make speech or to speak. Next, my classroom experiences encouraging fluency in my students have convinced me that I can only help my students become fluent in the future, not just in one semester. After I have inflamed and restructured my view of the components of language and my thought of what fluency means. In more detail before students can ever have any chance at refining their fluency, teachers must enlarge their traditional restrictions of accuracy to offer rules of appropriacy including: knowledge of the communicative language tools students must be able to use the communicative language choices they should be able to make, and they must use to compensate for the fact that they, like all users of the language including native speakers, lack complete knowledge of the language. As I am teaching this class of speaking, I ask my students to talk, they talk with more problems. For example, they cannot talk at least for ten minutes fluently and they have much pause during their speech, also they cannot use correct words in their speech.

Literature Review

There are many possible ways that make students to be fluent speaker in English language. Firstly, person can speak fluently, if he/ she know the structure of the sentences that how they should use it rather than usage of it is grammatical points. As Hartmann and Stork (1976) ^[3] mentioned "A person is said to be a fluent speaker of a language when he can use its structures accurately whilst concentrating on content rather than form, using the units and patterns automatically at normal conversational speed when they are needed" (p. 86). But in my classes most of my students do not know how to use the structures in the sentences to speak it. Also students need to practice more on their speaking, because practice make them perfect and they will work on some daily words and phrases. Second, Fillmore (1979) ^[4] notion of fluency is limited to oral productive language.

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Since fluency may not be limited to oral productive language. It means that person should talk until should produce sentences and words to learn the language.

Richards *et al.* (1985, p. 108) ^[6] define fluency as follows: "the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions." They further point out that, in second and foreign language learning, fluency is used to characterize a person's level of communication proficiency, including the following abilities to:

1. Produce written and/or spoken language with ease.
2. Speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, and grammar.
3. Communicate ideas effectively.
4. Produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication. (Richards *et al.* 1985, pp. 108-109) ^[6]

Analysis

There are many reasons that students cannot speak fluently:

1. **Lack of pronunciation:** Most of the students do not know sounds such as: sounds of vowels, diphthongs, and consonants, especially those that are different and a challenge for most English language learners especially in speaking classes. They do not know about stress, also they are not familiar with rhythm and intonation that how they should bring pause in their speaking time.
2. **Lack of grammar** (expanded to include utterances and discourse rules)
3. **Lack of vocabulary:** Most of the students do not know a lot of word or their meanings.
4. **Lack of practice:** Most of the classes are like a traditional teaching that the entire time teacher speaks and do not give chance for students to talk.
5. **Lack of listening:** Mostly in classes there are not listening activities for the lesson teaching.
6. Students do not know difference between accuracy and fluency.
7. **Psychological Problems:** Like home problems, mental problem, and situational problems.
8. **Lack of dare or courage:** Most of the students are shy and cannot take part in the lessons. As I have teach in this class I have found most of students that are intelligent, but they shy to come in front of the class and talk about his/her lesson. Most of them are good listener and understand the lesson but cannot convey the idea of the lesson in English. As Leathwood (2003), speaks of the pervasiveness of the 'shame' inherent in gender, race and class, where to be working class is to experience the constant fear of never getting it right. For Leathwood these feelings are not personal failings but rather she relates them to the pathologising of the 'other' within the 'systems of oppression' of an unequal society, exacerbated by the myths of meritocracy and classlessness that pervade all social systems, including our education system.
9. **Lack of self- confidence:** Some students usually say that the lessons are difficult we cannot learn and we cannot speak as the native speakers. And they do not believe in their abilities. They rely on others ideas and speeches rather than themselves. As Jeffers (1987) argues that most of the students do not believe how to say something, how to do it, be careful, maybe it will be

wrong. Also, he mentioned that these things cased them to think that they are inadequate and they cannot speak well.

10. **Lack of motivation:** Students do not pay attention how to find the ways to speak; mostly the teachers do not motivate or stimulate them to take part in the class and to talk. They do not repeat the lesson and are not interested to talk much. So, they are not intrinsically motivated to because they do not know how to think and to practice something when they want to do it.
11. **Lack of repetition:** Most of the students do not repeat the lesson or speeches when they learn or listen. As I have seen in most of the classes when students read their subjects in the class, they think that we have learned it. After that they do not repeat it when they go home, so it cause that they forget the lesson and have not good effect on their learning process. For example, when the teacher talks in the class they do not take not to repeat it many times to speak about.

In Afghan classes most of the students have the ability to talk, but they afraid of making mistakes and they do not talk. So, they think if we made mistakes our teacher will get angry and it will cause to be insult in the class. But, the others think if we say something incorrect, it is better to do not talk. So, these problems make them to do not talk fluently. As Evolutionary psychologists (such as Baron-Cohen, 1997) argue that fear, anxiety and even depression are a legacy of evolution. When an animal is on unfamiliar territory it is in danger of its life, hence a fear response is a survival mechanism. Unfortunately, as human beings we also have consciousness and consequently an awareness of our own fear that can inhibit us in ways that would never be true of an animal.

Some students do not trust on their abilities. And they think that they are not able to do it and are not intrinsically motivated to do something. They are just encouraging themselves that we are not able and we cannot think about something accurately. The other problem that I found with my students is that when they are in the class they speak English, but when they go out of the class they do not speak any more. So these problems cause them to do not be fluent speakers.

Through teaching ways and strategies of learning a language we can teach our students how to speak fluently without having any pauses in their speech. As Lennon (1990, p. 388) ^[5] says that the term fluency is used in two different ways in the literature, what he calls its broad and narrow meanings. The broad definition operates "as a cover term for oral proficiency," which "represents the highest point on a scale that measures spoken command of a foreign language" (p. 389). The narrow definition of fluency is that it is "one, presumably isolatable, component of oral proficiency. This sense is found particularly in procedures for grading oral examinations..." (p. 389).

According to Richards *et al.* (1985, p. 109) ^[6] fluency "refers to the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently". It means that should have the ability to write correct sentences according to the grammar. I do not agree with their idea, if we know the grammar and we use it in the sentences it can help us to put the sentences in correct ways, but when we make correct sentences we must have the ability of speaking as well. Because when we talk about fluency it is separated

from the accuracy. And we should not just focus on the writing of the accurate sentences we should focus how to speak fluently.

Traditionally, accuracy has been taught not only in grammar, as suggested by Richards *et al.*, but also in vocabulary and pronunciation. Of course, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation would be included in the concept of grammar if Richards *et al.* were using the all-inclusive concept of grammar. However, I am honestly sure that is not what they meant, and will therefore have to come back to the issue of grammar in the context of fluency teaching. In general, however, I feel that fluency can best be understood, not in contrast to accuracy but rather as a complement to it. As Brumfit (1984) phrased it, "In no sense is it (accuracy) meant to imply that fluent language may not also be accurate language."

Teaching Solution

In order to make students fluent speaker and to solve their problems I suggest the following solutions:

1. For solving students' problem and for making them fluent speakers, teachers should teach them differences between L1 and L2 in how facial expressions, eye movements, eye gaze, head movements, and hand gestures are used.
2. Teach the differences between L1 and L2 in distance, touching, and posture during conversation.
3. Make students familiar about differences between L1 and L2 in the pragmatic rules of conversation in different contexts and situations, as well as the rules related to the relationship between speaker and listener.
4. Explain the differences between L1 and L2 in how stress, intonation, and voice quality are used to affect meaning
5. The importance of reduced forms in comprehending native English speech
6. The importance of schwa in English pronunciation
7. The importance of word stress and syllable timing to native speaker comprehension of non-native speech
8. The importance of using and understanding utterances (rather than complete sentences) in spoken English
9. The multiple meanings of words
10. Idioms as important elements of vocabulary in English
11. Informal vocabulary like swear words and expletives in English

In teaching fluency, teacher must be willing to let go of some of the control in his/her classrooms; teacher must be willing to let the students have some of the control and let them do some of the work; and must be willing to set up situations in which fluency can develop, and then encourage the students to actually communicate. I'm not saying that we need to teach fluency all of the time, but I am saying that some of the time students need a little guided communication time during which their knowledge of the many aspects of the language can develop into fluency.

Unlike language knowledge, fluency is about automatizing the language knowledge. As Schmidt (1992)^[7] said, "Fluent speech is automatic, not requiring much attention, and is characterized by the fact that the psycholinguistic processes of speech planning and speech production are functioning easily and efficiently." Such automaticity can only occur when the students themselves are trying to use their language knowledge to actually communicate, and we can

only help the students become fluent by creating opportunities for them to practice communicating and then stepping out of the way.

Besides explaining the above information I will use some practical tasks and activities in my class with my students to make them fluent speakers in the future. For example, I will use activity of talk on task and whole class talk which is said by the Bygate (1996).

1. **Task talk:** As all know that we often tend to think of oral communication tasks as designed to encourage unscripted creative talk, around some information, whether verbal or non-verbal (i.e., pictorial, realia, diagrammatic, or some type of chart). However as Bygate (1996) suggested here, our concern is not simply to stimulate talk, but to find ways of structuring it so that constructive repetition is encouraged. In fact, the structure of many familiar tasks already involves degrees of built-in repetition. These are grouped below into two sets, which I will here call "external repetition" and "internal repetition." "External repetition" is repetition where the task requires students to repeat their talk to different students. "Internal repetition" is repetition which is encouraged by the demands of processing the input material and/or of preparing the intended task outcome.

A. External repetition

1. **Survey tasks:** according to Bygate (1996) "survey tasks" are any tasks which require students to circulate around their class gathering information from colleagues in order to compile a group profile. The structure of tasks such as these in fact requires the students to ask many classmates the same set of questions. This is a simple example of in-built repetition. Although the wording is unlikely to change, as suggested in the preceding discussion; repeated enactment of the same questions is likely to lead to improved fluency.
2. **Card games:** Various oral activities are structured around sets of cards, with one student holding a card, while the others have to guess or ask questions about the card, or respond to what the student holding the card says. Each student takes it in turns to draw the card to set off a round of talk. Each round of talk is likely to be structured similarly, around the rules of the game. Hence each successive round is likely to lead to re-use of some strategies, changes or additions to them, with students borrowing strategies and formulations from each other. This is expected in turn to lead to improvements in the fluency and accuracy of students. That is, a "round" is at first strategically structured, and useful structures are then re-used, as students build on their experience of previous rounds.
3. **Poster carousel:** Working in pairs, students prepare a poster on a topic. Posters are posted on the walls around the room, with one student going off to visit and ask questions about the other posters, while the second student stays and hosts visitors from the other pairs. Each visitor will be expected to ask questions of the host, so that given that the posters define the content, each host will have repeated practice in talking about the same content, to different people, leading naturally to constructive repetition.

4. Pyramid (or “snowball”) tasks: Pyramid tasks are of course quite well known: students explore a topic initially in pairs, and then meet up with another pair to develop their account of the topic, the group of four then joining another group of four, to refine their ideas, leading to a plenary session. One of the purposes of this design is to encourage and support constructive repetition in order to build up students’ fluency.

B. Internal repetition

1. Picture stories: Distributed picture stories (that is, activities where each member of a group can see a different picture from a story) typically first involve speakers in describing their pictures, so as to situate each picture in relation to the rest of the set. The task can orientate them towards repetition, since particularly if the story is difficult to sort out, students will be led to repeat the narrative in order to check it, and potentially to ensure everyone is able to re-tell it if asked. In addition, where a large number of pictures are involved, or where the set includes a series of very similar pictures, there is likely to be a fair degree of repetition of the descriptions. In the former case, this is because it is hard to hold large amounts of information in working memory – participants are going to need reminding who holds which picture. In the latter case, repetitions are encouraged by the fact that sequencing depends on being able to identify the differences between the pictures, so that if several of the pictures are very similar the descriptions are likely to need repeating (Bygate, 1996).

2. Picture and map differences tasks: According to Bygate (1996) picture differences tasks typically involve managing three important types of information: location, identification, and description. Location itself requires both use of prepositions, and the identification of reference points (e.g., on the table, north of the forest), and some of these are likely to be repeated, with prepositional phrase constructions being widely used. Identification involves naming, or the use of strategies to negotiate reference: and the inclusion of a lot of referents which students are not easily able to name could lead to repeated use of negotiation/communication strategies. Descriptions will tend to take the form of various kinds of noun modifiers and constructive repetition may be motivated where subcategories of referents are needed (a major road, a minor road, a footbridge, a railway bridge). Making the task of identifying differences deliberately problematic is likely to lead to extended discussion of what is in the pictures and/or how to say it. For example the teacher might deliberately provide pictures for which students do not have all the vocabulary, leading them to have to negotiate understanding; or the pictures may contain a large number of distracting elements or ambiguous material.

3. Prioritizing tasks: A number of tasks have been designed which give students a set of options to consider and priorities’ in order of importance, preference, urgency, moral significance, and so on. Tasks like this are likely to encourage repeated use of expressions of opinion, and of justificatory comments, and depending on the design of the task can also give rise to repeated comparisons.

4. Problem-solving tasks: By problem-solving tasks I am referring to tasks which pose conceptual or logical puzzles and which are deliberately intended to engage learners in talking through the nature of the problem, identifying potential explanations, and evaluating them before arriving at a preferred solution. A well-known example is the famous problem of how a farmer can cross a river by boat, with a dog, a rabbit and a lettuce if he can only get two of them into the boat at a time (though note that this may need “taskifying” if the material is to be used to generate interactive discourse). Other more real world examples might involve students in explaining why particular roads in a given town carry more traffic than others; working out the best location on a map for a new factory, hospital or housing, given a number of important sometimes competing criteria; or providing an explanation for the different rates of growth of three potted plants, or for what it is that causes a hole in a punctured tyre to create bubbles when put under water. Tasks such as these push learners towards constructive repetition to the extent that they are led in to checking that they have described the situation correctly, and checking and reviewing the proposed solutions in order to identify the best one.

As I got information from above activities, I can say that a characteristic of tasks with “internal repetition” is that this type of repetition depends on pressure on the individual students to manage the information content, and to be able to present and/or explain the outcome to the teacher and class at the end of the group work. In other words, repetition here is a likely product of pressure on them to manage the different phases of the task and to make students to be able to speak fluently, because they repeat their speech in working of each activity.

If I am right, covering some or all of these solutions will not only provide students with tools they will need to increase their fluency in English, but will also make the classes more interesting for the students, in fact, much more interesting than the standard triangle of traditional pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Schmidt (1992) ^[7] describes fluency as an automatic procedural skill. According to him, L2 fluency is a performance phenomenon which "depends on procedural knowledge [citing Faerch and Kasper, 1984], or knowing how to do something, rather than declarative knowledge, or knowledge about something."

Suggestions

In order to make students fluent in speaking I suggest them some ways to follow them those ways will make them fluent speakers in the future. First, they should be confidence, because having confidence changes our emotions and we feel stronger when we speak English. Next, beside studying English vocabulary, listening, and speaking you must also study your own psychological roles. It means that when a student want to learn a language must know that various language choices are based on psychological roles - role differences that students need to understand especially if those roles are different in their culture. You must learn how to manage your emotions. Because, it is very important in speaking that we should control our feeling during speaking. For example, when we talk we should talk with confidence and without thinking about making mistake. Then, do not afraid of making mistakes, because mistaking gives you the

chance to work hard on and achieve your goals. As Brown (1996) said, "A student who is afraid to make errors won't make errors, and a student who won't make errors won't become fluent. For many students, this may mean learning to take chances in ways that they have never done before." I do agree with his idea, because the learning environment plays a part in the fear factor. Human beings do learn by trial and error. If the learning environment feels over-threatening, the student will not want to make mistakes and open themselves up to blame: they may give up rather than reveal their mistakes to aggressive study. The lesson we can learn as academics is to make the learning environment a safe one for all our students: a space for trial and error, for learning from mistakes and we must reassure students that we have done so. The students have to realize that they will get things wrong – quite often – but if they work to learn from these experiences they will learn more. You must learn how to develop inner strength and confidence. Furthermore, develop your motivation, because motivation gives you the feeling to learn more and to work hard on vocabularies and on pronunciation. In addition, use any resources you can do better your English language skills. Doing research in your native library will help to strengthen your fluency, and you should use your learning in to good ways. It means, when you get information you should use it in correct way. Finally, always work on groups and with your pairs to have more interactions and discussions about the lesson in order to make the lesson easier and to talk about fluently.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I can say that in this background essay I have found many useful tips to help my students to be fluent speakers. So, the first steps of being fluent speaker are to practice more on speaking and on using vocabularies. Second, it is very important to focus more on the listening, because it will help you to know about the native speakers' speech. Also, it is very essential to know the difference between L1 and L2. In addition, in order to teach for the students be fluent speaker we have to make them to learn more words and expressions that face with in their daily life's, and to make them to talk as much as possible. And, teachers can promote fluency by doing five things in their classrooms: encouraging students to go ahead and make constructive errors, creating many opportunities for students to practice, creating activities that force students to focus on getting a message across, assessing student's fluency not their accuracy, talking openly to the students about fluency.

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