

The Role of Teaching English Language in promoting learners' Speaking Skill

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ABSTRACT

The English Language is a live and international language which is the most popular conversational language. According to the experts' view, the main goal of teaching foreign language is communicating, subsequently; the goal of learning the English language must be increasing and promoting the speaking skill. In this article, it is attempted to investigate the role of teaching English in promoting speaking skill of learners whose mother language is Persian. This is carried out by proposing questions as: 1) Is the English language selected in order to develop and promote the speaking skill? 2) Does teaching the English language is effective in creating an attitude towards learning and also learning independently? 3) Does teaching the English language promote the learners' tendency to probe and search and create critical attitude? 4) Does teaching the English language create the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners? 5) Does teaching the English language emphasize the general concepts and ideas in order to facilitate understanding partial contents? Next, by conducting studies through the survey and library research and applying instruments such as note-taking and questionnaire the necessary data were gathered among 107 samples. Then, the data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics and finally the conclusions and suggestions were presented according to the given data.

KEY WORDS: Teaching the English Language, Speaking Skill, Learners.

INTRODUCTION

For long time, foreign language is subsumed in lesson planning of different countries as an instrument for communicating with other nations. Now, at the beginning of the third millennium, teaching foreign language specially the English language has become important by fast and daily development of science and technology. The development of science and technology and its economical, political and military effects increased the importance of teaching and learning foreign languages moreover in today's world. Today, nations need more to teach foreign languages in order to keep their country independent.

Learning and mastery over a foreign language opens a new door of other worlds to us which helps using other nation's achievement and making others aware of our findings. Furthermore, learning a foreign language helps human intellectual growth: "Language mediates our thoughts and actions" (Sadeghian, 1984).

In Iranian schools, the focus is more on teaching the English language compared with other foreign languages and most of the students of the country select English as the foreign language. Teaching this language starts from second year guidance and continues to the end of secondary school. Also, at universities at least some courses are allocated to English in all majors. What should be attended in this issue is that for teaching English, many humane forces are required to activate and enormous cost need to be spent, students who are the most valuable assets of the country spend many hours to learn English and despite these costs and other free and private classes, the efficiency of all these physical and human capital and precious time is very little at the end of secondary school and even after that. The results are not favorable as expected and the students are not successful after many years learning English, so that according to the announced statistics 300000 exam candidates scored zero from English in 1991 (Esmaeel lu, 1994).

According to all the above, the analysis of teaching English on the basis of assigned goals and principles of teaching methods is a necessary and obligatory issue even with exact and perfect contents of the books. Without observing the goals of English language, i.e. four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) and also principles of teaching methods, it is not possible to carry out research and remove the problems and shortcomings which were discussed above about English language.

Statement of the problem

Learning is a complex internal activity in which one's active participation is considered to be important. For this reason, incorporating the principles of an active teaching methodology in a teaching learning process seems to

be crucial. Implementing natural stimuli is either nonsense or only applicable in simple learning. This is because learning is a purposeful active process which is dependent on comprehensive range of thinking activities and skills.

On the other hand, today the range of available information is so vast that one hardly can use them. This necessitates a teacher who moves away from giving speech and transferring information neglecting its applications. Thus, a teacher should focus on strengthening learners' thinking skills and independent reasoning and learning. A teacher should help learners reach a desirable level of thinking and comprehension according to their level of knowledge. Teaching is not giving speech but an external process consisting of logical disciplined steps which is implemented by a teacher to speed up learning process. When a learner uses one's eyes, ears, tongue (language), and hands, the results are more desirable.

A learner should be active in the learning process and the content should be selected according to learner's level of comprehension and readiness. New learning content should be based on the previous content to strengthen the previously acquired knowledge and basically increase independent learning (Soleymanpour, 2001). Language learning skills encompass four skills; that is listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills listening and speaking are primary and reading and writing are secondary.

In some language teaching methods oral skills are primary because they are more active and motivate learners. However, in some other methods written skills are more important since their assumed learners are not in contact with oral forms of language. Totally, the common methods of language teaching focus on both oral and written skills since both are considered to be necessary and learning one can reinforce the other ones. This paper aims at studying the role of teaching language skills on the level of speaking skills.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this paper is to identify the role of teaching the English language on promoting speaking skills. The main questions of this study are:

- 1) Is the English language selected in order to develop and promote the speaking skill?
- 2) Does teaching the English language is effective in creating a view towards learning and also learning independently?
- 3) Does teaching the English language promote the learners' tendency to probe and search and create critical attitude?
- 4) Does teaching the English language create the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners?
- 5) Does teaching the English language emphasize the general concepts and ideas in order to facilitate understanding partial contents?

The population of the study consists of 350 students of English passing their courses at Teacher Training Centers of Mazandaran in the academic year of 2011-2012. Thirty percent of the populations, that is, 107 students were selected based on cluster sampling procedure. The data were gathered via library research method and field research. The instruments consist of note-taking, databases and a questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistical procedures were applied to analyze the data. The answers of 3 or above were considered to be the basis of further inferential analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS:

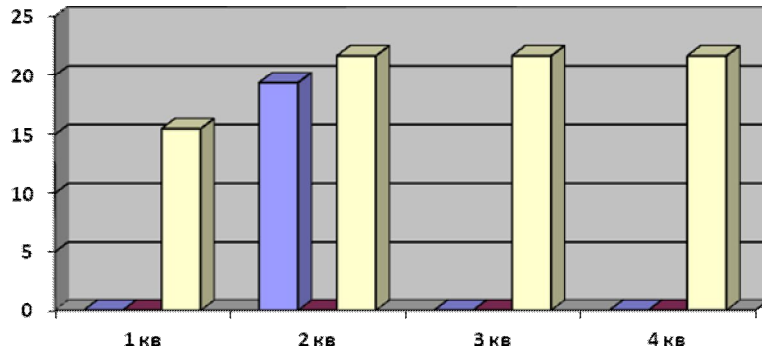
- 1) Is the English language selected in order to develop and promote the speaking skill?

Table 1: the frequency and percentage of students who answered questions 4, 5, and 6 of the questionnaire

<i>spectrum</i>	<i>very much</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>average</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>Very little</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>frequency</i>	23	23	23	21	17	107
<i>percentage</i>	21,7	21,7	21,7	19,38	15,51	100

As it is shown in table 1, 21.7% of the sample selected average, very and very much, 19.38% selected little and 15.51% selected very little.

Graph 1: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question one)



Since the observed mean is 3.13 and it is more than 3, it can be concluded that teaching the English language is influential on promoting speaking skills.

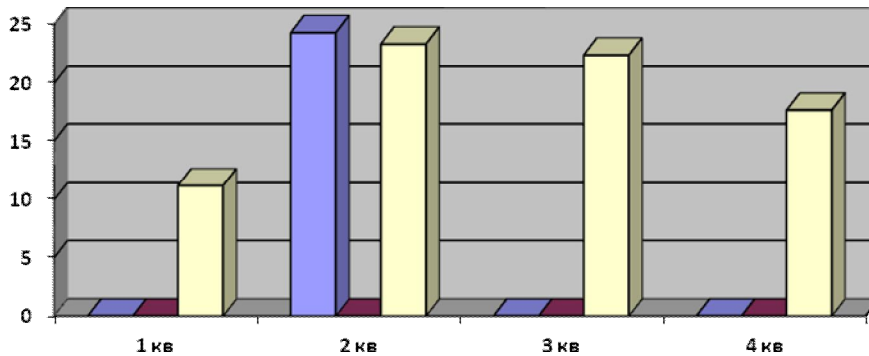
2) Does teaching the English language is effective in creating a view towards learning and also learning independently?

Table 2: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question two)

<i>spectrum</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>average</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>Very little</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>frequency</i>	20	24	25	26	12	107
<i>percentage</i>	17,69	23,36	24,31	24,31	11,21	100

As it is shown in table 2, 17.6%9 of the sample selected very much, 23.36% selected very , 24.31% selected average and little and 11.21 % selected very little.

Graph 2: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question two)



Since the observed mean is 3.13 and it is more than 3, it can be concluded that teaching the English language promotes learners attitudes to leaning and independent learning.

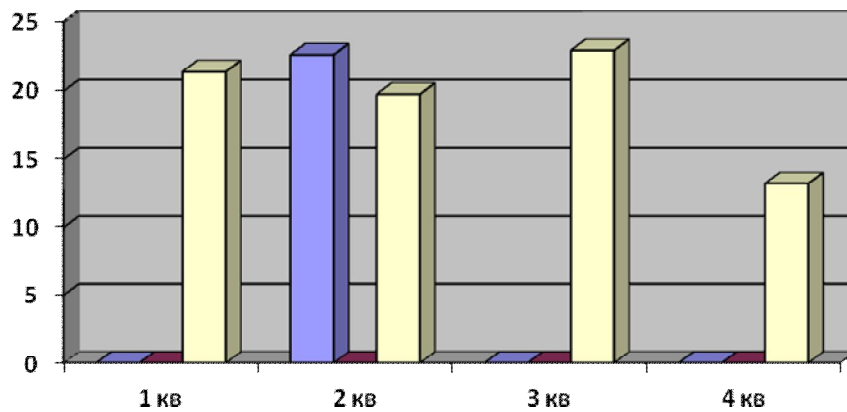
3) Does teaching the English language promote the learners' tendency to probe and search and create critical attitude?

Table 3: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question three)

<i>spectrum</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>average</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>Very little</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>frequency</i>	23	25	21	24	14	107
<i>percentage</i>	21,39	22,63	19,84	22,95	13,18	100

As it is shown in table 3, 21.39% of the sample selected very much, 22.63% selected very, 19.84% selected average and 22.95% selected little, and 13.18% selected very little.

Graph 3: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question three)



Since the observed mean is 3.17 and it is more than 3, it can be concluded that teaching the English language promote the learners' tendency to probe and search and create critical attitude.

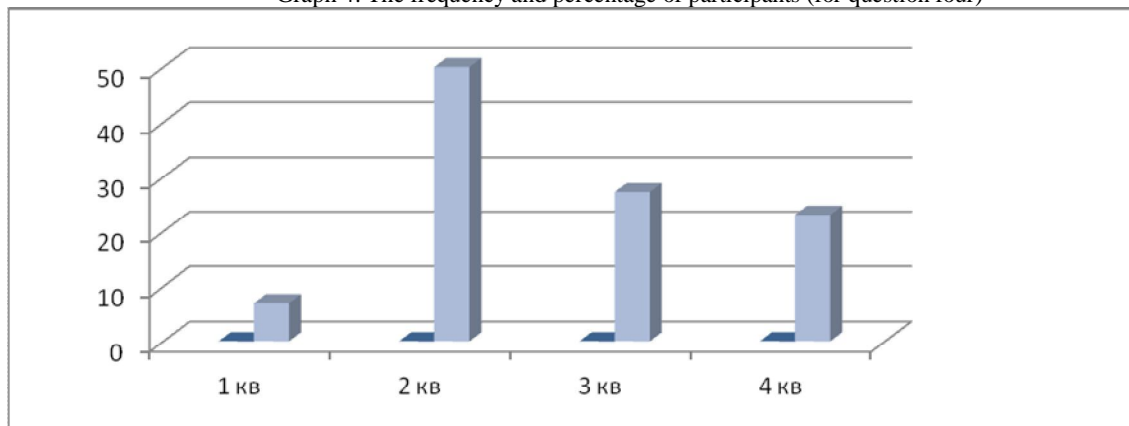
4) Does teaching the English language create the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners?

Table 4: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question four)

<i>spectrum</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>average</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>Very little</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>frequency</i>	24	23	29	23	8	107
<i>percentage</i>	23,03	20,7	27,21	20,69	6,97	100

As it is shown in table, 4. 23.03% of the sample selected very much, 20.7% selected very, 27.21% selected average and 6.97% selected little, and 6.97% selected very little.

Graph 4: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question four)



Since the observed mean is 3.29 and it is more than 3, it can be concluded that teaching the English language create the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners.

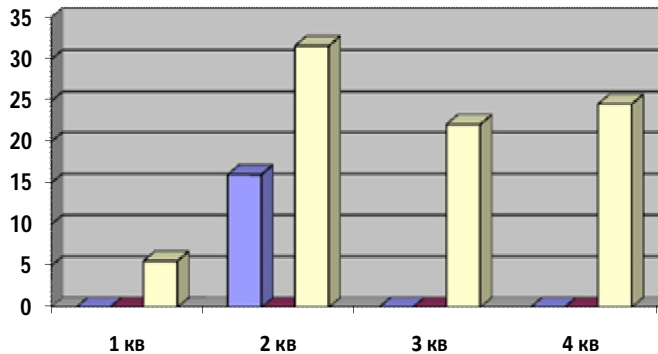
5) Does teaching the English language emphasize the general concepts and ideas in order to facilitate understanding partial contents?

Table 5: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question five)

<i>spectrum</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>much</i>	<i>average</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>Very little</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>frequency</i>	26	24	34	16	7	107
<i>percentage</i>	24,65	22,09	31,63	16,04	5,60	100

As it is shown in table, 5. 24.65% of the sample selected very much, 22.09% selected very, 31.63% selected average and 16.04% selected little, and 5.60% selected very little.

Graph 5: The frequency and percentage of participants (for question five)



Since the observed mean is 3.73 and it is more than 3, it can be concluded that teaching the English language emphasize the general concepts and ideas in order to facilitate understanding partial contents.

Inferential Analysis:

The following is the inferential analysis in order to determine the difference and similarity of the relationship between the students’ attitudes and the research questions’ significance.

- 1) Since the value of observed Q-square, 18.54 (.05 probability level), is larger than the value of Q-square in the table (9.94) with 4 degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis, i.e. no similarity between the students’ attitudes, is rejected at the level of confidence 95%. Generally, it can be concluded that teaching the English language methods are effective in order to develop and promote the speaking or verbal skill.
- 2) Since the value of observed Q-square, 27.4 (.05 probability level), is larger than the value of Q-square in the table (9.94) with 4 degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis, i.e. no similarity between the students’ attitudes, is rejected at the level of confidence 95%. Generally, it can be concluded that teaching the English language methods are effective in creating an attitude towards learning and also learning independently.
- 3) Since the value of observed Q-square, 19.2 (.05 probability level), is larger than the value of Q-square in the table (9.94) with 4 degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis, i.e. no similarity between the students’ attitudes, is rejected at the level of confidence 95%. Generally, it can be concluded that teaching the English language methods promote the learners’ tendency to probe and search and create critical attitude.
- 4) Since the value of observed Q-square, 34.51 (.05 probability level), is larger than the value of Q-square in the table (9.94) with 4 degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis, i.e. no similarity between the students’ attitudes, is rejected at the level of confidence 95%. Generally, it can be concluded that teaching the English language methods create the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners.
- 5) Since the value of observed Q-square, 22.41 (.05 probability level), is larger than the value of Q-square in the table (9.94) with 4 degrees of freedom; therefore, the null hypothesis, i.e. no similarity between the students’ attitudes, is rejected at the level of confidence 95%. Generally, it can be concluded that teaching the English language methods emphasize the general concepts and ideas in order to facilitate understanding partial contents.

Conclusion

This article under the topic of “The Role of Teaching English Language in promoting learners’ Speaking Skill” has been conducted through a questionnaire which was answered by students and then the gathered data were

analyzed through descriptive statistics calculations and applying inferential statistics (Ki-square). Finally, according to the obtained results through answering the research question, the following suggestions are presented.

- 1) The process of teaching and learning the English language has a remarkable effect on the promotion of speaking skill. Such that in a class room, issues such as: answering to the questions, summarizing a text, and producing simple sentences by the learners may play an important role in developing the speaking skill.
- 2) The process of teaching and learning the English language in order to encourage the speaking skill is very influential in making an attitude towards learning and promoting independent learning.
- 3) The process of teaching and learning the English language in order to encourage the speaking skill considers significantly the desire to study and probe and creating a critical attitude among learners.
- 4) The process of teaching and learning the English language led to the creation of the sense of responsibility and active cooperation among learners in the learning process and promoting speaking. Also, the similarity between the answers of the students to the research questions was significant and approved.
- 5) The process of teaching and learning the English language in educational centers in order to encourage the speaking skill emphasizes significantly understanding the minor contents and the relationship between the constituents and the whole contents by the learners. Also, the similarity between the answers of the students to the research questions was significant and approved.

Suggestions

In this part, some suggestions are presented to the whole elements of the English language, both teachers and learners on the basis of the research findings:

- 1) The process of teaching language should be designed so that the learners have the ability to produce simple sentences like answering reading comprehension questions, summarizing the text, using the given grammatical points during performing speaking functions and also the process should increase the learner's ability to ask or answer a question in order to solve his/her problem.
- 2) According to the findings, it is suggested to design the process of teaching language so that the teachers present many examples in order to increase their motivation to learn speaking skill. Furthermore, the teacher directs the students towards independent learning by playing the role of a guide or an advisor in the class. They can increase the learners' motivation by clarifying the educational goals at the beginning and using verbal encouragements.
- 3) Designing teaching the English language should be so developed that the learners become familiar with scientific facts and plan the research bases according to John Duee 's idea: teaching is research and research is a problem-solving technique. Consequently, according to this view, critical thinking will be created in the learners.
- 4) It is suggested that in the process of teaching and learning the English language, the learner himself should participate and cooperate in order to promote his speaking and verbal skill and also a higher sense of responsibility and commitment will be created according to the interaction between the learner and the teacher and the degree of the learner's involvement with the teaching content.
- 5) On the basis of the findings, it is suggested that the process of teaching the English language should be so formulated that the teacher directs the learners towards understanding the partial contents through the general key concepts and through this helps creating a comprehensive and general-oriented thinking among learners and finally producing the speaking skill.

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