Using ICTs in Promoting EFL Learners' Oral Skills

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Abstract

The current paper aimed to investigate the importance of using information communication technology in EFL and its role in enhancing teaching oral skills. To fulfill the objective of the study the researcher used the descriptive analytical approach. Finally it is concluded that, using ICTs have many benefits in teaching and learning EFL specially in the field of oral communication as it provides EFL students with the required aids and method to practice oral skills.

Keywords: oral, communication – ICT (information communication technology)

Introduction

Alonso (2013) argues that, the importance of understanding and applying information and communication technologies (ICT) is fundamental for the development of people in our current society. Each day ICTs are used more often for information, studying, entertainment and work, or access to services offered by telematic means. Therefore, it becomes a priority to secure access to technological media (infrastructure, hardware, software and internet in particular) as well as the knowledge, management and application of ICT tools.

The use of ICT in the English class extends beyond its motivational value to address key outcomes of the syllabus, and allow students to become competent users as well as consumers in English. As an interactive and collaborative medium, ICT allows responding, composing, and publication to be easily shared and offers students the opportunity to explore the language of texts more creatively and develop as speakers, writers and readers for an ever widening range of purposes and audiences. ICT can enable students to:

- Access information and respond to a widening range of texts
- Organize and present information in a variety of forms

- Broaden the range of audiences for their work
- Compose a widening range of texts for a broad range of purposes
- Compose for real audiences. ICT can support them in their choice of genre for audience and purpose.
- Identify key characteristics and features of text
- Develop understanding of language and critical literacy (Becta,2006,ICT in the Curriculum)

Using ICTs in Education

The direct link between ICT use and student's academic performance has been the focus of extensive literature during the last two decades. ICT help students to their learning by improving the communication between them and the instructors (Valasidou and bousiou:2005). Another objective is that students who learn with ICT are scored better than students who learn without it, according to Kulik's (1994) meta-analysis study revealed that, on average, students who used ICT-based instruction scored higher than students without computers. Students also learned more in less time and liked their classes more when ICT-based instruction was included. Fuchs and woessman (2004) used international data from the program for international students assessment. They showed that while the bivariate correlation between the availability of ICT and students performance is strongly and significantly positive, the correlation becomes small and insignificant when other student environment characteristics are taken into consideration. ICT especially computers and internet technologies enable new ways of teaching and learning rather than simply allow teachers and students to do what they have done before in better way.

ICT also allow for the creation of digital resources like digital libraries where the students, teachers and professionals can access research material from any place at any time (Bhattachary and Sharma, 2007; Chlin, 2005). Such facilities

allow the networking of academic and researchers and hence sharing of scholarly material. Harris (2004) concludes that the benefit of ICT will be gained " ... when confident teachers are willing to explore new opportunities for changing their classroom practices by using ICT."

ICT in EFL Classes

ICT uses in general terms is any use of " computing device such as desktop computers, laptop, handheld computers or internet ... for instructional purposes" (Hew and Brush, 2007 p.225). However, more specifically it refers to the use of technology by teachers for instructional preparation, instructional delivery, and technology as a learning tools For students (Inan and lowther, 2010).

An over view of the developmental history of CALL (Computer-assisted Language Learning) shows that, ICT tools have been actively and widely used in language classes from the initiation of computers into the world due to the fact that language teachers have always been the pioneers of using innovative teaching tools in their classes Amiri (2000) .

The history of CALL consist of three distinct phases, i.e. behavioristic, cognitive, and interactive CALL, each of which characterized with both a certain level of computer technology including main frames, PCs, and multimedia technologies and specific language learning and teaching approaches including behaviorism, cognativism and constructivism Warschauer (1996). Coincidental with the development of the technology and second acquisition (SLA) research EFL teachers have utilized ICT tools for teaching and learning purposes. (Beatty & Nunan: 2004) states that:

"they also used technological tools such as PCs, Laptop, or mobiles in the classroom for instructional delivery very effectively and frequently. learning application prepared by teachers/students or commercially produced ones such as drills, tutorial

and computer-based tasks are used in the classroom to promote collaborative learning of English skills"

Furthermore, EFL teachers used computer-mediated communication (CMC) or software as a tool for making authentic and meaningful communication Mahfouz and Ihmeideh (2009), in this way technology can provide learners with arrange of authentic materials and tasks that have expositive influence on their autonomy.

In the current educational system in Catalonia the study of at least a foreign language is compulsory from the age of 6 years, however, the introduction of a foreign language may be allowed and carried out at previous ages. In Catalonia English as a foreign language constitutes a core curricular area both in Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO) and in Post-Compulsory Secondary Education (Batxillerat). Regarding vocational Training the study of a foreign language is compulsory in certain areas. The acquisition of the ability to communicate in a language which is different from the native language is the main reason which justifies its inclusion in the Curriculum in almost all educational levels of the Catalan System. Despite this basic instrumental function, in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages the Council of Europe highlights and stresses those aspects related to the learner's upbringing: "Learning a language is a privileged process to appreciate and value cultural diversity and one's own identity and to develop a critical and open attitude towards cultural matters".

The Role of ICT in Supporting Oral Skills

For younger learners effective classroom strategies have traditionally involved use of songs, rhymes and traditional stories with repeated language structures. The internet can be a rich source of authentic oral models via recorded songs, talking electronic books, podcasts and video clips that help learners with pronunciation as well as acquisition and

reinforcement of new vocabulary. These tools can also help to support teachers who don't feel as confident with their own language skills. Technology also affords children the opportunity to record themselves for playback at a later time. Learners report that the ability to listen and play back recordings helps identification of grammatical errors and inaccuracy in pronunciation, encouraging self-improvement. Young children can use Flip, or other video cameras to record their mouth movements to develop phonetic accuracy; recordings can subsequently be compared with standard models sourced from the internet. Learning resources, such as songs and poems, can be downloaded from the internet and practiced as a whole class via an interactive whiteboard prior to a live performance that can be filmed for posterity.

Taking a karaoke-style approach, children are able to digitally visualize rhymes and songs through freeze-frame photography, artwork and text based legends that can be synchronized to the words. Audio recorders like talking tins, pegs or cards can be used to reinforce the learning of traditional rhymes or to record the singing of popular songs. Talking photo albums have been successfully used to create stories or non-fiction texts with an oral narrative. Here photos and text can be inserted into each page of the album and the user can subsequently record a corresponding narration.

Recording devices are cheap, portable and simple enough to be used by even the youngest learner, where being able to overwrite recordings multiple times is essential to allow learners to achieve relative success in their oral work. Audio recorders have also been used to encourage reticent speakers to use oral language more openly in the classroom; a child makes a recording in isolation and plays this back in the classroom, validating their voice to their peers Howard and Pim (2007).

Definition of Oral Proficiency

Different sources have been used to establish the meaning of the word “oral proficiency” and their explanations have similar character. However, in this work the word „skill “will demonstrate the meaning of the word proficiency and oral proficiency focuses on the students" oral skill.

Language proficiency refers to the degree of skill or the extents to which learners can use a language to write, read, and speak or understand a language effectively. The concept of language proficiency would likely represent the ability to use competence, so speakers who are regarded as proficient are often characterized as “good” “fluent” “knowledgeable” “competent” and so on, in addition to some other researchers who suggested that oral proficiency determined by vocabulary and grammar, accent and fluency. According to Taylor, (1983:166) the term proficiency designates something like “the ability to make use of competence.” Performance then, is what occurs when proficiency is put to use, competence can be regarded as a static concept having to do with structure, state, or form; whereas, proficiency is a dynamic concept it has to do with the process of function, this shows that language users who know the same language (the static sense of competence) can use this language (the dynamic sense of competence) and, as a result show their proficiency in performance.

So, a general definition of oral proficiency can be given as the learners’ ability to speak, listen, as well as to use English in actual communication with the interlocutors without problems or obstacles, and this implies that there is a close relationship between speaking and listening, these two skills are interrelated since both falls within the oral mode of language. A proficient speaker of English in this case the learner, is the one who effectively asks or responds to questions, understands, expresses his/herself easily and

accurately and tends to interact more with an interlocutor, also is capable of using oral language appropriately and in a skilled way because of practice. Speaking is a fundamental skill that language learners need to master, it is defined as a complex process of sending and receiving messages via verbal expressions. According to Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2000) speaking is the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language, in fact speaking is the most commonly used form of communication. Also, it includes non verbal forms such as: gestures and facial expressions. According to Brown, (2001) speaking is the primary tool for communicating; it involves producing, receiving, and processing information, so it is an interactive process its meaning and form depends on the context where it occurs including participants, their sharing knowledge and the purpose of speaking. Hedge (2000:261) considers speaking as "a skill by which they (people) are judged while first impressions are being formed". This means that speaking is regarded as the most important proficiency that learners of foreign language require in order to be able to reflect upon their thoughts and experiences when they are using the language.

Speaking skills

Hornby (2005) defines Speaking as the act of talking to or having a conversation with somebody. According to Hadfield (2008), this presents the necessity of interaction among people, which is not only "putting a message together" but also the response that the listener can give to the speaker. However, this interaction presents a difficulty for learner of English as a foreign language, since "they need to think of something to say (...) and feel confident enough to try to express it. Then, they have to use what they have learned in terms of vocabulary and grammar to produce a message that other people can understand.

Problems of traditional teaching of oral skills

In traditional teaching the emphasis tends to be on the students doing reading and writing, probably because it seems to keep them quiet and it is easier to organize. Similarly most teachers probably do most of the talking. While the students do most of the listening, with a questionable amount of understanding .

In real life, it is not so easy to separate these four skills, as most language skills are preceded or followed by a different skill. This integration is constant and confusing for language learners to understand and practice themselves. However these teaching guidelines for the skills of language do separate the skills. The main reason for this is to organize learning activities into some order, and to assist teachers in deciding exactly what the aim of their lesson is, and choices, as to how to do it. Each skill is sub-divided into several sub-skill activity, listening, speaking, reading or writing is emphasized, but with other skills an integral part of the activities, as in real life .

The following pages contain at least a hundred different activities. However, it is to be emphasized that they represent a range of possibilities. The students do not have to do all the suggestions, nor in the order represented. As with any Teachers' Guide, it is up to the individual Teacher, in an individual school with an individual group of students, to decide what can be done, in given time with limited facilities. For example, if a text book has a reading passage, by turning to the 'Reading Skills' section, a number of different ways of doing activities involving reading will be presented. Teachers need not feel restricted by these suggestions. Use as many or as few as is felt necessary.

Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. In spite of this, it has traditionally been forced into the background while we, teachers of English, have spent all our classroom time trying to teach our students how to

write, to read and sometimes even to listen in a L2 because grammar has a long written tradition (Bueno, Madrid and McLaren, 2006: 321)

Speaking is generally thought to be the most important of the four skills. Indeed, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still they cannot speak it. There are some language policies, which provide a way to specify what learners are able to do at certain levels with regard to The Common European Framework of Reference for languages, the Portfolio or inside the Curriculum. Teachers should follow them as a way of providing a guideline for their lessons. The CEF describes in detail the different levels that a student can obtain in speaking activities and strategies (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2), these levels refer to things that students can do. Hornby (2005) defines Speak as the act of talking to or having a conversation with somebody. According to Hadfield (2008), this presents the necessity of interaction among people, which is not only "putting a message together" but also the response that the listener can give to the speaker. However, this interaction presents a difficulty for learner of English as a foreign language, since "they need to think of something to say (...) and feel confident enough to try to express it. Then, they have to use what they have learned in terms of vocabulary and grammar to produce a message that other people can understand".

According to Spanish curriculum, one of the objectives explains that learner should be able to: Understand and produce correctly complex texts and messages both orally and in writing in daily life situations, using linguistic and non-linguistic resources in order to get a satisfactory and fluent communication Loe (2007).

There are some basic competences considered essential that should be developed in all subjects of the curriculum. So,

when teachers are preparing a speaking activity, it is suitable to integrate one or more competences at the same time.

For most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language. Nevertheless, “speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills” Bailey and Savage (1994: 7). What

specifically makes speaking in a second or foreign language difficult ?

Brown (1994) labels speaking as the most challenging skill for students because of the set of features that characterize oral discourse:

- Contractions, vowel reductions and elision;
- The use of slang and idioms;
- Stress, rhythm and intonation;
- The need to interact with at least one other speaker.

The most difficult aspect of spoken English is that it is always accomplished via interaction with at least one other speaker and this is one reason why many of us were shocked and disappointed when we used our second or foreign language for the first time in real interaction: We had not been prepared for spontaneous communication and could not cope with all of its simultaneous demands .

Speaking is an “activity requiring the integration of many subsystems...all these factors combine to make speaking a second or foreign language a formidable task for language learners...yet for many people, speaking is seen as the central skill” Bailey and Savage (1994: 6-7)

There are numerous daily life situations where people need speaking, such as talking to someone face to face, communicating through the phone, answering questions, asking for directions, in shops, meetings or chatting with their friends, to name a few. People spend great deal of their time interacting with more people and, each of these situations

requires a different register according to the formality of the moment.

We speak for many reasons- to be sociable, because we want something, because we want other people to do something, to do something for someone else, to respond to someone else, to express our feelings or opinion about something, to exchange information, to refer to an action or event in the past, present, or future, the possibility of something happening, and so on (Lindsay and Knight, 2006: 58)

How to develop Oral Skill

Hadfield (2008) proposes that that teacher can help students to develop their speaking skills by giving them ideas such as asking them to read a text concerning the topic that is being discussed so that students can manage some vocabulary about it. This is also helpful because “it can get students thinking around the topic and stimulate ideas ”.

He also proposes teacher to provide students with what to say by giving them some role cards with an outline or suggestions of what they can say. Moreover, he proposes that tasks should be precise, with a clear goal for students to reach so that students have a clear idea of the outcome of their work .

In order to help student to develop their confidence for speaking, Hadfield (2008) proposes, for example, allow the students to practice in pairs what they want to say so that they will feel more confident to say it in front of the whole class.

To help learners developing fluency, the most useful tool is asking them to speak, presenting different –and interesting – topics or communicational situations for them to express themselves as many times as possible. Another important aspect to consider in the development of speaking skills is the feedback that the teacher gives to students. He/she should avoid “interrupting learners to correct them while they are speaking” because this could mean “that they will not get the chance to develop fluency.” (Hadfield, 2008)

Problems of Speaking Skills

The position of speaking in the hierarchy of language skills has evolved over the centuries. Rather ignored in the Grammar – Translation Method, it became a primary skill in the Direct Method. Audiolingualism brought even more focus on speaking, although the linguistic principle it was based on viewed oral discourse as imitative routine behavior in typical and predictable situations. The grammatical syllabus of the Cognitive Method incorporated activities in all language skills, attaching equal importance to each of them. Finally, Communicative Language Teaching added a more realistic dimension to teaching oral discourse by introducing numerous forms of interaction to the classroom and practicing the language in natural or probable situations which demanded defining of the discourse genre and the roles of participants. Although the contribution of CLT to developing forms of speaking practice in the language classroom can hardly be overestimated, there is a growing tendency among researchers and practitioners to criticize it for its insufficient recognition of the complexity of speaking as a psycho-linguistic process and of placing too strong an emphasis on information gap criterion as leading to artificial or impractical tasks Dakowska (2005) . Nowadays, in spite of the inevitable criticism of available methods, techniques or resources, speaking is generally perceived as the most fundamental skill to acquire. Since the onset of the communicative era it has been treated as the ultimate goal of language training and its proper development has become the focus of attention of both teachers and learners. However, it is also a commonly recognized fact that achieving proficiency in foreign language speaking in classroom conditions is not an easy task. Even advanced learners often finish a language course with the conviction that they are not sufficiently prepared for speaking beyond the classroom. This difficulty results basically from the character

and inadequate frequency of speaking opportunities in the classroom in comparison to the abundance of natural varieties and genres of oral communication. In fact, selecting the most appropriate types of spoken discourse for classroom practice in a particular language course is a very hard decision which, unfortunately, hardly ever reflects the natural occurrence and distribution of communicative situations. Additionally, an advanced language course should create optimal conditions for developing learners' socio-cultural knowledge, that is "the culturally embedded rules of social behaviour" (Thornbury 2007: 31) and their linguistic knowledge, which includes discourse and speech act knowledge, and knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary and phonology of the target language. These knowledge areas must then be appropriately activated in order to be made available for use in regular speaking practice in the classroom and beyond. Importantly, as far as the stages of mental processing involved in speaking are concerned, there is not much difference between native and target languages. Both combine the processes of conceptualizing, formulating, articulating, self-monitoring and negotiating. Yet, the skill of speaking is not automatically transferable from the speaker's first language into the second (Thornbury 2007). Even extensive knowledge of the target language's grammar and vocabulary often presented by advanced students of foreign language departments does not guarantee success in oral communication when this knowledge is not properly integrated or accessed. Problems in speaking may be additionally aggravated by excessive use of self-monitoring processes and a tendency to formulate utterances in the native language first. These mental operations create obvious costs in terms of fluency and may lead to producing artificial discourse. Other problems that are commonly observed in the language classroom are related to individual learners' personalities and attitudes to the learning

According to Penny Ur (1996), the problems related to speaking skill in the language classroom are related to individual learners' personalities and attitudes to the learning :

a) Inhibition Since speaking requires some degree of real-time exposure to an audience, learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom: worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts .

b) Nothing to say: Even if they are not inhibited, students always complain that they cannot think of anything to say: they have no reason to express themselves beyond the guilty feeling that they should be speaking .

c) Low or uneven participation: This problem is compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

d) Mother-tongue use: In classes where learners share the same mother tongue, they may tend to use it because it is easier and they feel less "exposed". If they are talking in small groups it can be quite difficult to get some classes –particularly the less disciplined or motivated ones –to keep to the target language.

Solutions for Learner's Problems

As a mean to solve learners' problems, Penny Ur (1996) proposes that the teacher can take advantage of Group Work to solve some of the problems. This increases the sheer amount of learner talk going on in a limited period of time and also lowers the inhibitions of learners who are unwilling to speak in front of the full class .

Another suggestion is to base the activity on easy language. Language should be easily recalled and produced by the participants, so that they can speak fluently with the minimum of hesitation. It is a good idea to teach or review essential vocabulary before the activity starts. It is also important to make a careful choice of topic and task to stimulate interest. On the whole, the clearer the purpose of the discussion the

more motivated participants will be. A final piece of advice Ur gives is that teachers should keep students speaking the target language, being there as much as possible, reminding students and modeling the language use.

Designing a speaking syllabus depends on several factors, the most obvious being the age and level of learners, the learning context and the aim of teaching. First, it must be defined how much emphasis can be given to speaking within a particular course and whether speaking is to be taught separately or integrated with the teaching of other skills and areas of the language. Secondly, it is essential to choose an approach which defines the teaching procedure. The selection between a task-based approach, a genre-based one or the combination of both types is the most crucial step in designing the course as it influences all the elements of the learning process in progress. Nevertheless, a modern multi-layered syllabus should specify the target aspects of the speaking skill to be taught, as well as the grammar and vocabulary components Thornbury (2007).

A genre-based approach focuses on the notion of the communicative situation which centres around a particular spoken genre or genres. Needless to say, the variety of types of communicative situations is virtually unlimited. As a consequence, the teacher faces the necessity of deciding which situations should be included in the language course he or she coordinates. This selection, however well-thought-out it may be, is always connected with eliminating or ignoring a number of relatively significant situations and concentrating on those which seem most relevant to the particular learning context. The next step is defining the most important parameters of the selected situations, such as the topics, goals, discourse genres, social and cultural norms. The actual teaching procedure starts from establishing the social purpose and cultural context of a given genre, later a typical example is presented and analyzed,

finally learners create their own samples of appropriate communicative events Thornbury (2007: 121)

In contrast, a task-based approach stems from the general idea that “a language is best learned through using it, rather than learned and then used” (Thornbury 2007: 119). Consequently, it is believed that accuracy results from fluency, in other words the need to communicate effectively leads to the refinement of learning and language. A task-based syllabus, then, takes the form of a sequence of integrated tasks which involve speaking and which reflect the situations that learners are likely to meet in real circumstances. Both approaches have their advantages and drawbacks. The task-based approach has been criticized for giving priority to the process of using language rather than focusing on the language that learners actually produce .

The genre-based approach has been considered inadequate as it relies too heavily on imitating models and this is not necessarily the way in which people communicate in real life. It seems, however, that more advanced learners may benefit more from a genre-based framework since it emphasizes the importance of social context, purpose, register and interlocutors' expectations, that is the components of a communicative situation which are seldom covered or analyzed in classrooms at lower levels of language proficiency .

It must be stressed that all oral discourse stems from a communicative intention, that is the speaker has a defined aim which he or she wants to achieve in a particular communicative situation. This situation may require creative thinking and producing a highly personal individualized utterance or relying on automatic reactions in accordance with established social and cultural norms. Yet, in order to implement a communicative goal, a speaker must enable the interlocutor to understand, interpret and evaluate the information being passed. Seen from such a perspective,

speaking seems a very complex activity which combines the processes of intending, planning, constructing and monitoring. Additionally, these operations have to be executed in fractions of seconds according to the demands of communicative fluency Dakowska (2005: 233)

In the light of the above assumptions it may be claimed that ongoing language performance is an extremely significant element in the process of developing speaking skills. In other words, it seems obvious that in order to learn to speak or develop this ability, learners have to speak. As Skehan (1998) claims, a comprehension-based approach is not sufficient on its own, and relying on listening tasks as the only source of language input does not guarantee success in language learning. He underlines the importance of output, that is the actual practice of interactive speaking, and identifies the roles it may play in interlanguage development Skehan (1998: 16–19)

- To generate better input – speaking is used as a signaling device to obtain better input, it enables the negotiation for meaning in the form of clarification requests and comprehension or confirmation checks ;

- To force syntactic processing – being aware that they have to speak makes learners more attentive to syntax while listening, as a result listening tasks become more effective for interlanguage development ;

- To test hypotheses – it should not be assumed that the learner will individually receive relevant information for the specific needs of his or her interlanguage at the right moment, by speaking the learner controls the present state of his interlanguage, tests hypotheses, takes risks and looks for relevant feedback ;

- to develop automaticity – to become effective as a speaker, the learner needs to achieve a degree of ease and a natural

level of speed and rhythm, frequent speaking practice is the only way of acquiring such fluency ;

- to develop discourse skills – speaking practice cannot focus only on “short turns” but it should also give opportunities for taking part in ex-tended discourse, this allows for developing discourse management and turn-taking skills, which underlie the negotiation of meaning in ongoing communication ;

- to develop a personal voice – learners who rely exclusively on what others say are not likely to develop a personal manner of speaking, they are dependent on the meanings they are exposed to and cannot steer conversations, each learner should learn how to meaningfully influence ongoing discourse and find ways of individual expression .

The above approach suggests that frequent and well-planned speaking practice has a great impact on learners’ interlanguage development. However, the question of whether it is a sufficient and efficient condition for language learning still remains open for theoretical and practical consideration Skehan (1998)

Speaking Activities at Advanced Level

According to Thornbury (2007: 40), the process of developing speaking skills consists of three stages :

- Awareness – learners are made aware of features of target language knowledge wledge-base ,

- Autonomy – learners develop the capacity to mobilize these features under real-time conditions without assistance .

It seems that at the advanced level of foreign language proficiency students and teachers’ efforts should be focused on the stage of appropriation and its effective movement towards autonomy in target language use. For that purpose they need a range of speaking tasks that encourage a consider-able degree of independence by relying on extensive oral practice (treated as a source of meaningful input and feedback) mainly in the

form of student-student interactions. The speaking activities presented below take into account the above assumptions .

Conversations in foreign language classrooms are considered to be not the result of language learning but rather the context in which learning actually occurs Thornbury (2007). On the other hand, it is not easy to incorporate meaningful conversational interactions into a planned lesson as casual conversation is, by its very nature, spontaneous and unstructured. It becomes easier when conversation activities are based on a set of selected themes which are previously negotiated with learners. Useful conversational routines (opening and closing formulas, interrupting, asking for clarification) and helpful communication strategies (paraphrasing and reformulating, using vague language and hesitation fillers) should be taught and practiced beforehand to give students the appropriate devices for successful communication but elements of personalization should be given an equally important status. Conversation activities may proceed from more controlled ones, in which the language is limited by instructions, through awareness activities which make use of audio- visual materials, fluency practice, to feedback sessions during which students analyse their own interactions Nolasco and Arthur (1987)

Interviews are demanding tasks in the sense that they require from the interviewer some preparation in the form of research, the selection of relevant questions and the prior analysis of native speaker interviews so as to properly evaluate both the questions and the elicited information Dakowska (2005:245)

A class survey is a version of a collaborative interview which, if properly carried out, may engage a large group of students in a communicative task based activity. Learners prepare a set of survey-type questions connected with a particular topic and they mill around in the classroom, asking the questions and noting the answers. Next, they return to their original groups to

analyse the findings which are later reported to the class by a group spokesperson. Finally, the class decides whether the original claim put forward by the group is justified or not Thornbury (2007: 83)

Discussing is another popular and useful form of classroom interaction. However, it must be stressed that the actual potential of this activity for developing an individual learner's speaking ability can be implemented only under certain conditions Dakowska (2005: 245), particularly that :

- The topic is controversial enough to open different perspectives and interpretations ,
- Learners participate in the choice of the topic and are given enough communicative autonomy to be able to express their personal opinions and ideas ,
- Students are interested in the topic and their general knowledge is sufficient enough to discuss it (this may require appropriate preparation studying relevant sources and processing the teacher's or peers' input
- discussion is planned as a complex activity which combines working in pairs or groups and open-class or panel forms of interaction .

A more formal version of discussion is referred to as debate. It involves discussing a topic from two opposing points of view which are earlier ascribed to members of the debating teams Dakowska (2005: 246). Additionally, new points and arguments may emerge during the discussion. It is important that the arguments are logical and well-balanced and that they are presented in accordance with the social and cultural norms of the target language community .

Academic presentations Thornbury (2007: 94) are particularly useful for learners who study language for academic purposes and need practice in giving presentations or conference papers. This activity should be preceded by discussing the formal features of the genre and analyzing the specific language

patterns typical of each stage of an academic presentation. Watching model or authentic presentations before students actually start preparing their own speeches should be treated as an important part of the activity, as well as discussing the effectiveness of individual presentations (reactions of the audience, delivery style, time – management) afterwards .

Other activities that advanced students may benefit from include: story telling, jokes and anecdotes which are common ingredients of causal conversations and drama, role-play and simulation activities Thornbury (2007 .)

They greatly expand the scope of registers and social roles that learners may encounter in the classroom (for example, by introducing simulated inter- actions with total strangers or face-threatening speech acts). The perception and reception of such tasks, however, may be different in different students and they depend to some extent on the personality of the individual learner. To conclude, it must be remembered that each speaking task needs to be productive, purposeful, interactive, challenging, safe and authentic (Thorn-bury 2007: 90) if it is intended to ensure optimal conditions for effective and autonomous language use. (cited in Magdalena: 2011).

Aspects of Oral Production

Recently in teaching language, many approaches have been giving attention and more focus on classroom activities that emphasize the improvement of students’ oral production. In the communicative approach, the main criteria of speech which are complements of each other are fluency and accuracy. Hedge (2000:61) makes the emphasis on certain elements in saying that “the communicative approach somehow excuses teachers and learners from a consideration of how to develop high levels of accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary”. From this claim, learners should know how the language system works in a correct and appropriate way through the combination of

fluency, accuracy, grammar and vocabulary because they are very important to accomplish appropriate speaking output. Therefore, the oral proficiency is multi-component concept, it involves several aspects which have been mentioned above. William et al., (2008), (cited in Fred Genesee, 2006:14) claim that:

“Developing proficiency in oral English involves acquiring vocabulary, gaining control over grammar, and developing an understanding of the subtle semantics of English. At the same time, acquiring proficiency in English involves learning how to use the language to interact successfully with other speakers of the language.”

Therefore, anyone who wants to be a proficient speaker needs to have the necessary amount of words to accomplish the act of speaking, in addition to the correct use of grammar, and the ability to understand the hidden meaning and content behind the surface language, also the proficient speaker has to be able to communicate effectively with others through language.

Conclusion

Information communication technology (ICT) give students the chance to interact with each other through different technological instrument and this can ease the educational process in many ways, it can work a medium to practice new linguistic skills, these technologies can work as motivator and encourage students to use the language and expose them to authentic language in real life situation, these authentic materials includes recorded songs and conversations the thing that lead students to create their own recorded models and promote their oral skills

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