

Communicative Approach in Integrating Language Skills and Soft Skills

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Language Skills

The purpose of the language is to communicate the message to the participants. The communication has to be appropriate to the setting. It is an activity, basically of four kinds:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

These are called the four “language skills”. They are related to each other. When the learners learn the second language they try to communicate in the target language. For their effective communication, they use these language skills either consciously or subconsciously. Byrne states that “one should keep in mind that these skills are normally integrated into real life”. Second language learners must be able “to produce and understand language in different sociolinguistic contexts, taking into consideration such factors as the status of participants, the purpose of interactions and the norms of conventions of interactions” (Freeman & Freeman, 2004).

Integrating Language Skills

Integrating language skills enhances the focus on the communication which develops the students’ competence in English. In integrating language skills the easiest form is to integrate from receptive to productive skills within the same medium: oral or written.

	Receptive Skills	Productive Skills
Oral Medium	Listening	Speaking
Written Medium	Reading	Writing

Oral Medium

In this view, the oral medium helps to improve the students' communicative competence in the second language acquisition. Communicative competence is the central concept of the communicative language teaching. It ensures developing one's language proficiency. It also enhances the learner's ability to understand and use language in an authentic social and school environments.

Communicative Competence

Canale and Swain (1980) divided the communicative competence into four parts:

- 1) Grammatical competence is the ability to use the linguistic code, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary correctly.
- 2) Discourse competence is the ability to maintain cohesion between segments of discourse.
- 3) Strategic competence is the learner's ability to repair communication breakdown and work around gaps in his or her knowledge of the target language.
- 4) Sociolinguistic competence is the learner's ability to use language appropriately in various social contexts. (qtd. in Ann Mizne, 1997)

Focus of This Paper

Communicative competence entails knowing how to use language according to the setting and participants, knowing how to produce and understand different types of text and to maintain communication in spite of the fact that one's language knowledge is limited. This paper gives some basic methods that will help to develop learner's language communication at the secondary level.

Some Processes

The teacher can assign some tasks to carry out a formal and informal conversation, group discussion and enacting skit among the students. The conversation between students will help them to know how to communicate appropriately in different situations and will help them to learn new words. Enacting skit will develop students' fluency in the target language. On the other hand, students will get to listen to each other while doing group discussions and debate. As they listen to others' points, they volunteer themselves to convey their own. This method will develop students' listening skill as well as their speaking skill. Conducting activities like conversation and group discussion among students will improve their vocabulary and fluency. While doing activities that involve listening and speaking skills, it not only builds up the language skills but also the soft skills like teamwork, leadership, and building confidence.

Modern Need for Soft Skills

In the twenty-first century, people started to disconnect from each other which is opposite to the natural phenomenon that every human being is interconnected. Employers are expected to have soft skills for managing situations and handling things appropriately. At this stage, people lack soft skills when they appear in an interview for a job. Many companies train their employees for inter-personal skills. Soft skill is a simple term for a complex system of traits and habits commonly sought by employers. It includes problem-solving, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, communication, collaboration, building confidence, information management, and adaptability.

Developing Soft Skills of Students

Developing soft skills at the secondary level will help the students to mingle with others outside the classroom and will improve their confidence level. It has become essential for the students for both academic and non-academic purposes. When a student takes part in an activity like formal or informal conversation and group activity, it develops his ability to work in a team. It enables him how to handle people in different situations and how to get along with people in a particular circumstance. The activities involved in communicative approach will improve the students' fluency which in turn builds confidence in them. Being confident, the students will

volunteer themselves and will be interactive in a group. The hypothesis of this paper is that the students' listening and speaking skills involved in the communicative activity will eventually improve their self-confidence, leadership quality, and teamwork.

Works Cited

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