

PROMOTING LEARNERS' SPEAKING ABILITIES THROUGH SOCIAL STRATEGIES

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Annotation.

This article discusses the development of students' speech through social strategies. Speaking is "the process of creating and exchanging meanings through the use of verbal and non-verbal cues in a variety of settings" (Chaney, 1998, p. 13). The purpose of teaching speaking in today's world requires improving students' communication skills, because only in this way can students express themselves and learn to follow the social and cultural rules that are appropriate in each communication situation.

In this regard, the information about the analysis of theory and practice of foreign language teaching, the features and the usage of social strategies, exercises and games that improves learners' speaking abilities, the main stages of social strategies are listed in the article.

Keywords.

pair and group work, debates, strategy, mind-mapping, memory-related, learning process, metacognitive, Cornell method, taxonomy, structure

The topic of developing students' speaking skills through social strategies is very relevant in today's language learning process. With the globalization of the world and increased digital communication, the ability to communicate effectively in a second language is more important than ever.

Social strategies such as pair and group work, discussions and debates are important tools for developing students' speaking skills. These strategies enable learners to communicate authentically, express themselves, and discuss meaning in the target language. They also allow students to develop their confidence in using the language as they receive feedback and support from their peers.

In addition, social strategies are especially relevant in today's digital age. With the development of social media and online communication platforms, students have unprecedented opportunities to communicate in their own language and with non-native speakers. Social strategies help students take advantage of these opportunities and develop speaking skills in realistic settings.

At the same time, social strategies help to develop intercultural competence and understanding. By interacting with speakers of different languages and cultures, students can develop the ability to manage cultural differences, recognize similarities and differences between cultures, and develop respect for different perspectives.

Developing students' speaking skills through social strategies is very relevant in today's language learning process. By providing students with opportunities for authentic communication, developing intercultural competence, and enabling students to use digital communication platforms, social strategies help students develop speaking skills and succeed in an increasingly globalized world.

The basic peculiarities of social strategies in teaching English

The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word *strategia*, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of *strategia* has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 1990).

Learning strategies are defined as “specifications, behaviors, steps, or techniques-- such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task - used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p. 63). When the learner consciously chooses strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning. Six major groups of L2 learning strategies have been identified by Oxford (1990). Alternative taxonomies have been offered by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and others: **cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social.**

Cognitive strategies enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e.g., **through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally.** Cognitive strategies were significantly related to L2 proficiency in studies by Kato (1996), Ku (1995), Oxford and Ehrman (1995), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (1998), and Park (1994), among others. Of these studies,

three were specifically in EFL settings: Ku (Taiwan), Oxford, Judd, and Giesen (Turkey), and Park (Korea). The other two studies involved the learning of Kanji by native English speakers (Kato, 1996) and the learning of various foreign languages by native English speakers (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995).

Here are some examples of cognitive strategies that language learners can use:

Note-taking is an important study strategy that language learners can use to retain and organize new information.

	Types of note taking	Description	Example
1.	Mind-mapping	Learners can use a mind map to visually organize information and show relationships between different ideas	Brainstorming ideas on an essay
2.	Cornell Method	Dividing the page into two columns for notes and a summary, with a margin for questions	Taking notes on a chapter in a history book
3.	Mapping/Webbing	Creating diagrams with lines and boxes to connect related ideas	Organizing information about a topic for a research paper
4.	List Making	Writing down information in a list format	Making a grocery list or to-do list

Metacognitive strategies (e.g., identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy) are employed for managing the learning process overall.

Among native English speakers learning foreign languages, Purpura (1999) found that metacognitive strategies had "a significant, positive, direct effect on cognitive strategy use, providing clear evidence that metacognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy use in task completion" (p. 61). Studies of EFL learners in various countries (e.g., in South Africa, Learning Styles & Strategies/Oxford, GALA 2003 Page 13 Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; and in Turkey, Oxford, Judd, & Giesen, 1998) uncovered evidence that metacognitive strategies are often strong predictors of L2 proficiency.

The implementation of social strategies to develop learners' speaking ability

Implementing social strategies to develop learners' speaking ability requires careful planning and execution. Here are some steps to follow:

1. Identify the learners' needs: Before implementing any social strategies, it's important to identify the learners' needs and goals. For example, learners might need to improve their pronunciation, expand their vocabulary, or gain confidence in speaking.

Here are some strategies for identifying learners' needs:

- **Conduct a needs analysis:** A needs analysis involves assessing learners' current language proficiency, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and determining their language learning goals. This can be done through pre-tests, questionnaires, and interviews.

- **Observe learners in action:** Observing learners in action can provide valuable insights into their language learning needs. This can be done through classroom observations, language exchanges, or recording learners' speaking or writing samples.

- **Ask learners for feedback:** Learners can provide valuable feedback on their language learning needs. This can be done through surveys, focus groups, or one-on-one interviews.

- **Consider learners' background and context:** Learners' background and context, such as their age, cultural background, and educational history, can influence their language learning needs. Consider these factors when identifying learners' needs.

- **Use diagnostic tools:** Diagnostic tools such as standardized tests, proficiency exams or online language assessments can be used to identify learners' needs and determine their current language level.

2. Select appropriate social strategies: Based on the learners' needs and goals, select appropriate social strategies that will help them achieve their objectives. For example, if learners need to improve their pronunciation, role-playing activities or language exchanges with native speakers might be appropriate.

3. Provide clear instructions: Provide clear instructions and expectations for the social strategies that will be implemented. Make sure learners understand the purpose of the activity and how it will help them improve their speaking ability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of social strategies is an effective approach to developing learners' speaking ability. The use of social strategies, such as group work, pair work, and peer feedback, can foster a communicative and interactive learning environment that promotes speaking proficiency.

Group and pair work provide opportunities for learners to practice speaking and develop their fluency in a supportive and collaborative environment. Peer

feedback can help learners receive constructive criticism and identify areas of improvement, which can enhance their speaking ability.

However, the implementation of social strategies requires careful planning and preparation. Teachers must provide clear instructions and guidelines for learners, as well as monitor and facilitate the learning process to ensure that learners are on-task and making progress.

Assessment and feedback are also crucial components of implementing social strategies to develop learners' speaking ability. Teachers can use a variety of assessment methods, such as oral presentations, debates, and role-plays, to evaluate learners' speaking proficiency and provide feedback for improvement.

To sum up, the implementation of social strategies is an effective approach to developing learners' speaking ability. By using these strategies, learners can engage in authentic communication and develop their speaking proficiency in a collaborative and interactive learning environment.

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