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SPEAKING AND WRITING AS PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

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Rezumat

Acest articol tratează importanța competențelor productive, precum competența de producere orală și scrisă. Procesul de învățare a limbilor străine este lent și continuu și poate fi văzut ca un șir de provocări ce trebuie înfruntate. Acest proces constă în dezvoltarea anumitor competențe - competențele de producere și de receptare. Competențele de producere sunt semnificative, deoarece ele permit deținerea competențelor comunicative precum producerea prezentărilor orale, cercetărilor, rapoartelor ș.a.m.d. Articolul evidențiază importanța studierii și formării acestor competențe.

One of the ways how newborn kids learn their own language, is listening to those around them. After such silent way of listening to other people, language starts to make utterances (speak). Having learnt to speak they start to learn to read and write. The process they

are going through covers all 4 skills that we are trying to teach our students:

- listening;
- speaking;
- reading;
- writing.

If we group those skills in different types: reading and listening are known as receptive skills, speaking and writing as productive skills.

As a global medium of communication, the importance of English has increased a lot. English has become the only language for the world citizen. English has been taught as a core subject from class 2 to 12, yet it is very painful to watch that students are still lagging behind to achieve comprehensive productive skills. For a long time, communicative method is followed at schools and colleges that aims at developing skills reading, writing, listening and speaking. And proper planning, implementation and monitoring can make it possible to achieve students' language proficiency in four skills simultaneously.

Speaking and writing skills are called productive skills. They are crucial as they give students the opportunity to practice real-life activities in the classroom. These two skills can be used as a “barometer” to check how much the learners have learned.

Teaching speaking is vital unless someone is learning English purely for academic reason and does not intend to communicate in English, which is quite rare. Good command on speaking skills develop a real sense of progress among learners and boosts their confidence [6, p. 67].

Teaching writing is important because written communication is a basic life skill. Students may need to take notes, fill in forms, and write letters, reports, stories. Many need to fill in detailed questionnaires related to health, education and employment.

Sufficient ability of writing skills gives one the confidence and marks his expertise on a particular language.

Another reason learners need to write is for assimilation. Writing is an effective way of reinforcing what they have already been studying, and they benefit greatly from seeing new or unfamiliar language in written form. Writing is a good way to practice grammar structures, it helps learning to recycle and look up new vocabulary and to learn English punctuation rules. It encourages learners' autonomy when they are asked to keep journals on turn in regular writing assignments that they carry out at home.

Surprisingly it is found that learners are not able to show their performance in respect of productive skills as they are expected to be. It indicates that there are some flows regarding the techniques of teaching those productive skills to the learners. So speaking and writing skills development should progressively be given greater attention at secondary level of education.

According to English curriculum requirements, the objective of English is to develop students' ability to use English in an all-purpose way. Harmer suggested, any of the skills cannot be performed without another. It is impossible to speak in a conversation if somebody does not listen as well, and people hardly can write without reading [2, p. 48].

When we learn a language, there are four skills that we need to complete communication. When we learn our native language: we usually learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read and finally to write. These are called the four "language skills".

Productive skills, speaking and writing are defined by Jaromillo and Medina as an important form of expression used to persuade or convince other people as well as to share ideas or feelings [4, p. 73].

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It, like other skills, is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words.

According to Chastain, speaking is a productive skill that involves many components, such as grammar, sociolinguistics and discourse, for him speaking is more simply making the right sounds, choosing the right words or getting the constructions correct [1, p. 39].

Speaking is probably the language skill that most language learners wish to perfect as soon as possible. Speaking is more frequently used than writing. The main function of spoken language is to socialize individuals. Speaking skill is required everywhere, from simple conversation to formal public speaking. As Wilson argues, talking can be used to connect with others, explore and understand the world and real oneself.

Types of speaking activities can be: picture stories, information –gap-activities, grouping, mingle activities, problem solving, drama and role –play.

Writing is the productive skill in written mode. It, too, is more complicated than seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the skills, even for native speakers of the language.

Writing is slightly different from speaking in term of communication context. Speaking is always intended face- to – face communication among the audience present, while writing is always used by the writers to express and communicate their ideas to the readers who are actually separated by both time and space distance.

According to G. Broughton, English teachers can use three stages of writing:

- controlled writing;
- guided writing;
- free writing.

Further, G. Broughton, claims that to be successful in teaching writing skills it is necessary to make sure that the students start with controlled writing and when they become more confident in writing with controlled exercises more and more guided writing exercises should be available.

On the other hand, Jeremy Harmer in his book "How to Teach Writing" distinguishes between writing for learning and writing for writing.

There are various types of writing activities for the classroom: letters, creative writing, diary, discursive essays, instructions, dictation.

There is no doubt that in the era of globalization speaking and writing are more important than ever. And it is easier to obtain students participation and motivation when the suggested materials are entertaining, original and interesting. The key is to motivate students to learn English, giving them a chance to speak about interesting topics. If the students, teachers and the authorities cooperate and adopt the recommendations the teaching and learning of spoken and written English will be more effective.

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