



EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS IN FUTURE TOUR GUIDES

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ABSTRACT

It is important that future tour guides can communicate well with many different types of tourist through good speaking skills. The aim of this research paper is to look at research-based strategies to improve the oral communication ability of tourism students as they prepare to enter the working world. The study indicates that the primary method of developing the skill of oral communication is through the use of communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and using guided practical activities to support the development of oral communication skills. Another important component of developing confidence, fluency and accuracy in the speaking skills of the students is by developing a supportive and interactive learning environment. The outcome of the use of the suggested strategies in this study is to create well-prepared and professional guides who can provide clear, concise, and interesting information to the tourist that they serve.

Introduction

For any prospective tour guide, speaking is a primary skill that has a direct impact on how the public perceives the quality of the tour they receive. Students gain a new language through the use of the new language in meaningful contexts, so activities which get students speaking should reflect real-world situations of communication and have students actively engaged[1]. While communicating factual information is critical, effective communication also enhances the tourism experience for guests. Raxmatullayeva and Axmedov (2024) state that using structured speaking activities in guide training programs will not only increase confidence in students but also lead to increased practical communication competence in students[3].

To effectively teach historical, cultural and social contexts to guests, tour guides need to demonstrate linguistic proficiency in addition to demonstrating pragmatics. Also, they need to present these contexts to a variety of guest audiences in a manner that can adapt to that particular audience. Theoretical knowledge and practice do not match for many students

because they may experience nervousness, do not have a large number of speaking opportunities, or they feel constrained by their vocabulary. Therefore, this study will examine effective methods for developing speaking skills in future tour guides to ensure they can practice their profession successfully in the tourism industry.

Methods

In order to develop oral proficiency, instructors need to balance their focus on form with opportunities for students to practice speaking freely so that they are able to communicate effectively and improve their ability to communicate both accurately and fluently over time. The purpose of this qualitative literature review was to find ways to improve the speaking abilities of students in the tourism field. The literature reviewed was peer-reviewed articles, conference papers, and empirical studies on the topic of teaching speaking skills. The main focus was to identify classroom-based techniques, task-based learning, and guided practice in speaking for tour guide training.

To conduct the literature search, multiple data bases (Google Scholar, ERIC, and JSTOR) were used; Keywords included tour guide speaking skills, task-based learning in tourism, oral communication in EFL, and interactive teaching skills; Communication language theory focuses on students' ability to learn English by their interaction with others during the learning process and how the way they interact with others ultimately leads to their ability to speak English fluently. Selected articles based upon their relevance for primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education were considered for inclusion in this literature review based upon their empirical evidence of success and applicability for practical use in the classroom. In the present literature review, evidence is synthesized regarding communicative language teaching, task-based activities, interactive simulation exercises, and feedback-driven exercises as being beneficial for the development of speaking skills (or fluency), accuracy, and confidence in the student.

Results

A review of the literature demonstrates that to improve the speaking skills of tourism students, it is beneficial to use a variety of communication approaches, task-based learning, and directed hands-on activities. Communicative language teaching encourages students to participate in discussions, role-playing and dialogue, which helps to develop fluency and confidence as they navigate through realistic situations relating to the tourism profession. Task-based learning requires students to complete meaningful tasks; examples include planning a tour, describing a destination, or doing mock guided tours that relate their tasks to actual job requirements.

The use of technology such as audio and video recordings helps learners improve and practice their oral presence; they can use activities involving meaningful interaction (role-plays, information-gap tasks) to improve their fluency and confidence in speaking[2]. By having an instructor create a supportive classroom environment, provide feedback and support for students to take risks, help student feel less anxious and more willing to participate in class activities. Raxmatullayeva (2024) states that providing practice through guided instruction and interactive activities develops both fluency and accuracy in order to prepare students for real-life guiding situations[4].

Language acquisition occurs more effectively if the learner is an active participant in his/her own communication and is able to negotiate meaning with peers[2]. The results of the study suggest that students who are provided these types of experiences achieve improvement

in their speech clarity, vocabulary choice, pronunciation, and their overall communicative confidence; they will be able to give quality, informative tours.

Discussion

Students' linguistic history, motivation, and previous experience in a practical scenario will affect how effective their methods for producing verbal reports will be. It is important to provide a balance of task-based learning and guided practice. Focusing too much on grammar may cause a lack of confidence in generating a report orally, while concentrating only on fluency will not produce an acceptable product, which would harm the tourist when they obtain misinformation about a particular location they have just visited.

Real-life experience through simulated tours or field work supports class work and encourages students to be able to adjust their language to fit the needs of the different types of audiences they will be interacting with as tour guides. Instructors must continuously monitor all students' progress; provide feedback to the students; and tailor activities to their individual learning needs. By using these types of strategies, students will develop independence, gain the skills necessary to be a competent member of the profession (tour guides), and acquire the skills necessary to deal with complex situations that may arise while giving a tour.

Conclusion

In order to succeed as a touring guide and create effective tourism management systems, developing the speaking ability of future tour guides is vitally important. The use of research-based approaches that include using developmentally appropriate teaching methodologies, such as communicative language training, the use of task-oriented activities, the use of interactive simulations, and other technology-assisted training methods, provides educators with the tools needed to develop dynamic and encouraging learning environments for the purpose of promoting the development of confidence, fluency, and accuracy in students to produce qualified professional tour guides who are fully competent in engaging and providing information to tourists.

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