

Developing the Habit of Reading English Newspapers in ESL Classroom to Overcome the Speaking Challenges in Business Communication

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Introduction

The universal truth is, the sound knowledge of English language opens the doors of opportunities. In the past few decades, English has become as the global language especially in trade and business. It performs as an official standard language in all business sectors such as: marketing, finance, accounting, shipping, banking and negotiation. Obviously, English proficiency is an important skill in the modern business world. Writing, interpretation and speaking are just some of the skills used in business English. Therefore, an excellent command of English is required for all job appointments. The ability of speaking is highly expected rather than reading and writing.

In the internet era, English language teaching has been spread out through the internet. There are various learning processes available in online learning. Even though various changes have been in business English teaching, students face challenges when they speak or when they use it practically, because of the influence of technology in education the reading habits of younger generation become poor.

The styles of English language have been changed day by day which are not found in text books or other syllabus materials. This research looks for a solution for the speaking challenges in business communication of the business studies students of the

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Vavuniya Campus as well as finding the ways on how to use the newspapers in English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom.

Literature Review

Many researchers investigated to include newspapers as teaching material in ESL classroom to develop the language skill of students. Hakeem M.Elmandwi (2014) examined that the newspaper articles are highly motivational for students of all ages and students enjoy the variety of reading and visual material included in the newspaper. Naveen Mehta explained that, even after the advent of electronic media the importance and readership of newspapers are stable and it is quite striking to mention here that there is great increase in the readership of all the leading newspapers. Reading newspapers on regular basis is considered a good habit. It is observed that the students who read newspapers regularly are more proficient and aware about the happenings that occur near or far away world. According to the researchers, newspapers are regarded as one of the major teaching materials in the ESL Classrooms.

Methodology

This research is based on experimental method. It consists both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The random sampling method also was adapted in this study. Forty students from first year Business Studies were selected and divided into two groups such as: control and experimental group and each group consist of 20 students. At the beginning of the intervention, a pre-test was conducted to both groups to evaluate their speaking ability. During the intervention, some selected series of news items from “Mirror Business” and “Daily News Business” were given to the experimental group to skim and scan as well as to discuss some particular news items. At the same time, the control group was dealt with routine teaching materials. At the end of the experiment, each group of students was given a speaking test relevant to business communication in order to collect quantitative data. Questionnaire was given to collect qualitative data to assess the students’ involvement in book, routine teaching, and reading newspapers.

Results and Discussions

After the intervention, the results of the pre- test and post –test of the experimental group and controlled group were compared. Comparatively the results of the experimental group which was dealt with newspapers were higher than that of the control group. The effective and efficient participation and performance could be seen

in the experimental group. While the speaking test wide range of business terminologies, current examples, latest data and information were covered by the students. On the other hand, the performance and productivity of the control group is very poor. The students who were in the control group repeated the same examples and vocabularies which were given in the classroom. Even though they were interested in Learning English language, they did not have chances to develop the ability of speaking as creative and spontaneous in routine teaching. According to the questionnaire the pleasant participation of the experimental group was also commendable. The students expressed their interest in this type of teaching activity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study supports to find a way on how to break the language challenges in communication especially in business communication with the help of reading habit of newspapers. It supports to motivate the students in reading habit. Students will be able to face the challenges in business communication in future when they conduct presentations, meetings and sessions or when they face interviews in a company. According to the above, this study provides benefits to the students in a long term. Newspapers are considered as a learning resource for all groups of students especially in business studies. It develops the reading skill, conversational skill, vocabulary, writing skill, and analytical skill. Students can easily and quickly assess the latest global trend of business.

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