

Designing activities to practice english speaking skills for grade 5 students

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Abstract: *At the primary level, English is included in the curriculum to help students become familiar with foreign languages, as well as international English certification exams, as a foundation for development and improvement for students at next levels. However, in the face of the strong development requirements of the national education system in general, and of the foreign language teaching development strategy in particular, the effectiveness of English teaching in primary schools in the district has not yet been achieved equivalent. The design of activities to practice English speaking skills for grade-5 students is indispensable and important, helping them practice confidence, interest and increase motivation to study English, shorten the gap ability between Listening - Speaking and Reading – Writing.*

Keywords: *Teaching activities in primary schools, English speaking skills for grade-5 students, primary education.*

1. The problem

In the current trend of globalization, English plays an important role in many fields. In particular, English has become a necessary language of communication, a sensitive and rich means of information. Facing the renovation requirements of the country's economy and society in the context of globalization integration, foreign languages in general and English in particular are an effective and effective tool and means in the process of integration and development. One of the key tasks and solutions to develop solid education. The strategic objectives of English language development are closely linked to the major goals of education and training, namely to improve people's knowledge, train human resources and foster talents. The 2019 Law on Education has also affirmed that "Foreign languages prescribed in the education program are the language commonly used in international transactions"[7]. Our Party's Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW affirmed: Building an open, practical education, good teaching, good learning, associated with building a learning society; ensure conditions for quality improvement; standardization, modernization, democratization, socialization and international integration of the education and training system; upholding the socialist orientation and national identity. Striving to reach the advanced level of education in the region by 2030 [1].

The project "Foreign language teaching and learning in the national education system" (referred to as the foreign language project 2020) also identifies foreign languages as compulsory subjects in the general education program. The overall objective of the project is to "Comprehensively renovate foreign language teaching and learning in the national education system, implement new foreign language teaching and learning programs at all education and training levels, so that by 2020 the majority of Vietnamese youths will graduate from secondary school, colleges and universities have sufficient capacity to use independently

and confidently in communicating, studying and working in a multilingual and cultural integration environment; making foreign languages become the strength of Vietnamese people, serving the cause of industrialization and modernization"[2].

The lower secondary education program 2018 teaches in the direction of developing students' competencies, helping students develop qualities and competencies that have been formed and developed at the primary level, adjust themselves according to the general standards of society, know how to apply active learning methods to perfect knowledge and basic skills, Have an initial understanding of the trades and have a sense of career guidance to continue their education to upper secondary school, apprenticeship or participate in working life [4].

Currently, in primary school, students are exposed to English to gradually familiarize themselves with foreign languages, get acquainted with international certification exams, create an initial foundation to study advanced parts in the next levels such as: Cambridge, Toefl Primary, Test of English Young Learners ..., to help students practice and use foreign languages creatively in real situations, close to daily life, help them be more bold, confident in communication practice and love learning this subject.

However, in the face of the strong development requirements of the national education system in general, of the strategy to develop foreign language teaching in particular, the effectiveness of English teaching in primary schools in the district... still inadequate. In fact, the quality of English teaching and learning in primary schools in general and grade 5 students in particular is still not high, still theoretical, with little emphasis on practical hours, so they are timid, lack confidence in communication...

From the above reason, I chose the research topic: "Designing activities to practice English speaking skills for grade 5 students" to help grade 5 students have more effective activities in learning and practicing English communication.

2. The importance of English in Primary School

At the primary level, English is trained in four skills: Listening - Speaking - Reading - Writing, with mainly focusing on Listening and Speaking skills. Speaking skills play an essential role in the process of communicating.

English has been included in the curriculum at secondary level from grade 3 and above before and now grade 1 students are also starting to get acquainted with this subject, which is an elective subject with 4-8 periods/week.

The first step for students to familiarize themselves with a second language.

Gradually develop the main skills: Listening - Speaking - Reading - Writing. Special emphasis is placed on listening and speaking skills.

Create a premise, interest, passion and the ability to explore new languages, so that students will learn better at the upper levels.

Broaden students' horizons, acumen and curiosity about people, country, culture and countries around the world.

For students' English speaking skills, it is built on the foundation of their ability to express themselves through words; give them the opportunity to expand their vocabulary as well as encourage accuracy in the use of language.

3. Some advantages and disadvantages in teaching and learning English in primary school today

3.1. Advantages

- There is the interest of the upper echelons, the School Board, parents and teachers; the support of the professional team and colleagues in applying the initiative to the classroom

- This is a compulsory subject in general education, so the school has created conditions for students to study from grade 1 to grade 5, creating conditions for facilities and equipment for teaching and learning English. In addition, the teaching staff is increasingly young, dynamic, enthusiastic and creative, with training expertise according to the standards of level 4 of the European framework. Teachers can participate in advanced training courses on teaching methods of the Department of Education and Training, participate in seminars of schools, clusters, districts and cities.

- Students are gradually having a more positive view of this subject and most of them are very interested in learning: Students in grades 1 to 5 can learn English with a duration of 8 periods/week, including 2 periods/1 week with native teachers, therefore, students have more time to participate in activities during class. In particular, Grade 5 students in particular also have the ability to adapt well when using technology equipment, serving and absorbing effectively for lessons applying information technology to English.

- The staffing of teachers is guaranteed according to the development needs of each school; At the same time, teachers are trained according to standards, have enthusiasm, capacity and accumulated experience.

3.2. Disadvantages

- There is a lack of equipment for the subject: labs, reference books ...

- The level of students is uneven, so teachers face difficulties in applying teaching methods, designing activities and testing and evaluating students. Speaking practice activities are usually done in pairs and groups, so the class is easily disorderly.

- The English communication environment of students is limited. Because most primary school students are very active, easily distracted, in addition, some students are shy, lack confidence, afraid to pronounce and practice communication. A small number of students have difficulty accessing and grasping new languages.

4. Designing English speaking activities for grade 5 students

4.1. Requirements when designing activities

*Novelty and creativity

The following suggestions for English speaking skills for grade 5 students help them develop language skills, develop imagination, train students the habit of learning to speak English through lessons actively, students are confident and bold when communicating in English in the classroom and outside the classroom, create the habit of speaking English all the time and a positive learning attitude in each student.

Through the process of implementation, application at the author's unit has brought high efficiency in teaching, helping grade 5 students learn English well, be confident and prefer to learn speaking skills, like to communicate, chat with native teachers, teachers and friends. This is the process of the author researching and drawing experience from years of teaching.

*Significance of English speaking skills training for grade 5 students

- Help grade 5 students develop language skills, develop imagination. Teach students a lot about the world around them. Helping them confidently use the correct and correct language in the process of communicating and communicating well is their joy at this age.

- The teacher is the one who selects and uses teaching methods, as well as teaching aids suitable to his/her conditions, with the content of the lesson and the cognitive level of students.

* Conditions to support effective operation:

+ *For students:* Learning attitude needs to be active, proactive, hard to practice more at home. Have ingenuity, fluency, actively learn to apply knowledge in life creatively.

+ *For teachers:* It is necessary to learn about age psychology to have methods to educate students. Choose classroom teaching methods and express them in a variety of ways.

+ *For schools:* It is necessary to fully invest in interactive and multimedia teaching equipment in schools. It is necessary to actively create conditions for teachers to participate more in fostering classes to improve the level of information technology application in teaching. In addition, three indispensable environments: family, school, society need a closer and more comprehensive link.

* Effective application of methods in operation

- Method of observation.

- Check student learning (old lessons, new lessons).

- Survey method (interview with grade 5 students).

- Methods of essay, class visits, attendance.

- Quality inspection after school.

4.2. Activities to practice English speaking skills for grade 5 students

Speaking skills include the following 4 activities:

- Activity 1: Look at pictures and find differences

- Activity 2: Look at pictures and read sentences. Practice asking and answering
- Activity 3: Practice storytelling
- Activity 4: Answering questions about yourself

4.2.1. Look at the picture and find the differences

This is one of the easiest parts for students to practice because there is clear information in the pictures, they use sentence patterns and say the different points of the two pictures. They need to have vocabulary on topics: clothes, objects, action verbs, descriptive adjectives, vehicles, etc. Meanwhile, teachers need to pay attention to students when speaking, evaluate the use of simple sentences, correctly say the words in the picture. Students can practice in turn, the teacher calls to stand up and speak in groups.

Here's how:

+ Step 1: Let the children say simple sentences:

The teacher gives some thematic vocabulary (clothes, objects, descriptive adjectives, animals, verbs indicating action)....., conjugation in the present tense is simple, present continues. Then they practice saying sentences. For example: There is a rabbit in the car. / There are two tables in the picture. / The girl is holding a ball. /

+ Step 2: Teachers give pictures of topics so that students can practice communicating together. For example: Give vocabulary topics about clothes: scarf, T-shirt, dress, trousers, shoes, shirt, jacket..... They will practice talking about clothing, talking about themselves or others: I'm wearing a shirt and trousers. / My mom is wearing a dress. / There are two T-shirts on my bed.

4.2.2. Look at pictures and read sentences. Practice asking and answering

This activity was attracted by most students because there were suggested words in the pictures, they could easily ask questions and answer. Moreover, they will strengthen their vocabulary and practice using it in questions and answers, thereby remembering it longer.

Steps to follow:

+ Step 1: Teachers give questionnaires in the form of Wh-Questions to suggest students practice and remember sentence patterns.

+ Step 2: Teachers let students observe 2 pictures, ask to read information and facts about characters in each picture.

+ Step 3: Students look at the picture, play the role of the teacher and students answer about character information, then change roles.

4.2.3. Storytelling practice

This activity stimulates interest and sparks creativity in students when telling stories, as each student has a different way of seeing images and expressing them in different ways. Thereby, teachers can evaluate and guide how to use simple sentences, suggest keywords that can be used to tell stories, describe people, things, things according to each picture.

Steps to follow:

+ Step 1: Teachers model for students, tell a short story in English for children, accompanied by illustrations. After that, the teacher gives small questions for the groups to emulate, helping students remember the content of the story. The teacher questions the content of the story, shouting "True" when hearing the correct sentence and "False" if hearing the wrong sentence. Storytelling teachers

help students listen attentively and know how to use simple sentences to practice storytelling. Teachers correct students' pronunciation and remind them to speak sentences correctly.

4.2.4. Answer questions about yourself

This Q&A activity features a variety of questions about themselves, encouraging students to show character and express simple sentences to talk about everyday topics in life. To complete this activity, students need to identify and understand the words asked: Who, What, Where, How many, What time, How,... Thereby, helping them to be bold, confident and open when practicing speaking skills with the spirit of not being afraid to correct mistakes.

Steps to follow:

+ Step 1: Teachers let students write any topic about themselves, give suggestions for them to write in small sentences. Then the teacher corrects spelling mistakes, prompting the often made wrong grammar points.

+ Step 2: Students stand in front of the class to answer questions about themselves, then talk about topics related to family, school, friends, hobbies, daily activities. Teachers can flexibly change the traditional learning model in the classroom by organizing classes in different areas of the school: library, school garden, multi-purpose room,...

5. Conclusion

Speaking skills are one of the four important skills in learning English: listening, speaking, reading and writing. To speak well and fluently, learners must learn all skills well, have a good vocabulary. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers must regularly change teaching methods; explore and create activities for each skill for students to develop; besides, the teacher must understand the physics of the students, be close to the children; share the difficulties that students encounter in the learning process, thereby taking timely measures to help them.

The topic has an important significance in teaching English, contributing to innovating teaching methods, promoting positivity in grade 5 students and teachers, improving the quality of subjects. Help students be more confident and bold in communicating in English with friends, teachers in particular and develop good communication skills in society in general. Therefore, with this small contribution, the author hopes colleagues will continue to research and implement in primary schools to improve the quality of English subjects in primary schools today, meeting the requirements of educational innovation.

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