



## DEVELOPING SPECIFIC SKILLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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### Abstract

*English is one of the most spoken languages worldwide and is widely used as official communication language. It is equally important and an integral part of educational system. It is a window to the world. It is an effective instrument for acquisition of knowledge, for communication, personal development and national development. Language is the most important aspect in the life of all beings. We use language to express our inner thoughts and emotions. If we are not able to communicate in proper language we will not be able to convey our thoughts effectively. Special efforts at school level itself are required on the part of teacher and learner for acquiring skills for language proficiency. So a teacher should be aware about the needs of the learners, objectives of the course and different ways of analysing language. Teacher should be aware of the latest teaching methodology, approaches and techniques for teaching language effectively. The latest trend is based on the premise that learning needs to be connected to the lives of the students through relevant tasks that focus on student's ability to use their knowledge and skills in meaningful ways. A skill is a tact, expertness and dexterity. It is a practised ability. It implies facility, ease, smoothness and accuracy in an action or in doing or to do something. This part of the research paper mentions the five language skills. They are the abilities and tacts. They are essential for learning the English language and for using the language for various purposes. These skills should develop accuracy, ease and facility in using the language. There are four basic skills in English language. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The fifth skill which is included is 'interacting' which is very important and essential for better communication. This paper highlights four basic skills in English language, its meaning and activities to be conducted to develop these skills.*



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### Introduction-

English is one of the most spoken languages worldwide and is widely used as official communication language. It is equally important and an integral part of educational system. It is a window to the world. It is an effective instrument for acquisition of knowledge, for communication, personal development and national development.

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will not be able to convey our thoughts effectively. Special efforts at school level itself are required on the part of teacher and learner for acquiring skills for language proficiency. So a teacher should be aware about the needs of the learners, objectives of the course and different ways of analysing language. Teacher should be aware of the latest teaching methodology, approaches and techniques for teaching language effectively. The latest trend is based on the premise that learning needs to be connected to the lives of the students through relevant tasks that focus on student's ability to use their knowledge and skills in meaningful ways.

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There are four basic skills in English language. They are **Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing**. The fifth skill which is included is interacting which is very important and essential for better communication.

### **1. Listening Skill / Auditory Comprehension-**

Listening means proper understanding of the English language when it is spoken. It is the skill in which proper habits are formed to receive auditory signals and to understand them intelligently. It consists in getting used to the English sounds, words, phrases and sentences. It requires recall of content through associations between the English content and the expressions. This auditory comprehension is possible only when careful attention is paid to what is heard. It requires an adequate memory span.

Teaching and learning English is largely depend on developing basic language skills among students. Student's basic skills will be developed when teachers will conduct following activities along with the activities and exercises given in the textbook. Teacher has to take lot of efforts for this.

#### **▪ Activities to develop listening –**

To develop listening capacity of students teacher has to organize various activities in the classroom. These activities should be conducted according to the age group of students. For this teacher has to plan everything very minutely.

Following activities teacher can plan to develop listening skill.

#### **➤ Phoneme Discrimination Tests-**

In this three words are spoken. Two words are same, one word is different.

1. A bad B bad C bead
2. A road B road C rod
3. A pick B pick C pig

After listening to each group the testee i.e. Student puts a circle round the appropriate group words.

➤ **Dictation –**

In dictation teacher dictates words, sentences, paragraphs to the students. They listen it and as per their understanding they write it in their notebook. It is very helpful to develop listening skill of students.

In this type of item the words spoken by the tester occur in sentences.

(Spoken) Put the pan in hot water.

A Pan B Pen C Pin D Pain.

(Spoken) The colour is very dirty, isn't it?

A collar B Cellar C Caller D Colour

➤ **Listen and Do-**

Teacher will give oral instructions to the students. Then as per the given instructions students will do the act e.g. drawing, miming etc.

➤ **Tester says to the testee –**

I shall say a sentence. You will not write the complete sentence. When I complete a sentence, I shall tell you what to write from the sentences.

- Svaraj played the guitar well. ( write the name of musical instrument mentioned in this sentence)

➤ **Listen to Television News and Radio**

Teacher can ask students to listen to the television news and radio programmes. Then in classroom teacher should ask about what they have listened. Also students can write new and difficult words which they are not aware.

- Tester says to the testee, 'I shall say some sentence. I shall complete one sentence and stop for a minute. You will write that sentence exactly as I have said.
- Listen and fill in the blanks, listen and find, listen and choose the correct options.

**2. Speaking-**

One who can speak English well, can understand it, read and write it. Speaking English language means oral production of the signalling system through the English language. It is the skill of providing meaningful and appropriate verbal signals. In order to speak, proper

content is selected, content and expressions are combined for constructing sentences, and the sentences are supported by proper intonation and stress pattern.

In speaking, oral message is accurately conveyed when all the subskills like meaningful sounds, proper choice of words, proper pronunciation of words, intonation, stress, grammar are properly utilised.

▪ **Activities to Develop Speaking Skills-**

➤ **Recitations of poem-**

For pre-primary class speaking practice should begin with recitation of nursery rhymes and poems. Students can enjoy the recitation of poems with proper rhymes, chant, song and tongue twister.

➤ **Question Answers-**

It consists of a series of disconnected questions which are graded in order of increasing difficulty, starting with short simple questions.

➤ **Retelling story from written stimulus-**

The testee is given a short story, a passage to read. The story, the passage is taken back by the teacher once the testee says he has finished reading it. Then the testee is asked to re tell the substance in his own words.

➤ **Passing the Message on-**

The teacher gives the testee a message. Then the testee is asked to pass it on to his friend. In place of message, a short joke, riddle or story can be used.

➤ **Role Play-**

The teacher is asked to take on a particular role and to imagine himself in that role in a particular situation. He has to converse with the teacher or his peer in a way that is appropriate to the role and the situation given.

➤ **Sentence Repetition-**

A series of sentences are read out by the teacher or they may be tape recorded. The testee hears the sentences and repeats them as accurately as he can.

➤ The testee are given a sample picture and asked to read the response given below it. Then the tester introduces the other pictures. There should be at least 20 pictures for testing.

➤ To conduct various competitions in classroom like debate, elocution, group discussion, extemporary etc.

### 3. Reading Skill-

To read is to grasp the language patterns of the English language from their written representations. Reading comprehension can be defined as understanding the meaning and the ideas through the written form of the English language.

#### ▪ Activities to Develop Reading Skills-

##### ➤ Loud Reading and Silent Reading-

To develop reading skill of students teacher has to take both loud and silent reading of students. In this students will be able to understand intonation, stress etc in given sentences.

##### ➤ Matching Letters, words, sentences-

Circle the letter, word, sentence that is the same as the first letter, word, and sentence.

e.g. Model

Alternatives

b

p d q h b

now

bow/ not/ how/ now/ mow

##### ➤ Alphabetic Method-

This method is the oldest method. In this method learner learns the word 'mat' he repeats the letter m-a-t till he senses its pronunciation. Thus he learns to read letters first then words and then sentences.

##### ➤ The phonic Method-

In this method sounds are more important. The sounds are combined into syllables and words. The teacher begins with vowels and consonants and states their sounds. Then the sounds of consonants and vowels are combined to develop a series such as ks, ki, ke, ko, kou, ku. Then syllables are combined together into words. This method is psychological and logical.

##### ➤ The word Method-

In this the words are presented and taught in meaningful situations and largely by making the students look at the written words and pronounce them. It considers individual words to be the basic units of thought.

##### ➤ The Sentence Method-

In this the whole thought is expressed. The sentence is the true unit in language, and the sentence is a means of thinking.

##### ➤ Flash Cards-

The words and the sentences learned by the students can be written on flash cards. The teacher says the word or the sentence loudly and displays the proper card to the students for reading.

➤ **Blackboard –**

After mastery on flash cards, the words or the sentences can be written on the blackboard and the students can read them aloud.

➤ **Newspaper Reading-**

To develop reading skill of student's newspaper reading is the best activity. So that students will come to know many new words and concepts. Their understanding level will also develop along with reading.

**4. Writing skill-**

To write is to put down the graphic symbols that represent a language one understands, so that others who know the language and its graphic representations can read those graphic symbols.

▪ **Activities to Develop writing Skills-**

➤ **Substitution Tables-**

Students are asked to make meaningful sentences by selecting one segment from each column in the table.

➤ **Copying letters, words, sentences-**

Students copy letters, words and sentences from the given mechanism of punctuation, spelling, capitalization and paragraph identification.

➤ **Dictation –**

Teacher can dictate letters, words, sentences and paragraphs to the students. Students have to write everything on their own. It will help to develop writing skill of students.

➤ **Letter Writing-**

Higher classes students should write letter with points provided. They are expected to write both formal and informal letters.

➤ **Story writing-**

Students are provided with points and expected to suggest suitable title for the story. Also students are supposed to write moral of the story.

➤ **Report writing-**

Students have to write the report of any incident, activity conducted in the classroom. Students should be guided with proper rules of report writing.

➤ **Precise Writing-**

One paragraph is given to the students and they have to write summary of it in 1/3 form. Thus to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing of students teacher has to take lot of efforts and practice. Above activities can develop all basic skills of students very easily.

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