

EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR DEVELOPING STUDENTS’ SPEECH IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: This article addresses the issues of developing students’ oral and written speech in the process of primary education. It provides an in-depth analysis of the role of mother tongue education in developing students’ ability to express their thoughts correctly, fluently, meaningfully, and coherently. The article also highlights the importance of various methods and tasks aimed at developing oral speech, strengthening written communication skills, expanding vocabulary, working with texts, and fostering independent thinking. Particular attention is paid to the fact that speech development in the primary education system is not merely a separate topic of the mother tongue subject, but also an important factor that directly influences students’ mastery of all academic subjects. The article further demonstrates that the development of speech competence is an essential component of overall educational outcomes.

Keywords: primary education system, state language, communication, mother tongue, speech, oral speech, written speech, active and passive speech, speech competence, linguodidactics, vocabulary, text, literacy, ability

One of the principal objectives of contemporary education is not only to develop students’ knowledge and skills but also to enhance their ability to express their thoughts independently, clearly, and fluently. This is particularly important at the primary education level, which constitutes a vital component of the continuous education system, as it is during this stage that students develop their attitudes toward language, speech skills, and communication abilities. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to state that developing students’ oral and written communication skills in mother tongue education is one of the key pedagogical and linguodidactic objectives.

By the time children enter primary school, they have already acquired a certain level of oral language proficiency. However, during formal schooling, their speech and language abilities are developed systematically. Students learn to express their thoughts in grammatically correct language, select appropriate words, connect sentences coherently, provide complete answers to questions, and retell texts they have heard or read. At subsequent stages, these skills are reinforced through written expression.

Speech development is not merely an isolated topic within the mother tongue curriculum. It directly influences students’ ability to master all academic subjects. When explaining a mathematical problem, expressing ideas related to natural science, or reading and comprehending a text, students rely on linguistic resources. Consequently, the development of communicative competence constitutes an important component of overall educational outcomes.

Furthermore, an examination of the significance of oral language development reveals several important aspects. In particular, developing oral communication skills at the primary education level is essential for enabling students to engage in communication, express their thoughts, and understand the perspectives of others. Through oral language, students communicate their knowledge, perceptions, thoughts, emotions, and attitudes. Therefore, it is particularly important for teachers to ensure that students do not remain passive listeners during lessons but instead participate actively in verbal communication.

A variety of activities can be used effectively to develop students’ oral communication skills, including question-and-answer exercises, discussions, storytelling, describing and interpreting pictures, narrating events in a logical sequence, and retelling texts. These activities gradually teach students to formulate their own ideas independently and present them in a logical and coherent order.

For example, when students are asked to compose a story based on a picture, they first identify the objects and events depicted in the image. They then establish the relationships between these elements and construct sentences accordingly. The teacher, in turn, pays attention to students’ word choice, sentence construction, logical coherence, and pronunciation.

The formulation of questions also plays an important role in developing oral communication skills. Questions that encourage students to explain their reasoning are more effective than those that require only a “yes” or “no” answer. For example, in addition to asking, “What did the character do?”, teachers may ask, “Why did the character act in that way?” or “What would you have done if you had been in the character’s position?” Such questions encourage students to think independently and justify their opinions.

These learning activities also contribute to the expansion of students’ vocabulary. Teachers should explain the meanings of new words, provide opportunities for students to use them in sentences, and encourage their active use in everyday communication.

At the primary education level, the development of written communication skills is closely associated with the process of literacy acquisition. Students progress through several stages, beginning with letter recognition and handwriting and advancing to writing words, sentences, short texts, and independent compositions. Throughout this process, students develop not only the technical aspects of writing but also the ability to express their thoughts in written form.

Written communication differs from oral communication in several respects. In oral interaction, speakers can convey meaning through intonation, facial expressions, and gestures. In written communication, however, meaning is conveyed primarily through words, sentences, and texts. Therefore, students must learn to express their thoughts clearly and coherently in writing, construct grammatically correct sentences, and adhere to spelling conventions.

Various exercises are used to develop written communication skills in primary school, including copying texts, dictation, written retelling, sentence construction, sentence completion, and composing texts using given words. Gradually increasing the complexity of these tasks helps expand students’ written language abilities.

For example, students may initially be given several key words and asked to construct sentences incorporating them. Subsequently, they may progress to composing short texts consisting of several sentences, assigning titles to texts, and independently writing continuations of existing texts. This process promotes the development of students’ creative thinking and written communication skills.

Teachers’ approaches to error correction are also important in developing written communication skills. Rather than merely identifying errors, teachers should explain their causes and guide students toward independently identifying and correcting them. This approach helps students develop the ability to monitor and analyze their own writing.

Vocabulary development and methods of working with texts depend on several factors. Vocabulary plays a particularly important role in developing students’ oral and written communication skills. It is widely recognized that students with a rich vocabulary are better able to express their thoughts clearly and meaningfully. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that work with new vocabulary is conducted systematically in mother tongue and reading literacy lessons. When teaching new words, teachers can employ various activities, including explaining word meanings, identifying synonyms and antonyms, using words in sentences, and constructing word combinations.

Through these activities, students not only memorize new words but also gradually learn to use them appropriately in different communicative contexts.

As is well known, working with texts is also an important means of developing communication skills. Texts provide students with opportunities to acquire new vocabulary, understand semantic relationships between sentences, and identify the logical sequence of ideas. Activities such as formulating questions about a text, identifying its main idea, preparing an outline, dividing the text into sections, retelling its content, and selecting an appropriate title contribute to the development of students' communicative competence.

Furthermore, the use of examples of oral folk literature, including proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters, fairy tales, and short stories, increases primary school students' interest in language. Such materials enable students to understand word meanings, figurative expressions, and national and cultural contexts.

Contemporary approaches to developing speech and communication skills are becoming increasingly prominent at this stage of education. In modern primary education, greater emphasis is being placed on developing students as active participants in the learning process rather than as passive recipients of ready-made information. This approach also requires mother tongue education to promote independent thinking and active participation in communicative activities.

Tasks designed to develop communication skills should be appropriate to students' age-related characteristics and individual abilities. Rather than assigning identical tasks to all students in the same manner, teachers can differentiate activities according to their levels of difficulty. For example, some students may be provided with key words to support their writing, while others may be asked to compose texts independently.

Group work and pair work also provide valuable opportunities for developing oral communication skills. Students discuss their ideas with their peers, ask questions, respond to others, and attempt to explain and justify their viewpoints. In this process, they also develop communication etiquette, active listening skills, and respect for others' opinions.

In addition, digital learning tools can be used to make communication-oriented activities more engaging. For example, students may be asked to compose stories based on pictures, audio recordings, or short video clips; identify errors in a given text; or replace words with their synonyms or antonyms. Such activities can increase student engagement. However, every pedagogical tool should ultimately contribute to the development of students' actual communicative abilities. Therefore, the effectiveness of technology depends not simply on its use but on the methodological objectives it is intended to achieve.

In conclusion, developing students' oral and written communication skills in primary education is an important component of teaching the state language. Students' communicative competence develops progressively through regular practice and practical activities. Methods such as discussions, question-and-answer exercises, storytelling, expressing ideas based on pictures, and retelling texts are important for developing oral communication skills. Meanwhile, sentence and text composition, written retelling, dictation, creative writing tasks, and independent written assignments serve as effective means of developing written communication skills.

Working on vocabulary, analyzing text content, and paying attention to the use of words and sentences in mother tongue lessons expand students' ability to express their thoughts clearly, coherently, and meaningfully. At the same time, taking students' age-related characteristics and individual abilities into account, engaging them in active communication, and encouraging independent thinking are essential conditions for their communicative development.

Thus, effective teaching of the state language in primary education should not be limited to the acquisition of grammatical rules. Rather, it should aim to develop students’ ability to use the language fluently, accurately, and appropriately in everyday situations and educational contexts.

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