

Language skills

In-order to become a well-rounded communicator one needs to be proficient in each of the four language skills. These four skills give learners opportunities to create contexts in which to use the language for exchange of real information, evidence of their own ability (proof of learning) and, most important, confidence. Listening and reading are the receptive skills because learners do not need to produce language, they receive and understand it. These skills are sometimes known as passive skills. The productive skills are speaking and writing because learners are applying these skills in a need to produce language. They are also known as active skills.

Listening

Listening is a receptive language skill which learners usually find the most difficult. This often is because they feel under unnecessary pressure to understand every word. The listener has to get oriented to the listening portion and be all ears. The listener is also required to be attentive. Anticipation is a skill to be nurtured in Listening. In everyday life, the situation, the speaker, and visual clues all help us to decode oral messages. In due course of listening, be in a lookout for the sign post words. Thirdly one should be able to concentrate on understanding the message thoroughly. Listening Skills could be enhanced by focusing on making the students listen to the sounds of that particular language. This would help them with the right pronunciation of words. To equip students with training in listening, one can think about comprehending speeches of people of different backgrounds and regions. This intensive listening will ultimately help a student to understand more on the accents to be used and the exact pronunciation of words.

Speaking

Language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well. We must take into account that the level of language input (listening) must be higher than the level of language production. In primary schools elocution and recitation are main sources to master the sounds, rhythms, and intonation of the English language through simple reproduction. The manifestations of the language in games and pair work activities are encouraging source to learn to speak the language. This assists the learners to begin to manipulate the language by presenting them with a certain amount of choice, albeit within a fairly controlled

situation. This skill could be improved by understanding para-linguistic attributes such as voice quality, volume and tone, voice modulation, articulation, pronunciation etc. This could also be further enhanced with the help of debates and discussions.

Reading

Reading is a learning skill. It helps you improve all parts of the English language – vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and writing. It helps to develop language intuition in the corrected form. Then the brain imitates them, producing similar sentences to express the desired meaning. Using skimming or scanning technique to read quickly is highly effective. While reading underlining of key words is a must. Reading Skills help the students grasp the content and draw conclusions. The students should also make it a point to familiarize themselves with the jargons and new words by making reading a habit be it reading newspapers, articles, books, magazines etc.

Writing

Writing provides a learner with physical evidence of his achievements and he can measure his improvement. It helps to consolidate their grasp of vocabulary and structure, and complements the other language skills. It helps to understand the text and write compositions. It can foster the learner's ability to summarize and to use the language freely. To write flawless language one should excel in the Writing Skills with the help of various methods. Importance should be given to composition and creative writing. One should also focus on coherence and cohesiveness when it comes to writing a language.

With these four skills addressed equally while learning English, the learners can be assured of having good communication skills, a great necessity in today's competitive world.