

Poster presentations

The impact of integrating language skills on achieving objectives

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Abstract

In 'The impact of integrating language skills on achieving objectives', Amarajeewa Jayalath Basnagoda presents in poster format his belief that integrating language skills in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class can contribute a great deal to the success of the teaching and learning process.

This poster presentation shows how well language skills can be integrated with a view to achieving the set objectives. This presentation is based on a study done on teaching prepositions to 30 non-English teacher trainees at a National College of Education. Observations were made, discussions held, and documentary analysis revealed the areas of difficulty. The segregation of language skills and teaching them separately have resulted in an inability to use the target language for effective communication. The reluctance to use the language and the irrational fear of committing mistakes generally prevent second language learners from using the language. This study aimed to overcome the above barriers and create a learner-friendly environment, reflecting views shared by Harmer (2007) who states that productive skills and receptive skills are like two sides of a coin which can never be separated. In this study, a picture-story was used to teach eleven prepositions. The picture-story was displayed on the board, only the prepositions were introduced, and the story was first related by the teacher while the trainees listened. Next, they were encouraged to relate the story through activities like ladder chats, onion circles, running dictations and so on. Motivation, exposure to the target language and maximum participation were clearly observed. The trainees were encouraged to write the story and do peer correction afterwards, which they did with increased interest.

Thus, other than using traditional pedagogy, if a teacher can integrate language skills to create a learner-friendly environment, achieving the set objectives will not be a big challenge.