SPEAKING CURRICULUM: METHODS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING SPEAKING

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Annotation: This article examines the speaking curriculum and effective teaching and learning methods for developing speaking skills in foreign language education. Speaking is considered a core component of communicative competence, requiring not only linguistic knowledge but also pragmatic and sociocultural awareness. The study analyzes learner-centered instructional approaches, including communicative language teaching, task-based learning, role-play, and interactive activities, which aim to enhance learners' fluency, accuracy, and confidence in spoken communication. Particular attention is paid to the integration of speaking activities into the curriculum and the role of teachers in facilitating meaningful interaction in the classroom.

Keywords: Speaking curriculum, speaking skills, teaching methods, learning strategies, communicative competence, foreign language education

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются учебная программа по развитию навыков говорения и методы обучения говорению в процессе изучения иностранного языка. Говорение является важнейшим компонентом коммуникативной компетенции и предполагает не только владение языковыми средствами, но и развитие прагматических и социокультурных навыков. В работе анализируются ориентированные на обучающегося методы обучения, такие как коммуникативный подход, обучение на основе заданий, ролевые игры и интерактивные виды деятельности, направленные на повышение беглости, точности и уверенности учащихся в устной речи. Особое внимание уделяется интеграции говорения в учебный процесс и роли преподавателя в организации эффективного речевого взаимодействия.

Ключевые слова: Учебная программа по говорению, навыки говорения, методы обучения, стратегии обучения, коммуникативная компетенция, обучение иностранному языку

According to the Korean Language Standard Curriculum (2020:22), speaking is regarded as a very important language skill and serves as a key indicator for assessing a learner's overall language proficiency. Current speaking instruction goes beyond simply producing grammatically correct sentences and emphasizes accuracy, fluency, similarity to the target-language discourse community, social appropriateness, and an active attitude in the process of participation.

This approach encourages learners to effectively express their intentions based on their acquired knowledge of Korean. To achieve this, learners must actively engage in meaning negotiation with discourse participants and develop the ability to analyze Korean discourse used in various situations. It is also emphasized that learners should understand the characteristics of Korean discourse and be able to speak naturally in ways similar to native Korean speakers. This helps improve their ability to understand relationships between discourse participants and respond appropriately. Thus, Korean speaking education focuses not only on grammatical accuracy but also on developing rich communicative competence.

Next, several important principles of teaching methodology for Korean language instruction are summarized and presented.

Selection of balanced methods according to learning objectives:
Instruction should maintain a balance between grammatical accuracy and meaning-focused fluency. Both are important, but their relative weight may vary depending on learners' goals.

Consideration of diverse spoken situations:
Teaching methods should guide learners to express thoughts, feelings, and information in planned and unplanned situations, social contexts, and informational exchanges.

Understanding Korean discourse conventions:
Learners should understand Korean discourse conventions and spoken language features such as contraction, ellipsis, and idiomatic expressions so that they can speak naturally.

Pronunciation, intonation, and speed understandable to native speakers:
Instruction should enable learners, at their level, to speak with pronunciation, intonation, and speed understandable to native speakers of Korean.

Providing feedback:
Teachers should provide appropriate feedback to prevent incorrect expressions or pronunciation from becoming fossilized. This helps learners recognize and correct their errors.

Speaking Assessment

Goals of Speaking Assessment

The purpose of speaking assessment can be divided into two perspectives. From a micro perspective, the main goal is to verify whether learners can perform spoken communication appropriately according to context. From a macro perspective, assessment is used to review the appropriateness and effectiveness of educational goals, teaching methods, and evaluation methods. The results are then reflected in subsequent teaching–learning processes and curriculum design.

One important reason assessment is central to the curriculum is the **washback (backwash) effect**. This refers to the influence that testing has on teaching and learning itself. Assessment sets directions for instruction and plays a role in determining educational goals, content, and methods. Therefore, speaking assessment plays a crucial role in shaping how speaking is taught and learned.

Speaking assessment also provides educational feedback to learners. Through assessment, learners evaluate their own achievement, observe others' performance, imitate effective strategies, and make self-corrections. Speaking assessment must therefore be conducted carefully, with the goal of improving learners' ability to respond appropriately in real spoken contexts. This implies that assessment should be based on authentic discourse situations. Without such real practice and application, genuine communicative competence cannot be achieved. Assessment should therefore evaluate communicative ability through actual performance in Korean.

Categories of Korean Speaking Assessment

In evaluating speaking ability, the integrated interaction of the four competencies proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) should be considered: **grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence**. None of these is inherently superior; their relative importance depends on context and communicative purpose.

Thus, speaking assessment must consider all four competencies to ensure reliability and validity, with emphasis on the ability to respond and express oneself effectively in real situations.

Han Jae-young (2005a) emphasized that task performance assessment is essential in speaking evaluation and proposed the need to subdivide speaking assessment categories for more precise measurement.

Grammatical competence:
Assesses knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, including how language elements are used, the level of lexical ability, and whether pronunciation interferes with communication.

Sociolinguistic competence:
Refers to the ability to use language appropriately according to situation, including formal and informal styles, functional expressions, and understanding and use of proverbs, idioms, and trendy expressions.

Discourse competence:
Refers to the ability to express ideas logically and coherently by constructing appropriate discourse beyond individual sentences. Fluency is also included as an evaluation factor, adjusted according to learner level.

Strategic competence:
Refers to verbal and nonverbal strategies used to enhance communication efficiency and solve communication problems, such as paraphrasing or asking for help. While helpful, strategies that excessively avoid communicative goals may be evaluated negatively.

Educational Goals and Assessment Criteria for Beginner Learners

Learning content:
Language necessary for basic daily life. Learners should understand and use basic vocabulary and fundamental grammar rules.

Assessment goals:

- Ability to conduct simple conversations or tell short stories on personal topics
- Ability to speak in common daily situations and very basic formal contexts

Topics and themes:
Self-introduction, greetings, family, holidays, location, shopping, dates, weather, hobbies, hospital, ordering, appointments, places, pain, time, reasons, movies, banks, shapes, colors, and other common personal daily-life topics.

Learning functions:

- Accurate pronunciation of Hangul letters
- Basic daily communication
- Appropriate situational expressions
- Use of honorifics
- Limited formal-situation dialogue ability
- Natural speaking speed through practice of learned vocabulary and sentence patterns

Vocabulary and grammar scope for assessment:

- Survival vocabulary
- Vocabulary related to common daily topics
- Frequently used public-facility vocabulary
- Basic sentence structures and grammar rules

Text/task types:

Answering questions, role plays, simple interviews, map descriptions, picture/photo descriptions, chart explanations, and prepared storytelling presentations.

Speaking Assessment Methods

According to the Korean Language Standard Curriculum (2020:28), because speaking assessment measures actual language use, **direct assessment** and **performance assessment** are essential.

Direct assessment:

Evaluation through direct observation of speaking performance, such as one-on-one interviews, group discussions, and presentations.

Performance assessment:

Evaluation of language use through task completion, such as project-based work, role plays, and simulations.

Assessment should reflect discourse-community language practices, evaluating not only grammatical accuracy but also appropriateness and sociocultural language choice. Tasks should vary according to learner level and goals, including both dialogic and monologic formats. Social context — participant relationships and degree of formality — must also be considered. Assessment should function as a developmental tool by providing detailed feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

Goals and Achievement Standards of the Speaking Curriculum

Speaking curriculum goals should be organized based on principles such as behavioral description, hierarchy, comprehensiveness, frequency of use, sequencing, continuity, integration, limitation, spiral progression, and difficulty control, as presented in the Korean Language Standard Curriculum (2020:13–14).

By level, topics progress from familiar daily conversations to social and abstract themes, and at advanced levels to professional and academic domains. Level 6 requires fluent and accurate performance in professional and academic speaking tasks such as formal argumentation and discussion. Level 5 includes professional contexts but in more limited scope, emphasizing general work and academic communication rather than specialized discourse.

Conclusion

Speaking assessment is a crucial component of the curriculum, aimed at improving communicative competence. It should be performance-based and grounded in authentic situations, considering grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.

Assessment purposes must reflect learners' current expressive ability, and diverse assessment types should be used, including reading-and-responding, interviews, visual-based speaking, information-gap tasks, role plays, audiovisual retelling, discussions, presentations, and interpreting.

Speaking instruction should balance grammatical accuracy and communicative fluency according to learning goals and teach natural speech aligned with Korean discourse conventions. Appropriate assessment formats — interviews, pair work, group role plays, presentations — should be selected, and evaluation should include task performance, participation attitude, and pronunciation and intonation understandable to native speakers.

Reference

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