

Development of Speaking Skill in English Language through Rote Learning

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the role of Rote Learning in students' achievement in speaking skill of English language. A sample of fifty students was randomly selected from Government Shaheed Waseem Iqbal High School Tarkha Nowshera to engage the study. To make the study limited, the students were pre-tested and then divided into two equal groups of control and experimental groups. The teaching of control group remained unchanged while the experimental group was taught through Rote Learning. Different methods of Rote learning like Chunking, Rhyming, Mediation, Recital and Bridging were used for the study of experimental group. The data was analyzed by paired sample T-test. The result showed that the students who were engaged through Rote Learning showed good result as compared to those students who were not taught through Rote Learning. The study revealed that Rote Learning had an effective role in the improvement of speaking skill in the study of English.

Keywords: Rote Learning, speaking skill, English Language.

Introduction

Rote learning means to learn a piece of information by repeating it. It means that it is the repetition of the items produced by the mouth and tongue of the students. It is consistently used by the students when they need quick learning. Like memorizing a cell phone number or a dialogue in a drama and especially verses in poetry are the example, where the students use rote learning. Poetry of almost all languages of the world is learnt by Rote learning. The basic knowledge of every subject is also learnt by the use of rote learning. For example, translation of English textbook, forms of verb or degrees of adjective. Some other examples are the use of periodic table in the subject of chemistry, cases or statutes in the study law, anatomy in the study of medicine, tables in mathematics, and basic formulae in all sciences. In rote learning, the student will gaze somewhere else but his tongue will repeat the words and his pen will write. It is also said that rote learning is the counter part of discovery learning at the beginning stages of the child learning (Pappas, 2012).

According to Mayer (2002), people are having misinterpretation about the use of rote learning. He further explains that sometimes rote learning is misinterpreted with the

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traditional expressions like parrot work or cramming. Some teachers are of the view, if a student learns something by rote learning, it will not give him a real concept of learning. According to Schwartz (2015) memorizing trains our brain, and helps us to become better at learning, but eventually there isn't any indication that memorizing makes you any better at learning. It's sort of a quick-fix solution to learning. Part of long-term learning is essentially connecting and integrating things into things that you already know, whereas memorizing is more of a surface-level technique.

Statement of the Problem

It is also seen that most of the students use rote learning in their study but they are not utilizing Rote Learning. The study of the basic skills of language in English is very important. Rote learning can play a key role in the improvement of speaking skill in English language. Taking all the above points the researcher has explored the role of rote learning in students' achievement in speaking skill of English at secondary level. Further, the study has tried to explore how the teacher use this method of rote learning to accomplish teaching English language effectively.

Objective of the Study

To study the role of rote learning in English language teaching and learning in district Nowshera, the below stated objective was tried to be achieved through this experimental study.

- a) The following rote learning in students' achievement in Speaking skill of English language.

Hypotheses of the Study

The above stated objective was tried to be achieved by testing the following null hypotheses with respect to Rote Learning.

- a) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in speaking skill of English with respect to Rote Learning on pre-test.
- b) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in speaking skill of English with respect to Rote Learning on post-test.
- c) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in speaking skill of English with respect to Rote Learning on retention-test.

Significance of the Study

Rote learning remained an important thing for debate in education system for the whole world. Rote learning also remained as an issue for a long time. No one can deny the

importance of English language in our country. This study will be very useful for all the teachers teaching English textbook at secondary level. This study tried to explain how we can take rote learning as a positive aspect of teaching English in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It will help the student how they can utilize rote learning in the development of speaking skill in English language. The study tried to help the teachers in using rote learning technique and improve the speaking skill of the students of English language.

Methods and Procedure

Population

All the students of grade IX studying English as subject in district Nowshera constituted the population of the study.

Sample

Government Shaheed Waseem Iqbal High School Tarkha was selected as target school for the study. Fifty boy students were selected from class IX of the targeted school. Two groups (Experimental Group and Control Group) were formed from these fifty students through pair random sampling on the basis of pre-test result.

Research Instrument

The researcher used a teacher made test for the study. The test comprised of the first five units of the English textbook 1 Grade IX. The requirements of speaking skill ability and required students learning outcome was also observed during the formation of the research instrument. In the first step the students were pre-tested. On the level of pre-test, the students were divided into two equal groups for the study.

Data Collection

Two teachers of the same designation, qualification and experience were selected to teach the prescribed two groups for a period of eight weeks. The experimental group was taught for eight weeks or 48 classes of 40 minutes each as treatment through rote learning. The control group remained on the traditional method as there was no change in their teaching method. The first five units of the 9th class English textbook were taken as the course to be taught in this experimental study. The researcher administered three tests (pre-test, post-test and retention-test) for the data collection. After the completion of eight week teaching, a post-test was taken from both the groups.

Data Analysis

After the treatment the data of all the three tests were gathered. Paired sample t-test and analysis of variance was used for the analysis of the data taken from all the three tests.

SPSS software was used for the data analysis. First, the Pre-test of both groups was analyzed through t-test. After the treatment the post-test was also analyzed by t-test. Same was the procedure for retention-test.

Literature Review

Rote learning is known as learning by repetition of the learning items. This is a method of learning by memorizing the information. This memorization is generally accomplished by the repetition of actions such as recitation or reading. The theory behind this learning practice is that students will learn facts after repeated study. The student will be able to receive those facts whenever he needs. In present times, the use of rote learning is highly criticized by some teachers and parents who state that it makes the students habitual like parrots who need no necessary understanding of these facts. Further, in their view it does not lead the students to ask question or analyze the information they have learned. Some of the educators are also of the view that rote learning is needed in certain situations. For instance, the students who are beginners in their education have to use only rote learning and no other method or technique. These children must acquire basic understanding so they may carry on and develop skills like creativity and critical thinking. For the learning of reading in any language, the students have to memorize the alphabets of that language as first step (Mangal, 2007).

The higher mathematical skills are prefaced by the use of rote learning like multiplication tables. Supporters of rote learning state that deep understanding of the alphabet and the multiplication tables are not necessary. The important thing is that students quickly memorize these materials like alphabets and tables. There are some special cases in educational environment where rote learning can play an important role as learning technique. It can be the special need of the classroom. Students who are suffering from learning disabilities like dysgraphia or dyslexia. Here at this stage the students require repetition to learn new things and facts. In fact, students with such disabilities can only be able to learn by rote (Sinhaneti, 2012).

Techniques for Memorization

Some principles and procedures which are recycled to assist in rote memorization are discussed below:

The first one is mnemonic. According to Brotle (2011), mnemonic is a type of memory assistance. Mnemonics are often verbal and are like very short poems. Sometime they are like distinctive word used to help a person to recollect something, mainly lists. They may be pictorial links or acoustic. Mnemonics depend on the relations between easy-to-remember and create which can be connected back to the data to be remembered. The second one is a link system of mnemonics. It is a technique of remembering lists of information, based on generating a relationship between the different modules of that information. Take an instance like one person wants to remember the list (dog, envelope,

thirteen, yarn, and window), one can create a connection of links, like a story about a "dog confined in an envelope, dispatched to an unproductive black cat in performance with anecdote by the door near window". It is then appealed that the story would be unperturbed to remember than the preceding list itself. One can imagine a dog inside a giant envelope, and then envision an unlucky black cat eating the gigantic envelope.

The third one is peg system technique. According to Foer, (2011) peg system technique is a technique used for memorizing information in a list. This practice works on the pre-memorized list of words that are easy to connect with the numbers. Numbers can be represented like (1 to 10, 1 to 100, etc.). These substances create the pegs of the system. In future, it will help to remember a list of random items. Each item is associated with the appropriate peg. A list of pegs only has to be remembered once a time, and can be secondhand over every time, when a list of substances needs to be recalled. The peg lists which are made from words that are easy to link with the letters or statistics. Peg lists shaped from letters or rhymes of the alphabet are very easy to learn. The fourth technique is phonetic number system. This system is also like mnemonic technique, which is helpful in memorizing numbers. This system works by changing numbers first into appropriate consonant sounds, then shifting into words by the accumulation of vowels.

The next procedure is the Method of loci. It is a procedure for remembering information. This system has been practiced since classical times. This system is based on places or loci. Loci mean locations. It is repeatedly used where a prolonged lists of items need to be recalled. The technique was used for a long time in many places as a part of schooling. It empowers a speaker to easily recall a speech. It also helps the students to simply learn a portion of information (Bernstein, 2010).

Rote Learning as a Learning Tool

We can use rote memorization as perfect tool for learning, like learning of alphabets in English. We also use the same thing in learning irregular verbs in second language. We learn the morphology of second language in a short time. Rote learning is mostly used in these cases. We have to memorize it. The native speakers of a language develop these basic skills unconsciously by routine and their experience. These experiences can be video or audio. These experiences are in short bits. These bits are combined in a special rhythm and so they make a long series of sentences paragraphs. Like we recite our national anthem every day but we do not know the meaning of these verses used in national anthem. This is attributed to rote learning only. Like this we learn many things by rote learning in our daily life. Many words are repeated in public. We hardly pay attention to these things but they remain rooted in our day to day life (Lucas, 2001).

Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is related to our mouth and tongue. According to Zaremba (2006) speaking is the most significant skill of all the four skills of English language. It is a vocalized ability of human beings. It is the combination of different phonetics vowel and consonants. It has some sounds units. Speech has syntax structure. Everything has a distinct sound for presentation. Many people can communicate in more than one language. This ability of speech not only enable the man to speak but also gives the ability to sing. Deaf people who cannot speak have a language of sign. They try to present their idea through signs. Speech in most of the cultures of the world became a base for the written language.

Osborn (2008) stated that a good speaking ability is a benefit for the individual as well as for the organization. If you are able to express your words in the best possible way people will understand it easily and will respond quickly. Speaking skill helps in many situations like ceremonial speaking activity, job training activities and interview etc.

Zaremba (2006) presented through a study that speaking skill is improved by work and experience. Motivation and academic quality can help here a lot. Teacher should take help from these things to improve the speaking power of the students. It is also said that foreign language learners of English hardly catch the opportunity to express their words in a situation suitable for English.

According to Macaro (2010), speaking is different for different circumstances. The situation leads the speakers to respond accordingly. If the speaker is able to communicate his /her idea in the relevant situation, s/he has good communication skill. Public speaking is very important here because every crowd has its own limitation and merits. The speakers must keep this thing in mind while dealing different type of audience. Speaking is basically for audience, therefore they must be kept in consideration. Speaking with specific audience is different from the day to day conversation. It involves organization of thoughts, message, topic and feedback of the listeners. There are many other factors which affect the speaking skill of the speaker. These factors are effective for good performance in speaking. These factors are pronunciation, vocabulary, and association. How much vocabulary is possessed by a speaker? How the speaker is pronouncing the words. Is he able to associate the meaning of words properly?

Patil (2008) stated that English language speaking skill can be improved by competence and confidence of the learners. He further explained that confidence will remove the fear of the learner in front of other people whom he will face. In this way, most of his errors will be removed and English speaking will improve. The learner will feel relaxed. Proper syllabus design, instructional method, time and proper materials are needed for the improvement of confidence and competence.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group in speaking skill of English on pre-test.

Table 1: Significance of difference between control and experimental groups in speaking skill on pre-test.

Group	N	M	S. D	T	P
Control Group	25	4.8	2.0	-2.24	2.25*
Experimental Group.	25	3.9	1.3		

Table value of t at 0.05= 1.711 * insignificant

The above table shows the result of pre-test on speaking skill. The data taken from the students, for the speaking skill shows that the mean score of the control group was 4.8 and experimental group mean score was 3.9. The S.D was 2.0 in control group while in experimental group the S.D was 1.3. The t-score was -2.24. The t-score was also very low and not a significant one. This level of significance was not equivalent to the required level of significance which was 0.05. The required score of t was 1.711. The pre-test result was insignificant in speaking skill of English. This data accepts the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean score of control group and experimental group of rote learning on speaking skill in the learning of English language.

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental group and control group speaking skill of English on post-test.

Table 2: Significance of difference between control and experimental groups in speaking skill on post-test.

Group	N	M	S.D	T	P
Control Group	25	9.0	2.3	47.5	0.00*
Experimental Group	25	18.7	1.8		

Table value of t at 0.05= 1.711 * significant

Table 2 shows the result of post-test on speaking skill of the students. This table also shows how much the treatment was effective in respect of rote learning. The post-test results on speaking skill was totally different from the pre-test result. The mean score was increased to 18.7 in experimental group and 9.0 in control group. The mean score apparently shows that the treatment was effective. The difference between the mean scores of both groups was 9.7. Improvement can be seen here. The S.D of control group was 2.3 whether the S.D of experimental group reached 1.8. The t-score was also increased and came to 47.5. The significance of the value was 0.00. In short, our post-test

shows that the treatment was effective and the researcher has to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is significant difference of rote learning in speaking skill between the mean score of experimental group and control group of students in the subject of English.

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean score of experimental group and control group in speaking skill of English on Retention-test.

Table 3: Significance of difference between control group and experimental group in speaking skill on Retention-test

Group	N	M	S.D	T	P
Control Group	25	8.5	1.5	22.14	0.00*
Experimental Group.	25	18.2	2.9		

Table value of t at 0.05= 1.711 * significant

Table.3 shows the result of retention-test in the speaking skill of the students. The retention test on the speaking skill of the students' shows, that rote learning has an effect on retention power in the study of English. The mean score of control group was 8.5 while experimental group got 18.2 mean score. Still there is a significant difference in means of both the groups. The difference in the mean score was 9.7. The S.D was 1.5 in control group while experimental group showed 2.9 S.D. The t-score on the retention test of speaking skill in rote learning was 22.14. That was also not a bad score. The significance was 0.00. It shows that the treatment given through rote learning was effective. As the significance was less than 0.05, so it has to reject the null hypothesis of the study and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Discussion

English language learning is a complex process for those students who get it as second or foreign language. With the passage of time many new methods were evolved to teach English language. All the past researches showed that every method of teaching English has its own importance. This study explored how a teacher can take rote learning and use it in the learning of speaking skill in English language. Along with it the study also explored the role of rote learning in the learning of English language at secondary level boys' students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After the treatment when the students took their post-test according to the study, the mean score of experimental group students was higher than those of control group students. The level of significance also increased in post-test result for the speaking skill of the students. Thus the null hypothesis was discarded and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This result also supports the idea of Butler (2011) that speaking power of the students can be improved with use of rote learning. Rote learning leads the students to improve their vocabulary in English language. Result of the retention-test was also significant one. It is also accepted that rote

learning leads to retention power. The words learnt by rote learning are the part of vocabulary for a long time.

Conclusion

The result of this study showed that the students taught through rote learning technique, got high score than the students who were not taught through rote learning. In the light of the statistical result of the study it is concluded that the Rote Learning method can be used like any other method of English language teaching. The students who were taught through rote learning were good in speaking of English than those who were in control group. It is concluded that rote learning can be used like any other teaching methods for the development of speaking skill in English language.

Recommendations

By taking the result, discussion and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

The study showed that speaking skill can be improved through rote learning technique. So it is suggested that while teaching the speaking skill in English language through rote learning, the teacher should give practice to students only on specific words and should not use extra words in the class. If the teacher uses extra words in drilling of the lesson in the class, these extra words will be memorized by the students. Practice should only be given of the targeted words.

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