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INTEGRATING THE CULTURE OF ORAL SPEECH INTO THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Integrating the culture of oral speech into the educational programs of primary school teachers is crucial for fostering effective communication skills and enhancing classroom dynamics. As teachers serve as linguistic role models, their ability to articulate clearly, convey concepts effectively, and engage students in dialogue is essential to student learning and development. This article examines the importance of embedding oral speech culture into teacher training programs, highlighting the need for fluency, clarity, and engagement in verbal communication. By developing these skills, teachers can better manage classrooms, promote language development, and foster critical thinking among young learners. The article also discusses practical strategies for incorporating oral communication practices into teacher education, such as workshops, role-playing exercises, and reflective speech training, ensuring that new teachers are equipped with the skills needed for modern classrooms.

KEYWORDS

Oral speech culture, teacher education, primary school, communication skills, classroom management, language development, fluency, teacher training.

INTRODUCTION

Oral communication is the cornerstone of effective teaching, especially in primary education, where teachers guide students through their foundational learning stages. Developing a strong culture of oral speech in primary school teachers is essential to create

an environment where students can thrive linguistically, socially, and academically. Despite the critical role oral communication plays in education, many teacher training programs focus more on content knowledge and pedagogy than on the quality

of verbal interaction.[1] This article explores the importance of integrating the culture of oral speech into the educational programs of primary school teachers, examining its benefits and offering practical solutions for its implementation. The culture of oral speech, a fascinating and complex aspect of human interaction, encompasses the ways in which we use language to communicate, the social norms and expectations surrounding speech, and the impact of language on our identity and cultural understanding.

Examples of Cultural Variation in Oral Speech:

Greetings: The way people greet each other varies significantly across cultures. In some cultures, a handshake is the norm, while in others, a bow or a hug is more common.[2]

Politeness: The use of honorifics and other polite forms of address can vary considerably. Some cultures emphasize formality, while others are more relaxed.

Humor: The types of humor that are considered acceptable can be influenced by cultural values and beliefs.

The Importance of Understanding Oral Speech Culture:

Effective Communication: Understanding the cultural norms and expectations surrounding oral speech is essential for effective communication with people from different backgrounds.

Cultural Sensitivity: Being aware of the ways in which language can be used to express cultural values and beliefs can help us to be more sensitive and respectful of other cultures.

Intercultural Understanding: Understanding oral speech culture can help us to bridge cultural gaps and

promote better understanding between people from different backgrounds.

1. The Importance of Oral Speech Culture in Teaching

The culture of oral speech refers to the ability to communicate clearly, fluently, and effectively in a way that engages listeners and conveys meaning accurately. For primary school teachers, these skills are especially important, as they serve as the first point of contact for students in formal education.[3] A teacher's speech not only imparts knowledge but also models proper language use, fosters critical thinking, and creates an inclusive classroom atmosphere.

Why Oral Speech Culture is Vital for Teachers:

- **Language Development:** Young children learn language by listening and imitating. Teachers' use of correct grammar, pronunciation, and clear articulation helps students acquire linguistic skills.[4]
- **Classroom Management:** Teachers who communicate effectively are better able to maintain discipline, convey instructions, and engage students in learning.
- **Cognitive Development:** Teachers who pose thought-provoking questions and engage in meaningful dialogue with students stimulate cognitive growth and critical thinking.

Oral communication also supports emotional and social development, as students learn to express themselves, listen to others, and participate in collaborative conversations. Therefore, integrating a robust culture of oral speech into teacher education is key to shaping effective educators.

2. Challenges in Teaching Oral Speech Culture

Despite its importance, the development of oral communication skills in primary school teachers often faces several challenges:

- **Lack of Focus in Teacher Training Programs:** Many teacher education programs emphasize pedagogical theory, classroom management, and subject expertise but pay little attention to the cultivation of oral communication skills. As a result, new teachers may lack the ability to engage students verbally and communicate with clarity and confidence.
- **Overemphasis on Technology:** The growing reliance on digital tools in education has led to a decline in the prioritization of oral communication. While technology can enhance learning, it often reduces opportunities for face-to-face verbal interaction, leading to a diminished focus on developing speaking and listening skills.[5]
- **Time Constraints:** In modern education systems, there is often limited time for oral language activities such as storytelling, debates, or presentations, which hinders the opportunity for teachers to model effective speech and for students to practice these skills.

3. Strategies for Integrating Oral Speech Culture into Teacher Training Programs

To address these challenges and integrate the culture of oral speech into primary school teacher education, several strategies can be employed:

a. Workshops and Training on Verbal Communication

Workshops that focus specifically on improving oral communication skills can be a valuable addition to

teacher training programs.[6] These workshops should cover:

- **Articulation and Clarity:** Helping teachers speak clearly and confidently, using proper pronunciation and intonation.
- **Engagement Techniques:** Training teachers to use verbal techniques such as questioning, storytelling, and interactive discussion to keep students engaged.
- **Managing Classroom Dialogue:** Teachers need to learn how to guide student discussions effectively, ensuring that every voice is heard while maintaining focus on the lesson.

Workshops should also address the non-verbal aspects of communication, such as body language, facial expressions, and eye contact, which are important for creating an engaging classroom environment.

b. Role-Playing and Simulation Exercises

Role-playing and simulations are excellent ways to practice oral communication in real-life scenarios. By acting out common classroom situations, teachers can develop the skills needed to respond verbally to various challenges, such as managing disruptions, explaining difficult concepts, or guiding group work.

Benefits of Role-Playing:

- Provides teachers with hands-on experience in handling classroom dialogue.
- Helps them practice clear articulation, tone modulation, and pacing.

- Allows for immediate feedback from peers and instructors, helping teachers refine their skills in a supportive environment.[7]

c. Reflection and Self-Assessment on Speech Culture

Encouraging teachers to reflect on their communication skills is another important aspect of developing oral speech culture. Teachers can record their lessons and reflect on their speech patterns, clarity, and engagement levels. Peer feedback and self-assessment can be incorporated into teacher training programs to help identify strengths and areas for improvement.

4. Benefits of Integrating Oral Speech Culture in Primary Education

Embedding the culture of oral speech in teacher education programs has several key benefits:

- **Enhanced Classroom Communication:** Teachers who develop strong verbal communication skills are better able to explain concepts clearly, give precise instructions, and engage students in meaningful dialogue.
- **Improved Student Outcomes:** When teachers model good communication, students not only learn the subject matter more effectively but also improve their own speaking, listening, and comprehension skills. This supports both academic and social development.[8]
- **Stronger Teacher-Student Relationships:** Teachers who communicate clearly and empathetically are more likely to build strong, trusting relationships with their students. This fosters a positive classroom

environment, where students feel comfortable participating and expressing themselves.

5. Challenges and Future Directions

While the integration of oral speech culture into teacher training is essential, there are some challenges to overcome, such as curriculum overload and the fast pace of technological advancements in education. Balancing the use of digital tools with oral communication is key to creating a well-rounded educational experience. Additionally, ongoing professional development should be provided to help teachers continue improving their communication skills throughout their careers.

CONCLUSION

The integration of oral speech culture into the educational programs of primary school teachers is fundamental to fostering effective teaching and enhancing student learning. By focusing on verbal communication, teacher training programs can equip educators with the skills needed to engage, instruct, and inspire students.[9] As classrooms continue to evolve with new technologies, it is essential to maintain the human connection that oral communication provides, ensuring that both teachers and students benefit from a balanced, linguistically rich educational experience. The culture of oral speech is a fascinating and complex aspect of human experience. It shapes our communication, our sense of identity, and our understanding of the world around us. By studying and appreciating the diversity of oral speech cultures, we can become better communicators, more culturally sensitive individuals, and ultimately, more informed global citizens.

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