ON THE WAY TO BECOME EFFECTIVE LISTENERS THROUGH PEER LEARNING

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Problems
• Students do not listen to their friends while carrying out in class activities. (Observed Problem)
• Some of them do not think that they can learn from their friends. (Reported Problem)

Research question:
• How can we help our students become effective listeners through peer learning in class sessions?

Participants
40 Students
From different departments.
Pre-intermediate level

Data Collection Tools:
• Informal interviews with students
• Teacher journal
• Learning log entries

How well do you listen?
The Effective Listening Activities We Tried

GROUP STORY TELLING
This was a whole class activity, where one participant acted as a moderator delivering the first line of the story (once upon a time there was an English man) and writing the story as each student in the class contributed to the story by making up his/her own line using his creativity.

Before each student made his /her own line s/he has to repeat the previous lines of the other participants.

Our Reflections:
We observed that while repeating the lines each participant had an eye contact with the owner of that particular line of the story, which made them to remember the lines. It motivated them to listen attentively.

Students’ reflections:
Student E: Everybody in the class focused on the activity without being distracted during the whole class hour for the first time and it was a useful and enjoyable activity while learning new words. This extra activity motivated and relaxed us.

Student I: It was a beneficial activity which improved the mind. I learned new ideas and it taught me how to use linking words to make up a story.

Student J: I found the activity useful in terms of practicing English, understanding our friends’ pronunciation and improving my memory. I also learned new grammar item and words from my friends.

Student L: It was a good activity for instant thinking and short term memory and gaining these skills will be helpful in speaking exams.

Student D: This activity exercised our brain and it improved our listening and speaking skills. I learned to control my excitement from my friends.

Student N: We tried to think creatively. We listened to the story carefully to keep everything in mind. I learned new words from my friends. More students participated in the activity.

Student A: We tried to use the tenses correctly and tested our memory and learned new words.

Students G: It was useful in terms of understanding what you have listened, learning new words. Such activities should be done more often.

Ice breaker
We tried this activity to show students how important to listen to one another as a preparation to the next activity. We divided the group into two. We asked the group A to go out of the class to create mystery. While the A group was waiting outside the class, we asked the participants in group B to think of a topic to discuss with their pair waiting outside. Then we went out to tell the participants to ignore their partners while they are trying to convey their message.

Our Reflections: One minute after the activity started some of the students shouted out complaining that their partners were not listening to them. Until the participants in group B figured out the purpose of the activity, some of them tried to deliver their message and the others got offended and stopped talking.

Students’ reflections:
Student G: We realized that we should listen to each other carefully to continue the communication.

Student F: I learned the importance of listening.

Whole Class Discussion:
We selected some quotes related to good manners and bad manners on the internet and opened a whole class discussion about these quotes, which took a class hour.

Our reflection: They revised some useful expressions when they agreed or disagreed with their friend’s ideas. They learned to look at things from different perspectives. They improved their range of vocabulary while generating ideas.

Students’ reflection: This activity worked for our purposes to some extent. Therefore we couldn’t get as many reflections as we got in the previous activities.

Student F: It improved the ability to make sentences and we learned to share ideas openly in a discussion.

Student K: We learned to look at things from different perspectives.

CLASS MEMORY QUIZ
First, each student has a go in terms of asking questions to their peers and answering their peers’ questions too. Then, we held a quiz about the first part of the activity whether they remember the information about their friends.

Our reflections:
Students aimed to concentrate more on what they were doing and improve their range of vocabulary, revise the grammar covered in previous class sessions and they could remember more information as they were interested in getting to know one another better.

Students’ reflections:
Student A: We got to know each other better. Therefore I believe that our communication will increase in a positive way. I learned different points of view. I both improved my English and had fun. I learned new words. We could do this activity again...

Student C: We asked questions in English. This was a both listening and speaking activity. We revised past tense. We should do such activities very often.

Student D: This session was fun and interesting. We did brainstorming to ask questions to our friends. I learned new words.

Student E: We got to know each other better. I learned new words. I learned the meaning of ‘motto’.

Student G: I found this activity beneficial in terms of focusing, following and understanding what is said, using the time efficiently and participating in the activity.