

The Views of German Preparatory Language Programme Students about German Speaking Activity

Authors : Eda Üstünel, Seval Karacabey

Abstract : The students, who are enrolled in German Preparatory Language Programme at the School of Foreign Languages, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Turkey, learn German as a foreign language for two semesters in an academic year. Although the language programme is a skills-based one, the students lack German speaking skills due to their fear of making language mistakes while speaking in German. This problem of incompetency in German speaking skills exists also in their four-year departmental study at the Faculty of Education. In order to address this problem we design German speaking activities, which are extra-curricular activities. With the help of these activities, we aim to lead Turkish students of German language to speak in the target language, to improve their speaking skills in the target language and to create a stress-free atmosphere and a meaningful learning environment to communicate in the target language. In order to achieve these aims, an ERASMUS+ exchange staff (a German trainee teacher of German as a foreign language), who is from Schwabisch Gmünd University, Germany, conducted out-of-class German speaking activities once a week for three weeks in total. Each speaking activity is lasted for one and a half hour per week. 7 volunteered students of German preparatory language programme attended the speaking activity for three weeks. The activity took place at a cafe in the university campus, that's the reason, we call it as an out-of-class activity. The content of speaking activity is not related to the topics studied at the units of coursebook, that's the reason, we call this activity as extra-curricular one. For data collection, three tools are used. A questionnaire, which is an adapted version of Sabo's questionnaire, is applied to seven volunteers. An interview session is then held with each student on individual basis. The interview questions are developed so as to ask students to expand their answers that are given at the questionnaires. The German trainee teacher wrote fieldnotes, in which the teacher described the activity in the light of her thoughts about what went well and which areas were needed to be improved. The results of questionnaires show that six out of seven students note that such an activity must be conducted by a native speaker of German. Four out of seven students emphasize that they like the way that the activities are designed in a learner-centred fashion. All of the students point out that they feel motivated to talk to the trainee teacher in German. Six out of seven students note that the opportunity to communicate in German with the teacher and the peers enable them to improve their speaking skills, the use of grammatical rules and the use of vocabulary.

Keywords : Learning a Foreign Language, Speaking Skills, Teaching German as a Foreign Language, Turkish Learners of German Language

Conference Title : ICE 2017 : International Conference on Education

Conference Location : Berlin, Germany

Conference Dates : May 21-22, 2017