

THE USAGE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS

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Annotation: This article is dedicated to the usage of modern technologies in teaching speaking skills. Speaking is one of the skills that have to be mastered by students in learning English. Speaking is an essential tool for communicating. In the classroom, improving the speaking abilities of students has always been a concern. In the fast developing 21st century various innovative technologies are being introduced to teach speaking skill in the classrooms. Technology is the vehicle to get access with this modernized world. More than the process of communication, trade and transactions, today technology is widely used in educational sectors. Technological tools have been regarded as ways of helping students improve language skills such as speaking skill. Internet, podcasts, video conferencing, videos and speech recognition software are considered the best tools for teaching speaking skill. So, this paper aims to discuss some modern technologies available for teachers of English today to enhance speaking skill of second or foreign language learners.

Key words: skills, speaking, tools, communication, learning, interaction, modern technologies, improvement, real-life situations, process, verbal and non-verbal symbols, contexts, messengers, videoconferencing software, digital.

Speaking is deemed to be the most important in learning a second or foreign language. As stated by Ur, speaking included all other skills of knowing that language. Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching, it's an art of communications and one of 4 productive skills, that must mastered in learning foreign language. Good speaking skills are the act of generating words that can be understood by listeners. According to Brown and Yule, speaking is the skill that the students will be judged upon most in real-life situations [1,74].

It is an important part of everyday interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on his/her ability to speak fluently and comprehensively. In the development of speaking skills digital technology plays various roles. It can be a means of communication between learners via messengers and videoconferencing software. It also allows for the use of audiovisual materials that support oral production by providing patterns or by empowering students to produce their own audiovisual texts, which involves recording and rehearsing speech samples and editing them. The use of digital technology also creates language learning environments in virtual worlds, in games, and in interactions with digital "robots." It further helps to provide immediate feedback on oral production in speech-to-text applications and enables learners to hear what they write. Although analog technologies (e.g., audiolingual labs) were widely used for developing speaking in the 1970s this entry focuses on the current potential of digital technology and its application in teaching practices [3,135].

Of all four key language skills, speaking is deemed to be the most important in learning a second or foreign language. As stated by Ur, speaking included all other skills of knowing that language. Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts". Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching, it's an art of communications and one of 4 productive skills, that must mastered in learning foreign language. Good speaking skills are the act of generating words that can be understood by listeners. According to Brown and Yule, speaking is the skill that the

students will be judged upon most in real-life situations. It is an important part of everyday interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on his/her ability to speak fluently and comprehensively. So, teachers have a responsibility to prepare the students as much as possible to be able to speak in English in the real world outside the classroom. Despite its importance, for many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues.

However, today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because, only in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. In the preliminary stage, teachers used tape recorders as a technological device to instruct the students, which later evolved as communication laboratory. The integration of technology into language teaching which was started in the early 1960s and 1970s, assisted teachers to teach second language learners how to speak in the best way possible. Every day teachers are getting access to some new technologies, which join hand with English teaching.

As the conventional teaching method such as the chalk and talk method seems to be outdated, the modern technologies can be used as a supplement to the classroom teaching method to have a lively atmosphere in the classroom. It is the need of the hour to integrate modern technologies to upgrade the level of English teaching. The modern technologies relax the mind of the students to get into the subject with full involvement rather than a difficult task to do. New technologies in language learning by multiple intelligence and mixed abilities replace with old methods of teaching.

Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching:

- The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners.

- Our learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

- Oral skills have hardly been neglected in today's EFL/ESL courses.

Teaching speaking is to teach our learners to:

- Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns.

- Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.

- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting audience, situation and subject matter.

- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.

- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.

- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency.

There are some categories that can be used as the role of learners in developing speaking skills in the classroom [2,155]:

- Intensive - It goes one step beyond imitative to include any speaking performances that are designed to practice some phonological or grammatical aspects of language.

- Responsive - It consists of short replies to teacher-or student-initiated questions or comments.

- Transactional (dialogue) - Transactional language, carried out for the purposes of conveying or exchanging specific information, is an extended form of responsive language.

- Interpersonal (dialogue) - It carried out more the purpose of maintaining social relationships than for the transmission of a fact and information. These conversations are little trickier for learners because they can involve some or all of the following factors - a casual register, colloquial language, emotionally charged language, slang and sarcasm.

- Extensive (monolog) - Here the register is more formal and deliberative. It can be planned or impromptu.

Technology can stimulate the playfulness of learners and immerse them in a variety of scenarios. Technology gives learners a chance to engage in self-directed actions, opportunities for self-paced interactions, privacy, and a safe environment in which errors get corrected and specific feedback is given. Feedback by a machine offers additional value by its ability to track mistakes and link the student immediately to exercises that focus on specific errors. Studies are emerging that show the importance of qualitative feedback in softwares. When links are provided to locate explanations, additional help, and reference, the value of technology is further augmented. Modern technologies available in education today are:

Software's are available to develop speaking skills. By incorporating suitable software through computers the students will play it again and again with their own interest and try to improve their speaking skills, which are most essential in this modernized IT world. The usage of headphones in the lab makes the students to have interest over the subject and induces them to repeat again and again instead of feeling boredom.

Speech recognition software also helps improving the students speaking, this can convert spoken words to machine-readable input. The device recognizes the accuracy of what was read and then provides a positive reinforcement like "You sound great!" or gives the user an opportunity to try again, in this way the learner can figure if he is reading well or not. As the user's skill improves, the technology reads less material so that the learner reads more. This software also evaluates and provides scores of grammar, pronunciation, comprehension and provided with the correct forms, for examples if a student mispronounces a word, the learning tool can immediately spot it and help correct it. This device can be a very useful device for distance learners because they don't have a teacher who corrects their speech and this device can help improving their speaking skills.

Internet is a commonly acknowledged term and widely used by people throughout the world. Students now use Internet in the class to learn English. Online teaching inside the classroom seems to be interesting and makes the students to find out the suitable materials for them. Students are instructed to do the grammar exercises which are available online. Through Internet we can collect data from various sources for any instruction. to improve speaking, students can use Skype, MSM Messenger, Google talk (used to have conferences on line) and other applications where students can connect with friends, other students, teacher and even native speakers, these ways of learning have been observed to improve oral proficiency in students and make up for the lack of native speakers in the areas where students live and what is more, on line conferences also enhance intercultural awareness, motivation and raise the level of interaction. Over the internet, students can find a lot of learning materials, for instance, audio, video, radio and TV shows, games, voice recordings, quizzes, podcasts and so on , in this way, students get exposed to a great amount of target language and this help them develop their speaking skills [10,235].

TELL is the use of computer technology including hardware, software and the internet to enhance teaching and learning of languages. It allows the students to get access with all the technologies available for the enhancement of English learning. Students are allowed to use online dictionaries, chat, and to view the various happenings around the world.

Podcasts can be uploaded or downloaded, this audio help the learner familiarize with the target language and teachers can use them as useful audio material that can be used in class for activities like discussions, besides, in the web, there are even particular podcasts that are for ESL learners and these can include pronunciation for particular needs of students. Podcast undoubtedly help learners in speaking. Pod casting is the integration of audio files where we can feed our own materials and ply it inside and outside of the classroom. Students use i-pods to hear their favorite music files. In the same way they have their education in the form of entertainment. Podcasting allows students to use their tech-based entertainment systems for educational purposes. With it we are able to move away from the traditional face-to-face training without

losing the student-to-trainer relationship that is so effective in any learning process. Podcasts enables students and teachers to share information with anyone at anytime. An absent student can download the podcast of recorded lesson and is able to access the missed lectures. They could also access lectures of experts which may not otherwise be available because of geographical distance and other reasons [9, 23-24].

Quick Link Pen allows learners to copy and store printed text, Internet links. It helps to transfer the data to computers and enables the reader to get the meaning of the word from a built in dictionary.

It is a pen-like device. It allows the reader to easily scan the word and get its definition and translation on its own LCD screen. Technology such as Enounce and Sound-Editor enable learners to adjust the speech rate of listening materials to assist their comprehension, and present spectrum of speech waves and visual depictions of mouth and tongue movement to ease the learning and refine pronunciation [1,58].

In conclusion, using technology in learning a second language has become a real necessity nowadays. This paper has reviewed briefly how technology can be utilized in developing the speaking skill of the learners. Different methods for using technology in improving speaking skill were discussed thoroughly. As a result, the following concluding remarks and recommendations can be recorded:

1. As technology has developed the incorporation of this medium into the instruction process become necessary.
2. The computer is being viewed more as an integral part of the learning activity, and as a means by which skills are transferred to learners.
3. Theory and practice in second language learning can be matched together by the use of modern technology.
4. Modern technical ways should be followed for effective learning and teaching of the speaking skill.
5. English language teachers should encourage their students to use technology in developing their speaking skill.
6. Educational institutions should modernize their technical instruction capabilities by using new equipments and laboratories for supporting the teaching process.

Modern technological tools are much more interesting and provide fun and enjoyable learning, motivating the students, and help them to enhance their language learning in a fruitful way, moreover, these tools help students learn at their own pace and promote autonomy in them.

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