TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS IN HIGHER EDUCATION WITH THE HELP OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract: *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. This paper aims to discuss some modern technologies available for teachers of English today to enhance speaking skill of second or foreign language learners.*

Keywords: *Modern technologies, Enhancing Speaking Skill.*

INTRODUCTION

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 (1996), 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" (Chaney, 1998). 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 (1983), 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.

REASONS FOR TEACHING SPEAKING

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.

WHAT IS "TEACHING SPEAKING"?

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 (Nunan, 2003).

THE ROLES OF STUDENTS IN LEARNING SPEAKING

There are some categories that can be used as the role of learners in developing speaking skills in the classroom (Brown, 1994):

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.

MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL 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:

Communication lab

Speech recognition software

Internet

TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning)

Pod casting

Quick Link Pen

Quicktionary

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 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.

7. 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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