TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATED STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP THE ORACY OF STUDENTS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

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Abstract
   Speaking is one of the most important skills needed to be mastered by the students at the tertiary level. Speaking is an indispensable medium for communication. In a heterogeneous tertiary level classroom, improving the speaking abilities of students has always been a challenge. Various innovative technologies have been introduced to teach speaking skill in the classrooms. Technology is the only tool to get abreast with this modernized world. More than in the process of transport, trade and transactions, today technology is widely used in educational sectors. Technological tools have been regarded as weapons helping students improve language skills. This tool can be effectively utilized to break the monotony and teach the speaking skill without much strain. Internet, podcasts, video conferencing, videos and speech recognition software are considered the best tools for enhancing speaking skill. This paper aims to discuss some modern technologies available for teachers of English to enhance English speaking skill of students at tertiary level.
Keywords*: Heterogeneous, indispensable medium, tertiary level, break the monotony, enhance speaking in English.*

Paper
   The growth of globalization and the predominance of English in the media, particularly on the internet, have been responsible for change in language education policy and there is a global trend towards introducing English language teaching into the curriculum. Within a politically charged educational environment, some policy makers have decided that the creation of a well-educated, English speaking workforce may be a solution for the current global economic decline. Parents often consider academic excellence in English to be the number one priority in terms of access to higher education, university accreditation and economic prosperity of their children.

   Academicians agree that not being fluent in English has posed a hurdle to many during recruitment. Since the basis of the admission in professional colleges is limited to the so called cut-off marks obtained in Maths and Science, English skills are ignored right from school.

The speaking skills have been neglected in the class room up to 10+2 standards. Students learn English only to pass examinations. There are several vernacular movements, policies and clichés which confuse the teen learner during his school days. The students most often are exposed to Grammar teaching and encouraged rote learning of essays and reproducing them in the examinations. But English language teaching is not merely teaching grammar and developing reading skills, it also includes developing employability skills among students. It challenges learners to change their attitudes. Here, students cannot digest sudden changes in the syllabus and hesitate to talk in English all off a sudden in colleges.

Globalization has changed the English language teaching and learning process. It pervades every nook and corner of the world and is widening its scope. Global challenges have changed the ELT scenario: English language teaching is not merely teaching grammar and training students for international Graduate Entrance Examinations, but for increasing the employment potential of a learner by strengthening his/her communication skills. Unfortunately, our graduates could not cope up with industry requirements because of their attitudinal problems. They do not interact with others due to prejudices and inhibitions to switch over to communicate in Second language.

Teaching to speak in English to the students at tertiary level, that is, at the college level is challenging. The students come from diverse backgrounds where in there are convent educated ones with proficiency in English and also students hailing from the rural areas who have lacked even exposure to Standard English. They use their mother tongue to speak at home as well as with their friends. They are comfortable to speak in their own languages and are not ready to come out of their comfort zones. It is observed that communication in English becomes rigid, inflexible after communication skills were declared essential for employability of a candidate.

If we try to analyze the problems, we can understand that they don't even have basic knowledge of English. In order to improve their English language, the teachers have to put a lot of effort while teaching them. Same methodology cannot be followed for the entire class which comprises a heterogeneous group. Following the traditional ways of teaching always in the class may make them feel boring. Taking continuous classes may lead to lose the interest of the students. By giving different activities in the learning process, we can keep them engaged.

First of all, we have to create interest towards learning English and students must understand that making mistakes is a part of learning and they must also know how to rectify the mistakes. The major hindrance we find is time management. Usually the colleges allot less hours for English. The teachers don't get sufficient time to concentrate on the students individually. Due to time constraint, they have to rush through the syllabus. The teachers are not able to concentrate on them within the stipulated time.

Nowadays, many graduates are jobless. This is really very pathetic. Even if the students have enough knowledge in their subjects, when they attend interview, their English communication skill plays a very important role for communication, when they lack it, they lose the opportunities of getting jobs in good reputed companies. This situation can be changed if we try our best.

The teachers can give different activities in the class room such as Listening to native speakers in language lab, listening to videos, watching English movies, Situational conversation, Brain Storming, Storytelling, Group Discussion, reading e-newspapers, story books, creative writing etc. can definitely bring a change in the communication skill.

A language lab is mandatory in every college. It can be used for teaching with software to learn and practice phonetics and familiarize students with accent- stress, pause and intonation of the language using recordings made by native speakers. Listening to repeated activities with individualized learning will help to speak correct English.

The audios and videos of native speakers can be used in teaching learning process. While listening, the students come to know the right pronunciations as well as they learn the right usage of words and structure of sentences.

To improve the speaking skill, the students can be given an activity called 'Brain storming'. In this session, an interesting topic of current relevance can be given to the students. In Tamil Nadu, Jallikattu is a hot topic. Students can be shown a picture of Jallikattu and directed to discuss among themselves for ten minutes and then come up to the dais and speak. Even students weak in English participate. The convent educated students would present flawlessly whereas the Tamil Medium students would commit a lot of errors. All those mistakes need not be corrected on spot. Positive feedback must be given to motivate the students. It will not to dampen their spirits. The words of the teacher must enable the students to come forward with their ideas without any inhibitions.

Another interesting way of enticing the attention and interest of students is to show them a clipping with a situation on the projector and instruct them to weave a story using the situation. The story can be continued by another student. Likewise each student can speak at least two sentences at a stretch. Each team can be given twenty minutes. Every student should participate and contribute ideas. This is an effective way of improving speaking skill in English. This is called spin the yarn.

The students can be shown different pictures as hints and they may be asked to narrate a story. All the other students should be asked to be attentive. We can also ask them to note down any mistake committed. The teacher can also correct the mistakes at the end of it, so that it will not be repeated in future. This will help the students to improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency etc.

Software with a few numbers, when clicked may reveal a picture. Students can be asked to randomly click any number and speak on the visual displayed. Every student can be asked to do this activity. This will help improve the speaking skill of the student. One minute preparation and two minutes presentation time can be given. This will help the students to improve their communication skill. It boosts up the confidence and involves them in learning process with double interest.

Only a good listener can become a good speaker. Standard English news channels like the BBC News, Bloomberg UTV, CNN IBN, India Today, NDTV 24x7, NDTV Profit, News X, Times Now etc must be made accessible in classrooms every day. Daily, the students can be made to watch these channels compulsorily for at least half an hour. This will definitely improve the pronunciation and fluency of the students.

Apps to display dailies can be used in classrooms. Teachers should take more efforts to bring a change in their vocabulary by reading newspapers. Wide reading of news papers will improve their word power. When they read them, they will definitely have the opportunity to come across different words. For example, we can motivate them to read some of the incidents which attract them. It may be, a chain snatching incident or it may be an accident which really draws their attention. When they read, they will come across some words which are not familiar. Reading Newspaper will help the students to improve their reading, writing as well as speaking skills.

Tech-savvy teachers can embrace the interest of the in 'digital play, creating language learning opportunities through the use of computer games within an educational context – this is sometimes known as digital games-based learning technology. It can be used for all sorts of specific language learning activities, such as oral practice and reading and writing skills development.

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.

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.

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 example, if a student mispronounces a word, the learning tool can immediately spot it and help correct it.

Students can use Internet in the class to learn English. Online teaching inside the classroom seems to be interesting and makes the students 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 to improve speaking skills. 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. They 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 helps them develop their speaking skills.

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.

Technology such as Enounce and Sound-Editor enable 12 Acme International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research ISSN : 2320 – 236X Volume - II, Issue - IV April - 2014 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.

Theory and practice in second language learning can be matched together by the use of modern technology. Modern technical ways should be followed for effective learning and teaching of the speaking skill. English language teachers should encourage their students to use technology in developing their speaking skill. 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 of learning.

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