

ISSN 0975-3036

ELTWeekly

India's First Weekly ELT eNewsletter

Volume I, Issue#27

PUBLISHERS



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ELTWeekly

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Education: that which reveals to the wise, and conceals from the stupid, the vast limits of their knowledge.”

- Mark Twain

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VIDEO: ESL Teaching Tips: Keeping a Class Log

Keeping a class log is essential everyone knows to include things like what class you taught, what lesson you taught them, the date, attendance, etc. but i recommend including how successful each lesson was, and comparing the results to your lesson plans, so you can see what works and what does not.

Watch the video at <http://eltweekly.com/more/2009/07/25/eltweekly-issue27-video-of-the-week-esl-teaching-tips-keeping-a-class-log>

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RESEARCH PAPER: Technology - the 'Teacher's Assistant' for teaching Business Communication

By **Mukti Shah***

Abstract

Information and communications technology (ICT) is developing at a great pace and every day it seems to affect more aspects of our lives. Advances in ICT have significantly transformed the business situations. It has become an integral part in all aspects of business. Within past decade, the use of various tools of ICT has fundamentally changed the practices and procedures within business and governance producing sufficient transformations in industry, agriculture, medicine, engineering etc. It has been used extensively by researchers, trend setters and policy makers. Along with other fields of human activities, ICT also has significant transformational effects on education too. Optimizing ICT has become one of the major challenges facing our education system. It is the need in the era of 'Information Revolution' that we harness it to promote learning and teaching and improve pupils' attainment.

In recent years integration of instructional technology into the classroom has become a significant part of education. As such resources for educating and assisting faculty in this new arena have become crucial.

The present paper tries to affirm that the use of technology in teaching and learning Business Communication has the potential to transform the nature of learning. The paper focuses on pedagogical innovations to prepare the learners of Business Communication to meet the challenges in the electronic and communication era.

Keywords: Business Communication, technology, E-learning, Chalk and Talk method, Instructional Technology, Word Processing, Knowledge Based System, Intelligent Agent, Decision Support System, Data Warehousing and Mining, optimization Techniques , web-based learning

Introduction

Communication in business is used to promote a product, service, or organization; relay information within the business; or deal with legal and similar issues. It is also a means of relying between a supply chain, for example the consumer and manufacturer.

Business Communication encompasses a variety of topics, including Marketing, Branding, Customer relations, Consumer behaviour, Advertising, Public relations, Corporate communication, Community engagement, Research & Measurement, Reputation management, Interpersonal communication, Employee engagement, Online communication, and Event management. It is closely related to the fields of professional communication and technical communication.

Most of the universities across the world which offer management courses, prescribe the subject of Business Communication as part of their curriculum. Some common topics which are generally included are: Oral –Aural Communication, Written Communication, Business Letters and Reports, Employment Communication, Presentation Skills etc.

Listening skills in language teaching have been neglected and shifted to a secondary position after speaking and writing. This is a surprising fact given that it is the skill that is most often used in communication. It is thought that about forty percent of our daily communication is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. Yet, in spite of its critical role in communication and language acquisition, listening comprehension remains one of the least understood processes in language learning. By now language practitioners have accepted that listening skills have to be taught like any other language skills.

An innovative approach to teaching listening skills has emerged due to the hi-tech developments. One of them is a so called 'podcasting', which has recently become very popular. The term 'podcast' was first coined in 2004, and it means the publishing of audio via the Internet. Audio recording is designed to be downloaded and listened to on a portable MP3 player of any type, or on a personal computer. Listening to audio is nothing new to the Internet. Audio files available for downloading and other means of online listening have been around for some time. Podcasting differs from other ways of delivering audio online by the idea of automatically downloaded content. Podcasting offers language teachers and students a wide range of possibilities for extra listening practice both inside and outside of the classroom. Moreover, podcasts enable students to practice listening in a self-directed

manner and at their own pace. By 2005, the concept of 'podcasting' reached its top point: thousands of podcasts were created, and The New Oxford American Dictionary named a 'podcast' its official 'Word of the Year'.

Defining podcasting and its advantages:

'Podcasting', created by former MTV VJ Adam Curry, is a term that was devised as a way to describe the technology used to push audio content from websites down to consumers of that content, who typically listen to it on their iPod (hence the 'pod') or other audio player that supports MP3 at their convenience. The term podcasting is meant to rhyme with broadcasting. According to P. Constantine (2007),

A podcast is the name of a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program. Podcasts published on the internet as MP3 files. Interested listeners are able to download these MP3 files onto their personal computer or personal MP3 player of any type. The files can be listened to at the convenience of the listener. Learners can listen over and over to any material that is of interest to them. Podcasts can be as short as two to three minutes and as long as an hour. Learners can subscribe to a podcast through an RSS subscription (Really Simple Syndication).

According to T. Robb (2007),

The rise in popularity of podcasting actually allows the reincarnation of activity types that have recently fallen into disuse. In the 70s and 80s, it was common for teachers to have their students record their own voice for various types of practice activities, such as the practice of specific segmental phonemes, or 'pair taping' activities where the students had to record their own conversations. Now with digital recording, it is back, and in a form that is easier than ever to use and with greater functionality.

Podcasts are part of innovative online learning and can serve a number of purposes: to enhance the range and register of English language listening practice material available for the students to use in a variety of ways; to provide increased connectivity between different elements of the course; to increase the scope for discussion activity, etc.

Subscribing to podcasts:

A common way to subscribe to podcasts is via specialized software such as "Juice" a free podcast receiver (Figure 1).

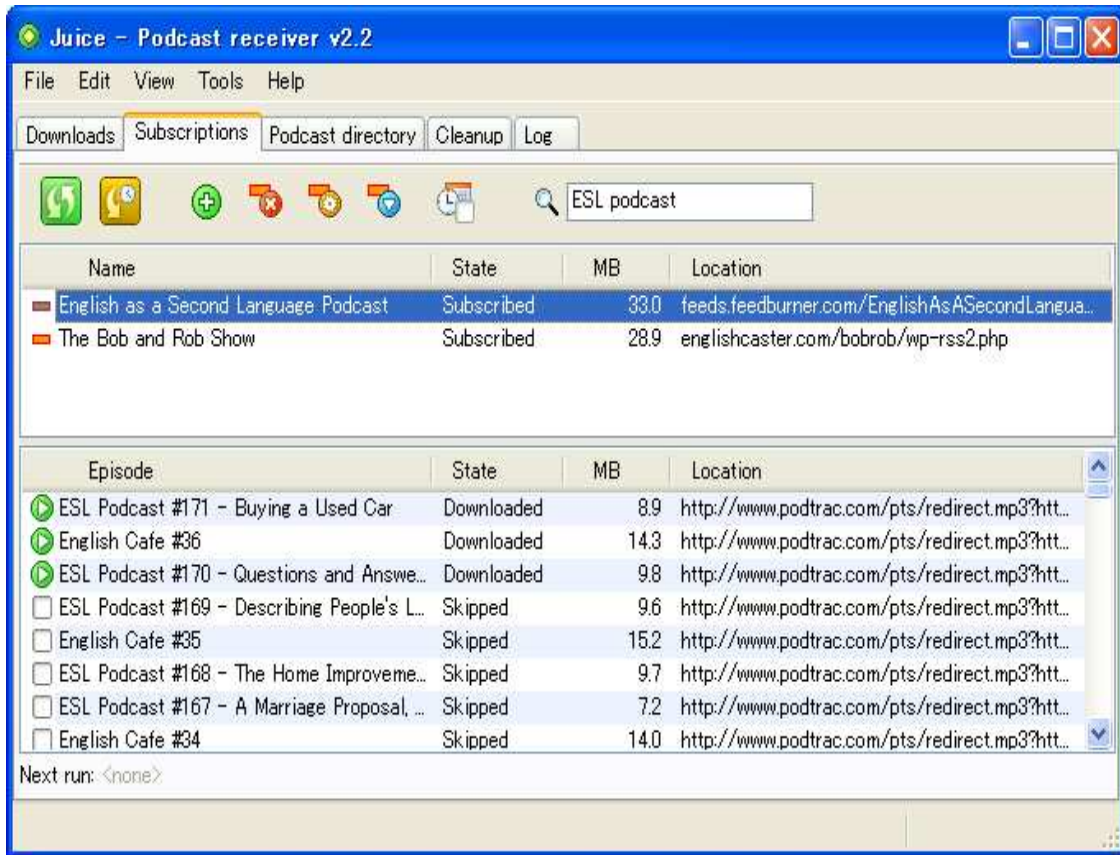


Figure 1 -- Juice Podcast Receiver

Another free podcast manager is the Google Reader for those with a Google or Gmail account. The screenshot in Figure 2 shows the reader in action. It can be used for any type of RSS "news feed," not just for podcasts.



Figure 2 -- Google Reader RSS Aggregator

The podcasts online have given the language teacher a wealth of materials for teaching Listening Skills. The advantages of podcasts are: 1) learners can benefit from global listening, even if they only listen from three to five minutes a day; 2) students will be exposed to the new language; 3) the intermediate learner has a need for authentic texts and to be exposed to a variety of voices. Podcasts are not just intended for listening. Often there is a transcript provided along with worksheets. A number of websites interact with the students and ask them to write in with questions or comments. According to P. Constantine (2007), one innovative usage of podcasts is to have a student listen to a podcast and read along its transcript. Then the student will make a recording of the material on a cassette tape and turn it into the teacher along with a written journal. The teacher then listens to the student's recording and gives appropriate feedback to the student. This type of activity helps the students to develop fluency in reading, to improve pronunciation, to acquire new vocabulary words, and to perfect listening skills.

It is assumed that podcasting is especially interesting for learners of Business Communication as it provides a means for students to get access to 'authentic' listening sources about almost any subject that may interest them. Teachers can take advantage of podcasts as a basis for listening comprehension exercises, as a means of generating conversation based on students' reaction to podcasts, and as a way of providing each and every student diverse listening materials.

Although once labelled a passive skill, listening is an active and demanding process of selecting and interpreting information from auditory and visual clues. In listening, there are several major steps that may occur sequentially or simultaneously, in rapid succession, or backward and forward. The major points include determining a reason for listening, predicting information, attempting to organize information, assigning a meaning to the message, and transferring information from short-term memory to long-term memory.

Earlier research into listening processes by V. M. Rivers (1992:18) suggests that "listening involves active cognitive processing – the construction of a message from phonic material". Three stages in the aural reception of a message are distinguished: 1) "listeners must recognize in phonic substance sound patterns in bounded segments related to phrase structure. At this stage students are dependent on echoic memory, which is very fleeting. 2) Listeners must immediately begin processing, identifying the groupings detected according to the content of our central information system. 3) Listeners recycle the material they

organized through immediate memory, thus building up an auditory memory which helps to retain the segments listeners are processing". An important feature of the listening process is that much of processing of incoming information takes place during the pauses in speech. Pauses in natural speech allow students to gain processing time. Moreover, much of comprehension involves drawing inferences. A characteristic feature of listening is a creation of mental messages which are stored by learners. This phenomenon is known as a false recognition memory.

The role of vocabulary knowledge and its recognition in listening affects comprehension of information. The term 'listenability' as an oral equivalent of 'readability' was coined by J. Read (2000:11). The simple readability idea focuses on two variables: the frequency of the complex vocabulary and the length of the sentences. The number of long words (three syllables or longer) and the number of words in a sentence define comprehensibility of a text. Lexical density is a variable showing the percentage of content words. A vocabulary measure may provide an indication of how easy it will be for learners to understand a spoken text. In listening, it is not just the relative frequency of the content words that affects comprehension but also how concentrated they are in the text.

The important issue in comprehension is authenticity of listening materials. The exact meaning of authenticity has often been unclear (Dudley-Evans and Jo St John, 1998:27): "many have used it with reference to genuine (not simplified) texts that were originally written for purposes other than language teaching". Authenticity may be present in the following way: the language is as natural as possible, items are contextualized rather than isolated topics are meaningful (relevant and interesting for the learners), tasks represent real-world tasks. In other words, authenticity implies real language, which is the hardest to understand, because no concessions are made to non-native speakers - language is unlikely to be simplified or spoken slowly. For learners, authenticity often means negative expectations, i.e. listening is bound to be too difficult. When learners listen to unfamiliar speech they hear an almost continuous chain of sounds. Inexperienced learners do not actually hear the boundaries of words. For this reason, they describe the speech as too fast. Experienced learners are able to break down this chain into separate words in their heads because they are familiar with the sounds and can create meaningful words with them.

The role of intonation and pronunciation is crucial. Intonation is the ability to vary the pitch and tune of speech. Stressing words and phrases correctly is vital if emphasis is to be given to the important parts of messages. Different turns are signaled by the rise and fall in pitch.

People hear certain accented words as prominent because of intonation. Knowing the language well, there is no need to hear every single sound in every single word to know what is said, because one's mind is able to fill in the gaps and to determine where one word ends and the other begins. Intonation is interrelated with pronunciation. The aspect of pronunciation is crucial to listening. Major problems that occur in learning pronunciation are students' great difficulty in hearing pronunciation features, in intonation – 'tunes' or identifying the different patterns of rising and falling tones.

One of the most difficult tasks for any teacher is to teach the skills of listening, because successful listening skills are acquired over time and with lots of practice Learning Listening Skills is frustrating for students because there are no rules as in grammar teaching. One of the largest inhibitors for students is often mental block. While listening students suddenly decide they do not understand. At this point, many students just tune out – some students convince themselves they are not able to understand spoken English well and create problems for themselves.

Having examined the available sources on developing learners' listening skills in Business Communication teaching classes, it is easier to understand why Internet audio has suddenly become popular now. Although Internet audio and video files have been around for many years, recent technical innovations allow subscribers with portable MP3 players to use technology for downloading podcasts and to listen to files at one's own convenience. This opens up new educational potential of using unproductive time for learning.

Here is a list of some websites that deal with podcasting technology. The podcasts can be downloaded (<http://www.elanguages.ac.uk/podcast/index.html>).

Various research projects are investigating the use of podcasting in education. Details of these can be found on the website of the IMPALA Project (<http://www.impala.ac.uk/index.html>), a Higher Education Academy research project into podcasting. A brief overview of how podcasting can be used in teaching listening skills is provided by T. N. Robb who suggests that there are three basic modes of activities for podcasting: 1) students as consumers, and teachers create material for students or assign them to listen to one of the many available ESL podcast sites; 2) students as producers or publishers, and teachers have students create material for others to listen to; 3) students practice through various exercises.

Podcasts can be chosen by learners from the website such as <http://a4esl.org/p/> which includes the following sections:

- VOA Special English
- Links to Podcasts for ESL
- Links to Podcasts for Native English Speakers
- Links to Downloadable MP3 Files

The reason why learners should be free to choose podcasts for themselves is to enable them to self-assess their listening abilities individually. The idea is to motivate learners in the future to develop listening comprehension skills without the threat of teacher's evaluation. Non-threatening practice may help learners who dread taking risks and who will enjoy some success in individual listening.

Collective listening to records in class differs from individual listening to podcasts in many aspects, such as in the former either top-down or bottom-up techniques are employed, students work in pairs or small groups, listening themes are brainstormed, essential vocabulary is generated, students do various exercises before the listening procedure, e.g. matching vocabulary items with their definitions, predicting the contents or the details of the recorded material, etc.

Listening autonomously in one's spare time ensures independence of learner's judgment of one's performance and helps develop critical approach to evaluation of success or failure in the activity. Also, there is an opportunity of improving listening skills from reading transcripts as a follow-up exercise. An approach to independent self-evaluation helps learners assess their abilities to follow authentic English speech.

Conclusion:

In this paper, the researcher infers that there is an opportunity for raising language awareness and thereby teaching listening communication by employing podcasting which allows learners to carry out homework assignments at their own pace and under non-threatening conditions. Online methodology involves downloading a variety of podcasts and listening to them at the convenient time. Follow-up classroom discussions on benefits or failures of listening to podcasts enable each learner to evaluate their ability to understand authentic records. Summarizing various types of listening experiences in individual weblogs allows learners to store written records of their progress for the future reference.

The implications of this research are numerous. First, individual online listening to podcasts at one's own pace and at convenient time prompts and motivates learners to improve skills of listening without being intimidated by possible failure. Second, raising learners' awareness of suitable individual ways of perfecting the listening skill promotes language learning. Third, the novelty and diversity of out-of-class listening motivates learners to perfect their skills without being observed by peers or teachers. Fourth, harmonizing online listening with classroom audition activities in teaching/learning English should benefit all learners. Fifth, learners become aware that listening skills can be improved through a lot of practice of their own choice. Finally, self-assessing one's achievements and publishing a self-evaluation report in individual weblogs encourage learners to keep improving.

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BOOK OF THE WEEK: The Secret Life of Words: How English Became English

By **Henry Hitchings**

Editorial Reviews

From The New Yorker

This historical tour of the English lexicon considers words as etymological fossils of past dreams and traumas, revealing the preoccupations of the ages that produced them. The nineteenth century's cult of fine feelings gave currency to sensibility and physiognomy; popery and libertine sprang from the religious skepticism of the sixteen-hundreds. Many such relics began as imports: centuries of Anglophone empire-building have occasioned borrowings from some three hundred and fifty languages, including Arabic (sash) and Sanskrit (pundit). The chapters are loosely focussed on different themes, but trade is a constant thread: tycoon comes from taikun, a Japanese honorific picked up on Commodore Matthew Perry's eighteen-fifties mission to open the ports of Japan. Hitchings offers a rich array of anecdotes and extracts, but the absence of a strong over-all argument deprives his account of momentum.

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From Booklist

What Hitchings shows us is that the history of our vocabulary is the history of who we really are. Playing up the “acquisitiveness of English,” which has proved hospitable to words from more than 350 other languages, his book has a wide sweep, from pre-Roman Britain to online communities. Each chapter tends to address a particular influx of words, whether rooted in invasion and conquest or in the innovative use of the language by gifted writers. A chapter called “Angst” not only covers the twentieth century's contribution to the vocabulary via the military, advertising, technology, and the business world, it also

incorporates, in digressive but entertaining fashion, the history of coffee, a caustic evisceration of “management speak,” and an explanation of why purists are so resistant to new words. Ever ready with an apt quote, *Hitchings* makes a delightful and knowledgeable guide, privy to many fascinating facts about the language—those averse to the increasing power of technophiles are given a handful of pithy put-downs, including dot snots and entrepenerds. A well-researched, fluidly written book that wears its scholarship lightly. – Joanne Wilkinson –This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Details

- Paperback: 448 pages
- Publisher: Picador (September 29, 2009)
- Language: English
- ISBN-10: 0312428561
- ISBN-13: 978-0312428563
- Shipping Information: View shipping rates and policies
- Amazon.com Sales Rank: #254,208 in Books (See Bestsellers in Books)
- Price: \$11.56

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<http://eltweekly.com/more/2009/07/24/eltweekly-issue27-book-of-the-week-the-secret-life-of-words-how-english-became-english/#respond>

RESEARCH PAPER: EFL Teaching of Speaking Skill, Grammar and Vocabulary of English Language

By **Dr. Ravi Bhushan**, Lecturer, Department of English, Bhagat Phool Singh mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Khanpur Kalan (Sonapat)

The various reasons given in response to the question 'what goes wrong when our students speak English' can be as follows:

- a) Students are tongue tied and shy and they refuse to open their mouth.
- b) They lack confidence.
- c) They are afraid of speaking, fear of going wrong and committing mistakes.
- d) They grope for words.
- e) They are unable to distinguish between Sea and She.

They perform well in the classroom, in predictable contexts, but are unable to tackle unpredictable situations outside the classroom.

This list of problems in speaking English is not exhaustive, you could add to this list. But such a diagnosis is necessary to decide on what kind of treatment is needed in order to develop our learners' spoken skills.

In a multilingual society like India, two or more language plans may become mixed, leading to code switching, code mixing, transfer or so called interference errors e.g. while giving directions to the stranger, the learners may say 'maidan' or 'pucca road' or 'kachha road' etc. as teachers, we have to make our learners aware of the contexts where such expressions are acceptable and where they are not.

In Garrett's Model (1982), our cognitive process cause speech to pass through four levels of representation before it is actually produced as sound.

- a) Message level/conceptual planning process, at which ideas and general meanings are represented.
- b) Functional level plans, here broad syntactic frames are assembled and word meanings are selected.
- c) Positional level, here sentence structure and word forms (with endings) are defined.
- d) Production level, here actual articulation of words is produced.

Now we can define Speaking - Speaking is effective communication, when all aspects of a language are integrated into a single utterance. There are two approaches to the development of oral communication skills.

- a) Learning language as a skill, in the classroom.
- b) Developing spoken skills through exposure and use.

Language as a skill involves three aspects:

1. Learners have to become aware of the key features of the target performance so that they can create the mental plans.
2. They have to practice converting these plans into actual behavior.
3. Learners must be capable of expressing an idea by selecting particular structures or vocabulary.

According to Rivers (1983), the first two aspects make up the skill-getting stage and the third is the skill using stage of language learning.

Skill getting- cognition: perception & abstraction

Production: articulation & construction

Skill using- interaction: reception & expression- motivation to communicate

As we see in the diagram motivation to communicate must be aroused. In our classrooms, motivation will need to be fostered by the intrinsic attraction of the task proposed and the student's interest in developing it. Here we have to accept that some people are temperamentally incapable of interacting with a babble of words, to force them to do so,

gives birth to pseudo communication and into mouthing learned phrases. The quality of the interaction will be judged by the ability to-

Receive and express meaning.

Understand and convey intentions.

Perform acceptably in situations and in relations with others.

The conditions, necessary for successful development of, natural spoken skills-

a) Exposure to language input: our learners in or outside the classroom are to be exposed to English through clearer pronunciation, slower pace, simpler structures and common vocabulary

b) Interaction with other people is crucial

c) motivation is the important factor: the urge to use the language for communication has to be aroused, e.g. a child brought up in a multilingual cosmopolitan setting will pick up a new language faster than a child brought up in a monolingual setting.

Exposure to

- Interaction with other people
- The need to communicate Comprehensible language

Positive attitude to English and the learning experience

Internal processing of input

Development of internal grammar

Communication (Littlewood, 1992)

As teachers we need to be more observant and see that we give enough practice in listening and provide opportunities where the learners have to be sensitive to what others are saying. We need to focus on both the aspects.

Comprehension (is A able to follow what B is saying?)

Comprehensibility (is A comprehensible to B?)

Techniques in developing oral communication skills:

- a) Question and answer technique.
- b) Lecture mode: besides content of your lecture, draw your students' attention to the presentation skills while lecturing.
- c) Group mode.

Solutions suggested for problems in speaking:

For Attitudinal Problems

Overcome the inhibition or fear.

Overcome nervousness.

Think in English.

Concentrate on whatever one is listening to e.g. a group discussion, news item on the radio or T.V.

Have confidence in your self.

For Sounds, Stress and Intonation Problems

Use audio tapes in recording your own speech.

Show patience, it is a long term process.

Exploit every situation to speak in English.

For problems concerning Vocabulary and Grammar

Exposure through reading and listening.

Grammatical awareness needs to be developed through reading and writing.

Listening to as many programmes as possible on the radio or T.V.

Information Gap Activities

An information gap is created when one person has the information and the other is left in the dark. Such activities can be thought of at the beginning of a session when your students get to know each other. Involve yourself by telling something about yourself.

Opinion Gap Activities

This is based on the principle of the value clarification approach which originated in the USA. This may be a very motivating experience, because the student feel that they are communicating about something meaningful, as well as being taken seriously as people; on the other hand, a situation in which the participants have to reveal some of their more private thoughts may appear threatening. Thus practice such exercises in a supportive and relaxed atmosphere.

Role Play

This is a way of bringing situations from real life into the classroom. We ask students to use their imagination. There are many suitable roles for school/college classes such as: teacher, bank officers, clerks at a post office, passers by, co passengers in a train journey, enquiry counter and a station or airport etc.

Goals of teaching spoken English can not differ essentially from goals of teaching meaningful speech, which is governed by three sets of rules.

- a) Rules specific to spoken English: they pertain to the bounds of English, word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation.
- b) General speech rules, concerning the features, qualities and contexts of speech.
- c) Rules of discourse concerning the semantics and structure or rhetoric of speech. This evoked meaning is both substantial and interpersonal. Language is essentially discourse and its markers.

Spoken English courses, which currently have little or no place in the formal mode of education; have an important place in the non formal stream. In teaching spoken English in India, we must accommodate regional variation and the goal should be shifted from articulation competence to discourse competence. We must use the learner's mother tongue in teaching English, and revert to our heritage and tradition to grammar as the supreme instrument of language learning.

Teaching Grammar

An essential part of the teaching of any language is the teaching of its grammar. Grammar is a term of great antiquity that has been understood and defined differently overtime resulting in teaching methodologies that range from the teaching of rules as an end in itself to the opposite extreme position of no grammar teaching at all. Whatever the case may be, some sort of knowledge of grammar is essential. It is important for the mental growth of a child and acts as a source of disciplining the mind.

Types of grammar

G1 (Functional): it is the total mechanism which a language possesses and through which its users (literate/illiterate) are able to communicate with each other.

G2 (formal): it is formal analysis and description of the rules of the language.

G3: it refers to the rules for the correct use of a language, which may be prescribed for its users. A grammar of the kind produced by Nesfield consists largely of rules which a student is expected to master. But some modern grammars merely describe the facts, instead of prescribing rules. So a linguist is concerned with G2 where as a language teacher is concerned with G3.

Now the question is , which grammar the teacher should teach G1, G2, or G3? The Indian situation seems top [provide a ready answer to that question. Many of our students know a lot of G2 or G3 (at lest their marks in the school examination indicate), but they can neither speak nor write correctly; their G1 is poor. On the other hand, a student can certainly be made proficient in G1 with out any exposure to G2 or G3 through constant exposure to the language. This is what we find in the case of students of the best English medium schools in our country.

G2 has to grow out of G1, the explanations are derived from exposure to language, and explanations can not precede the exposure. Grammar does not exist in isolation from language: language is grammar. The objective of teaching grammar to ordinary student is to improve his/her receptive and productive language skills-to make learner a better user of language and not give him/her a lot of specialized information about language. The grammar lesson should emerge out of the language material being used to develop the skills of reading and comprehension, as well as should form the basis of the grammar lesson too.

Methodology:

1. Grammar teaching should be done in context and in relation to language skills.
2. Inductive teaching moving from examples to rules. Because our aim is communication rather than learning forms of the language. This was used earlier in the teaching of classical languages. (Sanskrit, Latin, grammar translation method).
3. Focus should be on meaning rather than on forms.
4. Fluency is to be promoted before accuracy can be demanded. If vice-versa happens, learners are de-motivated to use the language at all.

Vocabulary Teaching

The teaching of four skills of English language viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing faces a common hindrance, lack of strong vocabulary. So it is very important, that our learners have good vocabulary. Let us try to ponder over the techniques, which can be used for developing vocabulary. Before that, let us discuss the types of vocabulary. This is of three types:

Ad-hoc vocabulary: those words which may be important for a given piece of text, but are unlikely to have any utility outside the text.

Passive vocabulary (recognition vocabulary): words which are likely to be encountered frequently, in speech or writing, though a learner may never use them in his/her own speech or writing.

Active vocabulary: words which a student will require for his/her own use, in speech or writing.

I would like to focus more attention on passive vocabulary because a learner should recognize the words, on his/her encounter with them. A teacher can use her/ his introduction, to present in advance the words which he/she judges to be important for passive vocabulary. For example, he/she can plan an anecdote for use in leading up to the text, and can weave the words, he wants to present into the same anecdote. The teacher may write them up on the blackboard, for the effect of highlighting the difficult words. Use the words naturally in a meaningful context, not necessarily giving meaning equivalents. For some words equivalents can be given even in the mother tongue.

Use of mother tongue

No doubt use of mother tongue in a class of English language is perfectly legitimate but with great care. Indiscriminate use of MT interferes with the practice of certain skills in the target language. The prime consideration for the teacher must be to provide as much practice in the use of the target language as possible.

Techniques for teaching vocabulary

a) using objects:

- i) labels
- ii) magazine pictures
- iii) Props-objects that can be shown in the class.
- iv) Slides for conveying the cultural difference of ordinary words e.g. house in a village, in a town, in the hills, in England.

b) Using gestures and symbols.

- i) Descriptive adjective-tall, thin, happy.
- ii) Prepositions of place-on, in, into.
- iii) Action verbs-go, sing, throw.
- iv) Symbols.

c) Using known vocabulary.

- i) Synonyms-probe-investigate.
- ii) Antonyms-progress-decline.
- iii) In sentence contexts- e.g. Ravana was a cruel man. Ashoka was a kind king.

d) Using word categories.

- i) Stationery-pen, pencil.
- ii) Cosmetics-cream, powder.

iii) Utensils-spoon, ladle, kettle.

e) Definition and paraphrase.

i) E.g. parasite-animal or plant living on or in another.

f) Using MT- judicious use of MT for giving equivalents.

g) Verbal context-e.g. expensive-glass bangles are cheap but gold bangles are expensive.

h) Familiarity/experience.

E.g. Oboe: a learner has never heard this word before, but he/she can make out these two sentences.

i) He used to be the oboe player in the town (game).

ii) He never liked to play the clarinet after he started playing the Oboe. (Musical instrument).

i) Semantic grouping: retention of vocabulary is equally important. This is done through semantic grouping. Words are easily learnt if they are organized into semantic groups e.g. shore, ocean, island etc.

Vocabulary expansion

i) Wide reading is recommended as the best way of increasing one's vocabulary.

ii) Direct instruction- lists of words are studied deliberately for word power exercise in Reader's digest.

iv) Incidental instruction, a combination of wide reading and direct instruction.

Lastly, vocabulary becomes permanent only if it is transferred to writing, speaking and thinking vocabularies. Learners should be encouraged in this direction.

Role of a Teacher

In learning/teaching various skills of a language, the role of a teacher is paramount. So the fundamental questions, who is a good teacher? Does experience of number of years makes one a good teacher? It is often thought that a teacher, old in teaching experience is a good teacher. Well, this is not really true. There is nothing like experience, rather it should be

quality of experience. Experience should help us to grow, not to keep us crystallized in a particular pattern of behavior. For some people experience only means years, regardless of outcomes. The criteria for a good teacher can be broadly classified under two heads:

Personal Attributes

personality traits(confident, calm, witty, sense of humor)

attitudes (patient, encouraging, tolerant, can take criticism, tries to learn)

Professional Expertise

Professional skills (classroom techniques and skills)

Knowledge (of subject and of the psychology of learning).

Conclusion

English language has glamour and offers jobs, so there is a rush. Job seekers are in a hurry to get a degree some how and there is no time or need to read the original texts or get ennobled. Bazaar notes have replaced the original texts and the only aim is top get through the examination. The departments of English, along with B.Ed have become money spinners for the universities. There is no quality control and universities have become graduate manufacturing factories, graduates without any competence either in literature or language.

A particular university in Haryana has well more than 1000 students on its rolls for M.Phil (English) through distance mode. Isn't it ironical, the scholars of M.Phil/PhD head toward spoken English institutes, where tutors are mere graduates? It needs serious introspection.

The English' tsunami' has come with an economic incentive backed by modern technology. The demand of good communication skills in English is increasing day by day. English has become a sought after commodity. We teachers of English should strive to raise the discourse competency level of our learners of English language. Teaching of English has to be viewed as mastering of language skills and not s a portion to be covered.

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*ELTWeekly would like to thank **Dr. Ravi Bhushan** for contributing this research paper.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE: Significance of Error Analysis in Language Teaching and Learning

By **Neha Joshi**

Error and Mistake

In order to analyze learners' errors in a proper perspective, it is crucial to make a distinction between "mistake" and "error". According to Brown (2000), a "mistake" refers to a performance error in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. While an "error" is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner. This recognition process is followed by the error description process. We compare learners' sentences with the correct sentences in target language, and find out the errors. The differences between these two indetailed can be described as under:

Errors are result of ignorance. Whereas mistakes are result of stress.

Errors of a learner has a definite pattern, whereas mistakes do not occur in pattern.

Errors can't be rectified by its doer, mistakes can be.

Significance of Error Analysis in Language Teaching and Learning

In order to teach a language, it is necessary to understand the process that goes on in the mind of the learner. Error analysis is a part of this process.

Significance:

As Corder has pointed out, there is a vital difference between 'errors' and 'mistakes'. He labels 'mistakes' as 'performance errors', which are like slip of pen. The learner himself can correct it later on, because they are not the results of unawareness. Whereas, genuine errors are ignorance of rules. The learner can't correct it by himself. They show the learner's "transitional Competence".

Error analysis is essentially significant because, as Jack Richards refers to Corder's observation: "Learner's correct sentences do not necessarily give evidence of the rules of the new language and the rules he has developed at given stages of his language development". This can be done only by the errors he makes. And after knowing this only one can proceed in teaching. So, errors, and its analysis both are an inevitable part of teaching & learning.

Types of Errors

The errors can be divided as under:

Area: This means an error related to some specific area of language. It can be subdivided into:

Phonological error: These are the errors related to pronunciation. E.g. in a word like 'river' the last 'r' should not be pronounced fully. If this is done, it's a phonological error.

Lexical error: These are the errors related to words. E.g. 'air-conditioned room'. Here, 'ed' is not required. So this is a lexical error. It's a use of wrong lexical items.

Grammatical error: These are errors due to problem with syntax. It is related to the sentence structure. E.g. "I prefer tea than coffee." Here, underlined part is incorrect. There should be 'to' instead. So there is a grammatical error.

Semantical error : These errors are due to the ambiguity of meaning. E.g. "She is like ice-cream." Here, meaning is not clear. This is called Semantical error.

Spellings: Due to incorrect spellings, the meaning is either not clear or is totally changed. E.g. "He is my sun." **Form:** These errors can be subdivided into:

Form: These errors can be subdivided into:

Error of addition: When there is unnecessary addition of characters or items, this type of error arises. E.g. "He faced a one problem." Here the word 'one' is added unnecessarily.

Error of omission: This occurs due to dropping the necessary items. E.g. "My father name is XYZ." Here an apostrophe to the word 'father' is dropped though required in order to clarify the meaning.

Error of selection: An improper selection from the existing options is the cause of such errors. E.g. “One day the king is going for hunting.” Here, from all existing tenses, only present progressive is selected, which is an improper selection in this contexts.

Error of order.: These errors occur due to incorrect order of words. E.g. “When I shall meet you?” here, the underlined parts have been placed in an incorrect order.

There can be interlingual error that arises due to L1 influence. E.g. a Gujarati learner of ESL would ask: “Where going you are?” instead of “ Where are you going?”

Similarly, there can be intralingual errors that occur within the target language due to incomplete knowledge of rules, or ignorance of exceptions. E.g. “Does she still sings?”

Comprehensibility: These errors can be subdivided into:

Global error – in which meaning is not clear at all. E.g. “I hope you wont mind if I sit here.” “Yes yes.”

Local error – where meaning is clear, but still it is an incorrect expression. E.g. “My girlfriend is a beautiful.”

The treatments to the errors made by learners may take many different shapes. However, remedial teaching is the most appropriate and widely used treatment.

Remedial Teaching

A remedial programme is a specially designed alternative strategy based on the need analysis carried out by observing the learner’s deviated behaviour, in order to put it on a right track.

The concept of remedial teaching is not new in the history of teaching – learning.

As they say, “To err is human...”, errors are considered to be a natural human behaviour. However, as far as the teaching of any domain is taken into account, the earlier remedial programmes do not show the same gentle attitude as the saying towards the error done by learners. Earlier, it was believed that errors are like diseases, which need to be cured. So, the remedial programmes that people like T. Wood prepared for their students were nothing but a tedious series of mechanical practice. These programmes treated errors as sins, and as a result, the doer of the sin i.e. the learner, was insulted.

This attitude to the errors was built up on the basis of structural approach to language teaching that projected the process of teaching merely a matter of habit formation. So, they insisted upon drilling and mechanical practice, which they thought would solve the problem. But as we now know, learning – whether it be language learning or anything else – is more of a trial and error, as suggested by the cognitive school of teaching. Unlike the behaviouristic school, they said that drilling is not ALWAYS a strategy that can lead to correct learning. From this came into existence the functional approach, which projected the use-oriented teaching. They emphasized the practical implementation of the learning items. Under the influence of this approach, the concept of errors, treatment to it, the nature of remedial programmes, everything went under a drastic change.

Later on, however it was realized that errors are not essentially useless. Even they can be exploited in order to learn correct things. A positive connotation to the term ‘error’ came into existence and that played a role in redefining the remedial programmes. They are no longer a set for practicing correct behaviour; they are now different, alternative strategies to teach. Earlier remedial classes meant the same for all who err. Hundred students can sit and practice the correct behaviour at a time. But now it has become more individualistic in nature. Today’s remedial programmes are specially designed keeping in mind the needs, abilities and weaknesses of individual learner.

Thus the base of remedial programmes is in need-analysis. The learners’ scope of using the taught item, his ability, his requirement etc. would define the course of remedial programme. This leads to the fact that the factors mentioned above may vary from learner to learner. If we consider the issue in terms of language teaching, it becomes more vital, because language is a medium to express the thoughts and knowledge that an individual possesses.

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RESEARCH PAPER: Using Technology to Teach Communication Skills

By **Rajesh Bharvad**

Abstract

The widespread prevalence of technology in the modern era assigns some new roles and duties on the modern teacher. Nowadays communication skills have gained supreme importance as far as the employability of the engineering students is concerned. The various tools offered by modern technology can promote the traditional teaching method to an advanced, effective, and interesting teaching method. The incorporation of technology in teaching in teaching technical communication activates their interest in learning technical aspects of communication. The various tools such as blog, audio-video aids, web browsing increase the productivity of teaching.

Communication whether formal, informal or technical is a practical term and technology enables the instructor to generate professional communication skills among the students. In addition to this technology offers new ways of communication such as chat lines where people from all over the world can chat in the virtual world. Similarly, blogging offers new ways of expressing ideas. These modern ways of communication can be incorporated in the teaching of communication skills in such a way that their linguistic knowledge as well as communication skills is enhanced.

Apart from communication skills their language skills can also be developed with the help of technology. Language remains at the centre of communication and therefore, with the help of different technological tools such as software created for the teaching purpose can be of immense help. With the communicative approach offered by the technological tools language can be learnt easily.

Introduction

Technical communication is very important as far as the overall development of the engineering students is concerned. For the career advancement it is very essential that they imbibe good communication skills. An average engineer spends about 40% of his valuable time in doing written and oral communication. However, the toughest task is to motivate the students in terms of the importance of technical communication.

It is very important that they acquire correctness in their writing as well as speech. Correctness in terms of their spelling, pronunciation, and punctuation is required from the engineering students. Moreover, some common mistakes such as incoherent writing, unclear subheadings, careless diagrams, and unwanted signals that obstruct the message should be cured.

Now the question is what kind of technical communication we are aiming at and how can we help them learn in a better way with the help of technology? According to me appropriate use of technology in the classroom is the only recourse to developing their skills. The contents that are taught in the classroom are as follow.

- Technical Reports- Annual Reports, Progress Reports, etc.
- Technical Writings i.e. technical instructions.
- Memorandum
- Letters
- Technical Proposals
- Writing of User Manuals
- Oral Reports
- Application Writing
- Resume Writing
- Documenting Sources

The content possesses practical values in them. Though they are useful, students might not understand its real value. And mere verbal technique of teaching might not work as far as motivation is concerned. Hence, technology is the only recourse left to the instructor. Integration of technology can be an interesting task as it will arouse curiosity among the students. PowerPoint presentations, overhead transparencies, and audio-video aids could be of great help. Writing report is not an easy task and therefore, one should use these

technological tools with the help of which all the aspects are presented clearly in front of the students.

Teaching of Technical Communication is consisted of both explaining the theory of writing and enabling them to use it in practical writing. Both the things can be taught with the right use of technology. For example, technical writing is responsible, i.e. honest language, honest format, and simple and direct language. Here one can use technical tools such as overhead projector and demonstrate how can the honest format be created or how can honest language be created. This will invoke a kind of curiosity as well as deepen their interest in this particular subject.

Technical writing needs sincere contribution from the writers as it is written for the practical purpose. The writing will guide the readers in doing the practical work. Writing an instruction for the product to guide consumers or viewers requires sincerity and honesty from the writers. And the students will never be able to write in the desired way if they take the task lightly. Hence, technology can be a very helpful tool in not only teaching how to write effectively but also inculcating the sense of sincerity and honesty among them as they will be able understand their task appropriately.

Bob Collins, a corporate manager, puts it in this way:

The most critical skill required in today's business world is the ability to communicate, both verbally and in writing. Effective communication has a direct impact on one's potential within an organization (1).

In order for the up gradation of presentation skill, technology can be proved to be an important tool. There are many instances when the students are required to have good presentation skills. Whether there is a presentation of their technical reports; oral and written, technical proposals, and the like, they have to have good presentation skills which include the appropriate mode of presentation; extemporaneous, impromptu, memorization, and manuscript and the effective use of body language. There are multiple videos based on effective presentation available at the sites like www.youtube.com. An instructor can select appropriate videos that can guide the students on how to make effective presentations.

I will not be wrong if I say that teaching with the help of technology is inevitable in the modern times. Technical writing techniques include: researching, summarizing, designing pages, using visual aids, etc. It is clearly seen that technology proves to be the main source.

Moreover, to sharpen the skills of the students some exercises that encourage the students to use electronic tools should be given to the students. For instance, an instructor can ask the students to decide a topic relevant to their career area. Ask them to use the web, find three full-text professional articles. Ask them to make a review of those articles and present it using technological tools. They can be given multiple exercises where web browsing is the key tool for them.

1. Riordan, Daniel. G, and Pauley, Steven. E, *Technical Report Writing Today*. Biztantra , 2005., P.3

Apart from the traditional resumes there is a growing demand of electronic resumes which should be kept in mind while instructing the students on how to make good resumes. In the electronic era the employers and the recruiters can find the resumes electronically. In other words, electronic resumes are changing the traditional way of job search. The candidate still submits a resume and the employer still reads it, but the whole process is done in an electronic way. Thus, "keyword strategies" are very important. Here technology becomes the main source of instruction. The resume is put into researchable database and when the employer wants to find a suitable candidate, with the help of the keywords he finds some suitable resumes. As Gonyea and Gonyea say,

To insure that your resume will be found, it is imperative that you include as many of the appropriate search words as are likely to be used by employers and recruiters who are looking for someone with your qualifications(2)

Blogs and the teaching of Communication Skills

Information Technology creates a kind of atmosphere which facilitates communicative teaching, task-driven learning, situational learning, etc. It is indeed true that it stimulates the learning process.

Though the use of PowerPoint presentation in the classroom is an advanced step, it does not alter the traditional classroom scenario where the teacher is at the centre and the student as a passive listener. But with the application of blog in teaching communication skills changes the whole scenario and the emphasis is given on the learner autonomy.

Technical communication is a practical aspect and hence, merely lecturing the students on various skills is not sufficient. They have to be given a right kind of platform where they can present their skill. The platform can be found in the form of blogging where they can write

online reports, letters, and other technical writing which can be assessed and viewed not only by the respective teacher but also by their friends and people from all over the globe. Thus, blogs offer a collective way of learning where all the students share their different ways of learning the same thing. This aspect enhances their overall ability of learning.

Blog can be an effective tool for the development of communication skills among the students. Learners can either express ideas on blogs of their own or express views on those of others. They can participate in the discussions that are collectively maintained by the people in blogs. Here they can go beyond the restrictions imposed by the textbooks and teachers. There is a simultaneous development of both the ability to communicate effectively through virtual means of communication and the learning of English language. The freedom from inhibition and fear that can be found in the traditional classroom generates a new impetus in their learning.

2. Riordan, Daniel. G, and Pauley, Steven. E, *Technical Report Writing Today*. Biztantra , 2005.P-536

However, the role of a teacher as a facilitator is indispensable. He has to monitor and supervise the blogs in such a way that they function in the right spirit. One can give some project - based or task - based works that can encourage students to use blog as a communication tool. In fact, the students can easily understand the process of communication which starts from encoding of the message to decoding of the same. Moreover, such activities on the blog will help them learn the different tactics of writing.

More importantly, blog can be an important tool in so far as theoretical discussions on Communication Skills and their practical application into virtual world are concerned. In their reflective way of learning they can discuss the theoretical aspects such as the types and levels of communication skills, formal and informal way of communication and so on. And an instructor can have a better understanding in terms of the learning process among the students.

Here an instructor can form few groups in the class and give them tasks in which they have to create posts on various blogs or discuss within the group or outside the group. Such activities can activate a kind of insatiable interest in learning communication skills. Similarly, it provides a new exposure of English language to the students where they can communicate using English language. Moreover, it affirms a sense of individuality among the students as through blogging they can be more opinionated, which could result into self- confidence.

Incorporating technology in teaching language skills to the engineering students.

The key factor in any form of communication is the ability to communicate with the help of some basic language skills. Hence, it is of utmost important that the engineering students know the basic knowledge of the language skills. The more they possess the desired language skills, the better will be their ability to communicate. With the remarkable development in the field of educational technology, teaching has become far better in terms of its effectiveness and productivity.

As we know that the virtual world provides multiple opportunities to enhance our language skills. Writing skill is a key skill as far as written communication is concerned. Written communication includes writing of various reports, technical proposals, letter writing, and so on. In all the forms of writing the basic knowledge of language is necessary. Technology provides a right kind of platform which helps develop the writing skill. Online publishing, word processor, blogging, etc. are some of the tools that help develop the skill. Technology makes writing interesting. Moreover, the consciousness that their writing is going to be viewed by people could inspire them to write in a better way. However, the intervention of a teacher is highly required. It is the job of a teacher to give them tasks that could motivate them to write and communicate with the other students using technology. For instance, asking them to organize an event, i.e. planning a trip and to fulfill the task they have to follow the guidelines such as using only computer technology as a medium for communication among the group. Here an instructor has to monitor their discussions and guide them if necessary. In addition to this, there are multiple softwares that can be incorporated so as to develop writing skill among students.

Similarly, there are multiple options available in the web that can help develop reading skills. Online reading is becoming more and more popular as people tend to read material from web sources. It provides multiple sources with unlimited access. Apart from reading skills technology also offers various opportunities for the development of the other skills, i.e. listening and speaking skills. For the development of the listening and speaking skills one can use audio-video aids. Both the skills - listening and speaking- are very important in the sense that they are directly responsible for the effective communication. The ability of listening and speaking directly correspond to effective communication. Technology offers a very good solution in the form of audio-video materials. In fact, listening and speaking are the basic skills of language that need a kind of training. Modernized language labs can offer

good practice to the students. They can listen to the standard recordings which can guide them on how to use language appropriately. It is essential that they are able to speak the language with the right pronunciation of the words. Hence, listening of the standard recordings enables the students to grasp the exact pronunciation of the various words. One of the barriers of effective communication is inappropriate pronunciation of words. In order to correct the students' pronunciation, an instructor can utilize audio - video aids in the classroom or the language lab. A teacher can record some speeches of the students and observe them minutely and enable them to realize their mistakes. In a computerized lab this task can be performed very easily. Similarly, live conversations among the students can be recorded and their grammatical and linguistic errors can be shown to them. This will enable them to realize their mistakes that they frequently make.

Educational software can be of immense help to the teacher and it can be utilized in teaching communication skills as they provide a great canvas for the development of language skills and communication skills. They can bring revolution in the teaching arena and enhance the qualitative teaching all over the globe. With the help of such softwares the job of an instructor becomes far more effective. Softwares are normally designed and created for various purposes. There are various softwares available for the development of listening skill, reading skill, speaking skill and writing skill. Good and qualitative softwares can generate the desired result. For example, Pronunciation Power-1&2 helps the students to recognize and produce the individual sounds of English at the phoneme, word and sentence level.

Thus, it is seen that technology can play not only a vital role but also a revolutionary role which will replace the traditional or an orthodox method of teaching with the modern and innovative method. Hence, Computer Assisted Teaching of Communication Skills (CATCS) can be more effective in terms of students' development of the ability to communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally. It can create stimulating environment of learning experience which will enhance the overall quality of learning process. Moreover, online discussions made possible by various chat lines create a new environment for teaching that we might call as virtual teaching. In short, the whole process of CATCS will be digitized where the students will be given digital assignments and the instructor will check them digitally. This digitalization will empower the instructor with multiple opportunities which will become a source of constant inspiration.

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RESEARCH PAPER: Pedagogical Issues Related to Speaking and Listening Skills & Sound Editing Software: Audacity

By **Dr. Dilip Barad**

Language learning is a multifaceted social and cultural phenomenon, even more so when it involves new technologies that promote a variety of social interactions (Kern & Warschauer, 2000). The pedagogy which addresses contextual factors such as types of learning tasks and teacher's beliefs about language learning (Warschauer, 2000) could provide valuable information for implementing the new technology and further enrich our knowledge of the language learning process in this unique environment.

In the early 1990's, some critics still questioned the value of computer technology and the value of implementing it into the foreign language classroom. At present, the focus is not on whether to accept computer technology. Rather, the question is now centered on how to integrate it more effectively into the learning/teaching of languages in culture specific context. The research focus has shifted from simply describing and examining computer technology to exploring how to use it in order to enhance language learning in contextualized environment. Educators have realized that effective use of technology can influence student learning. (Min Liu, Zena Moore, Leah Graham, & Shinwoong Lee) The majority of the studies reviewed from 1990 to 2000 attempted to show the advantages of using computers in the classroom, with a few exceptions. (Min Liu, Zena Moore, Leah Graham, & Shinwoong Lee). Rather than focusing on the benefits and potentials of computer technology, research needs to move toward explaining how computers can be used to support second language learning—i.e. what kinds of tasks activities should be used and in what kinds of settings. Such contextual factors can significantly influence the process of L2 learning in a technology supported environment.

Technology, today, has revolutionized the way teacher taught foreign/second language. In fact, the relationship between teacher and taught has undergone a phenomenal change. With the advancement of ICT computer has become a 'usable resource for integrative language learning' (Tickoo, 2003) resulting in the proliferation of multimedia TALL programs. But

most of these are western courseware designed to meet general purposes and are culturally biased. So the development of materials and task activities that will meet the varied requirements of the learners of countries like India is the only available option to facilitate vibrant, interactive language learning. Several studies have found that learners respond to technology-aided/enabled/mediated teaching learning materials produced by their own teachers more effectively than prepared by other agencies.

Min Liu, Zena Moore, Leah Graham, & Shinwoong Lee have studied approximately 70 research papers written during 1990-2000 in refereed journals. They finally concluded: “More research needs to be conducted in the less explored skills areas such as speaking, listening, and culture” (Liu et al).

Audacity is one such software which can help teachers and researchers to speaking and listening task based activities which are culture specific. It is an easy to use and powerful freeware for recording and editing sound files. The features it possesses are similar and in some cases even better than commercial software. It can easily be turned into a self-tutorial support for learners. It is one of the most frequently downloaded digital audio editors in the world. Tens of millions of people have used it to record a podcast, create a demo CD of their garage band, transfer old vinyl records to CD, or just have fun with audio. Another reason to choose Audacity is that it's the only audio editing software that runs on Windows, Mac and Linux computers. As it is open source software, it is not easy to die. It will be updated and survive longer than other programmes. One of the apprehensions with technology is its rapid changeability. The way technology gets outdated, it makes difficult for language teachers to update themselves. They face dual crisis, one updating with pedagogical changes and another that with technology. So, some teachers after walking too far, leave the hand of technology and switch over to traditional mode of teaching – learning. Here, the fear is least. Open source software are regularly updated, ‘freely’, by the users. This makes it survive longer than other professional software.

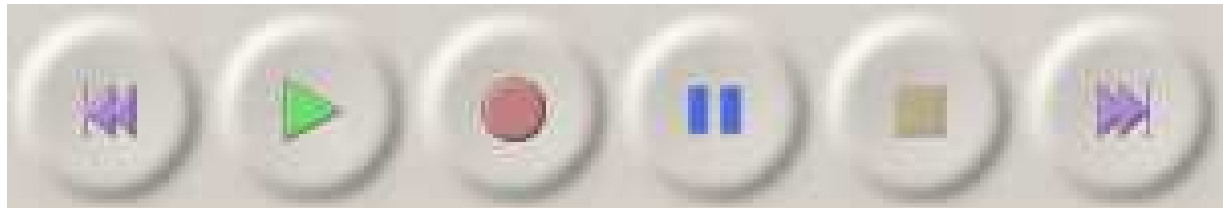
There are immense possibilities with the sound editing/engineering software like Audacity. It can be easily used for developing CD-ROM and web based practice material, activities for listening skills, exercise for evaluation and mobile / iPod based listening material. One can develop e-skills so that they can prepare authentic materials for language listening and speaking tasks by using sound editing/engineering program like Audacity.

The objectives of this article are two fold:

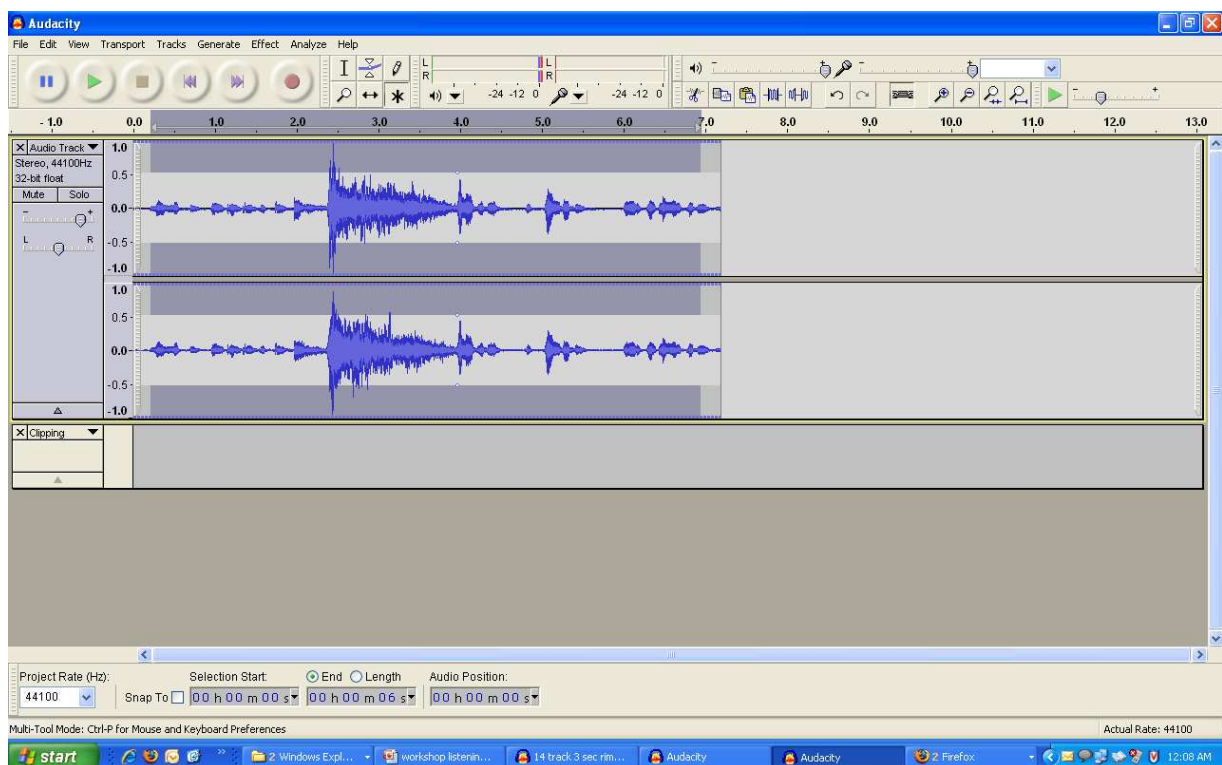
- (i) To provide a birds eye view of Audacity's functions and capacities and,
- (ii) to address pedagogical issues related to speaking and listening skills.

Audacity: Its Functions and Capacities:

Audacity has following important buttons:



These buttons are unknown to none. Most of the users of computers are well versed in using simple DVD/CD player or audio cassette player. These buttons resembles it. It has similar functions of 'Backward', 'Play', 'Record', 'Pause', 'Stop' and 'Forward', respectively. In the mainframe of computer screen, it is visible as given below:



- The blue frequency waves display the recorded script. We can 'import' pre-recorded sound file also. So if we want to mix various pre-recorded sound file with recently recorded files, it is easily possible with this programme. One should be cautious and do not forget to

install FFmpeg file before importing another sound file. FFmpeg can be installed by following below given steps:

- File>Import>Audio>Browse: sample music in My Music (My Documents).
- Message FFmpeg not found.
- To install FFmpeg:
- Desktop>Audacity>ffmpeg>extract files. Close window.
- Come to Audacity: Edit>Preference>Import/Export>Find library>OK>Browse it from desktop>avformat-52.dll>click OK> OK

FFmpeg is media decoder used to convert audio files in .aup format, which is compatible with Audacity.

Similarly, the 'export' function of audacity required to install another add on. It is known as LAME. Lame is media encoder used to convert .aup audio files into mp3 format.

- File>Export>file name>save as type> select mp3>type details if required> OK.
- LAME required: Locate Lame
- Desktop>Audacity>right click books icon>extract files>OK>new folder libmp3lame>open>close window
- File>Export>file name>save as type> select mp3>type details if required> OK> Locate Lame > Browse>desktop>Audacity>lame folder>open> OK.

It is very important to convert audio files into mp3 format. MP3 format is compatible with most of CD/DVD players as well as with mobile phones. Students in India are not as iPod savvy as in the USA, but they are crazy for mobile phones with mp3 players. If task activities for listening skills are transported to their mobile devices, they would certainly use it and it may help them improve their language.

Apart from this; Audacity has several other functions and capacities. The recorded audio can be edited for various purposes. It can be edited and used for:

- Drill exercise as it was in audio-lingual language lab module: For this the teacher has to use just ‘copy – paste’ functions and the sound file can be created which goes on repeating a word or sentence or paragraph.
- Remove unnecessary humming or buzz sound: for this one has just to ‘select and cut’ the frequency waves which are unnecessary.
- Compare and analyze sound frequency waves: For this one has to copy separately recorded sound waves and paste it in new file. Click on ‘play’ to listen both the sounds simultaneously.
- Add sounds to show ‘blanks’ while preparing cloze: For this one has to click ‘Generate’ and sound from the drop down menu. One gets option of ‘pluck’, ‘silence’, ‘drum’ etc to use in cloze test for listening skills.

Pedagogical issues related to speaking and listening skills:

As discussed earlier in the introductory paragraph of this article, pedagogical issues related to speaking and listening skills are not addressed at length (Lui, 2009) as is the case with writing and reading skills. In 1980s, during the halcyon days of audio-lingual language labs, instructions attempted to achieve linguistic competency. The structuralist and behaviorist theories behind the audio-lingual approach held that students became speakers of the target language by learning discreet linguistic units. These units could be mastered through the mechanical process of repetitive drills (Baltra, 1986). A typical audio-lingual language lab activity is one in which students listen to and repeat pre-recorded audio materials, either individually or as a group, with the option of the teacher "monitoring" (listening without disturbing the students) and providing individual feedback as necessary.

Language acquisition theories, however, have changed significantly from the days when those language labs ruled as the pre-eminent technology in language instruction. On the whole, the primary objective now is communicative fluency rather than linguistic accuracy. (Stone, 1991). As the result of this change, those language labs came to be seen as a relic with no merit in today's Web 2.0 learning environment. One of the many reasons for its failure may be: “because students are plagued by lack of confidence, shyness, fear of committing mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. Fear of speaking or making mistakes while producing output is the result of incomplete acquisition”. (Ponniah, 2009). Krashen (2008) claims that fear of speaking means that learners are about to try to say something that

they have not acquired or do not yet have the ability to say. Whereas in acquiring communicative fluency, learner does not fear as he has to speak the way he wants, irrespective of linguistic accuracy. This gives him confidence and confidence makes him speak, first with fluency and later, with accuracy. Audacity has tremendous potential at this point of learning.

- It gives opportunity to speak as well as to listen.
- It makes one to listen his own recording in mechanical drills.
- Listening one's own voice helps in improving intonation, stress, tone, pitch, pronunciation, phonetics and phonology.
- Recording same dialogues again and again gives opportunity to speak more.
- Self-evaluation is the best form of improving skills. Here student listens 'n' number times his spoken dialogues and every time he can measure the level of his improvement.
- The editing is so easy that student can edit & mix his voice with his friend's or teacher's and compare it.
- Student can analyze frequency waves of his spoken dialogues with the pre-recorded one by professional speaker.
- Student can record his voice and send it for evaluation through email or post it to blog or upload to web pages and ask any teacher in the world to evaluate it.
- Testing and evaluation becomes student centered as well as it crosses the boundaries of nation / culture with the help of www.

Task-based activities (TBA) and culture specificity with Audacity- Sound Editing Software (SES):

What Lee Ann Stone (1991) observes about language lab can be aptly applied for SES - Audacity: "There are three main criteria for task-based activities (in lab environment or with Audacity. By the way, Audacity can be best explored and utilized to its optimum in language labs).

- First, they have a goal or purpose that requires the use of the target language, but is not itself centered on that language.

- The second criterion involves making use of the unique features of Audacity to create a learning environment that cannot be recreated in the regular classroom.
- The third characteristic of a task-based activity is that it involves the student in a way that intrinsically motivates, lowers the affective filter, and creates a desire to excel. One element of motivation is to want something.

Let us illustrate above given three criteria on task based activities with the help of Audacity.

- For the first criterion, each student writes and records 'ghost stories' or their 'invented experience with ghost'. Students then listen to the stories and evaluate them in terms of which story was scary and dreadful. The students' goal is to tell a story that interests and excites their peers. The focus is on the story rather than on the language itself; however, the means to the end is through effective communication in the target language. (Stone, 1991).
- For the second criterion, teacher can record cloze test (dialogues or paragraph) by editing it in Audacity. He can use 'pluck', 'drum', 'silence', 'tone' etc to denote that the missing word is Noun, Verb, Adverb, Adjective etc. The students will listen attentively to the cloze audio file and will carefully take note of all words and sounds. His attentiveness increases and it helps in improving his listening skills. This can give better results if students work in pairs. It allows them to discuss various options. Discussion gives them opportunity to speak. Thus dual skills get good practice in this activity.
- For the third criterion, Stone (1991) gives an example of 'Murder in the Lab'. An activity such as "Murder in the Lab" utilizes the unique features of sound editing software like Audacity in an even more sophisticated way. In this activity, the teacher prepares a number of audio files with information regarding the people, places, and activities involved in a murder. These files may be transferred to their mobile devices (if there is at least one such mobile in a group). The students' task is to determine, after listening to the various audio files (each placed in different mobiles), who the murderer is. The students work in pairs or small groups and listen, discuss, reason, and draw a conclusion. At the end of a given period of time, the teacher brings the students together for a discussion about the crime.

To want something is to be motivated, and motivation initiates and sustains involvement in learning" (Spithill, 1980, p.72). Task-based activities, then, can be designed with the help of such sound editing software to provide students with the opportunity to want something. Take the "Murder in the Lab" example: The students want to solve the murder. In the case of the 'ghost story' activity cited earlier, the students are motivated by a desire to be creative and to impress their peers. This opportunity to be inventive itself becomes a motivator as the students' self-esteem is enriched through the positive feedback received from their peers.(Stone, 1991). One of the greatest advantage in such TBA with SES is that teacher and taught are not using material prepared by native speakers or in that matter, by anyone who does not belong to their culture. There is no issue of culture specificity as the exercise created and practiced are all prepared by the people of same culture and nation. Even in multicultural or multilingual country like India, it gives optimum learning opportunity with least possible barriers. The role of task-based activities is to provide learners with opportunities to use the target language contextually, and to explore the target language through situational activities. In this way, the language lab can serve as an invaluable tool in the language learning and teaching process, for it provides opportunities for learning that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. (Stone, 1991).

Thus to conclude let us quote Lee Ann Stone at length: "A tool, however, is only as effective as its implementer, and thus the role of the teacher is central to the success of task-based activities (with SES). The aim of patterned lab drills was to provide a mechanical means to free the teacher for other instructional activities. Task-based activities (with the help SES) bring the teacher back into the lab. The role of the teacher has been summarized by Rivers (1987):

Part of the teacher's art is to create, or stimulate student creation of, the types of situations in which interaction naturally blossoms and in which students can use for actual communication what they have been learning in a more formal fashion. (p.4). Audacity is one such web 2.0 tool which can help teacher to create and stimulate students' interest and create situation in which interaction naturally blossoms.

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