

Lecture- 14

CALL- Speaking Skills

Module -35**TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES USED FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS****Topic No: 53**

Improve speaking Skills by Using Computer; Shy of Speaking? Online Tools; Students Smart Phones; Recordings and Transcripts; Native Speakers; Skype and/or Face time; Book Track Classroom

Improve Speaking Skills by Using Computer

Computer is a suitable tool to be used to improve students' speaking skills. We use the computer technology to create an environment that encourages communication and provides increased and more varied communicative opportunities for students to utilize their oral skills.

The computer can be used as tutor in improving speaking skills. MyET is like a personal tutor that can help you learn English through speaking practice. MyET's unique and award-winning technology, "Automatic Speech Analysis System" (ASAS©), can analyze students' English speech on pronunciation, pitch, timing and emphasis, and even pinpoint problems to individual sounds. After they speak, they will receive a score and specific feedback on how to improve. Whether the student is a beginner or advanced learner, MyET is like a one-on-one tutor who can make speaking English a comfortable experience.

This software like a personal tutor, gives students one-on-one feedback on their speech. MyET is unique because it tells you exactly which word and even which sound (phoneme) that students are having trouble with, and how to correct the problem. MyET gives students the one-on-one feedback they need to improve, just like a live tutor.

This software will also provide an online community, so that students will not study alone. MyET has online English learning communities so students are connected to other learners. Through the Internet, not only can compare scores with others, but also find a community of learners at similar levels of English skills. MyET will also ensure students learn the correct accent. Since there is no

one “correct” accent in English, MyET lets students choose their own tutor, to learn the accent that they like, whether it’s Californian, New York, Canadian or even British. Students can learn an accent of their own choosing.

Besides, the computer can be used as an instructional tool in improving speaking skills. Instruction tool means there are human-to-human interaction via the computer in the classroom.

Everyday English in Conversation is a useful website that helps ESL/EFL learners develop conversational English skills. In this section, they will focus on learning idiomatic and everyday expressions to help students deal with daily conversational situations. As each dialogue is accompanied with carefully designed exercises, follow the recommended steps and practice at your own pace.

Lastly, the computer can be used as a communication medium that is a human-to-human interaction via the computer outside the classroom. Students can improve their speaking skills by using MOOs (Multi-user domains, Object Oriented) and chat rooms for “live” real-time communication.

Shy of Speaking? Online Tools

Speaking is one of the most challenging English language skills for many TOEIC test takers to master. Even native speakers are often terrified when they first have to give a formal presentation to an audience: the fear of public speaking is in fact our most common phobia, with many saying that this fear is worse for them than even fear of death.

If you are preparing for TOEIC, however, giving a public speech is not what you have to master. You will be speaking privately and simply into the “ears” of a computer and being scored by expert raters who score international English anonymously and objectively, with no judgments based on accent or knowledge of who you are.

Speaking “to a computer” of course can generate its own fears (though in today’s VOIP- and DVC-connected business world you may be doing it every day). Fortunately there are many learner-friendly forums that will develop your skills and your confidence.

Students Smart Phones

Undoubtedly, your classroom is full of technology even if there is not a computer or projector in sight. Often the most advanced technology is right in your students' pockets in the form of their phones. Having a smart phone is like walking around with an entire computer in your pocket, and the best ESL teachers will take advantage of this tool that doesn't cost them a dime. Have your students use their phones to record themselves during a speaking activity. You might have one person record another in a group discussion. Or you might have one student record himself while reading a dialogue or answering questions orally. After students record themselves, have them go back and watch their videos. If possible, give them a rubric or checklist of the skills you want them to measure in their video. Since students will view and assess their own videos, they can be brutally honest, and you should encourage them to be so. And if you want them to be even more honest, assure them that you won't take their own assessment into consideration if and when you grade them on the speaking project.

Recordings and Transcripts

How well does your students' pronunciation approach that of a native speaker?

They may find out for themselves when you have recordings and transcripts available them to practice with. Many websites for ESL students have videos and corresponding transcripts free for classroom use. Try making the materials available in your own classroom for your students during independent work time. Have students listen to a line of the video and then repeat it, reading off the transcript. As students work their way through the video and the transcript, they will find their speaking skills approaching that of the speaker on the recording.

Native Speakers

Of course your students listen to you all of the time (though like any good ESL teacher you try and limit your talk time and increase your students' talk time).

But are you using one of the best resources for pronunciation improvement at your disposal – other native speakers? If your school allows, invite other people into your classroom to come and talk to your students. Ask around or send out a general invitation on social media. You might be surprised just how many friends and acquaintances are willing to come spend an hour with your students and give them a little sample of their spoken English. Have your visitors come and talk about a topic you will be teaching in class, about their job, about their family, or just sit and chat with your students. Listening to other voices and accents will benefit your students as they seek to have good English pronunciation (not to mention increase their listening comprehension skills).

Skype and/or Facetime

You don't have to invite other people to your classroom to give your students the benefits of talking to native speakers, and if you teach overseas you might not have the resources to do it, either.

Instead, team up with some volunteers or a class of English speakers overseas and set up some time for video chatting through Skype, Facetime, or another program. This way, your students can have conversation partners without anyone having to move away from their desks. Both classes will benefit, and your students' pronunciation will improve by simply hearing and speaking with native speakers. And this is another opportunity when your students' smart phones will be a great resource in class.

BookTrack Classroom

BookTrack is an awesome, free tool that enhances both reading and writing by incorporating music. Students can create soundtracks for plays, poems, stories, or even their own creative writing, and share their creations with the world. Text and music both have the powerful ability to elicit an emotional reaction from the audience. With BookTrack, students can merge the two and bring a new dimension to the written word.

As English teacher Kate Baker explains, "BookTrack is the only tool that I've found that really helps students connect with author's purpose and tone in writing." Enhancing the text with music calls for students to think deeply and critically about the written word, and encourages them to

create an experience for the reader. Children have to consider the audience; mood and tone of both the text and music; author's purpose; and employ digital editing and revising skills to create the soundtrack.

We're all familiar with the writing process, but do we ever stop to consider how that process is mirrored when children create and edit video and audio? We ask students to revise, edit, and publish in classroom tasks which imply these skills are the end goal, rather than a means to an end. We rarely give the process, as a whole, meaningful context. Composing with BookTrack provides an avenue for children to progress through to a final product in the creation process.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

I think nobody can deny that computers are in the center of our everyday life. Is your answer no? Then, just think again: Computers can divide/multiply or add numbers for us, we can draw money from computer- managed ATMs anytime we like, they work in our digital watches, in ABS & ESP systems in our cars, in almost all of the control mechanisms of an aeroplane, in digital cameras, in cellular phones, in cd players, in remote controllers, in photocopiers, in satellite systems, so on and on.... Do they sound familiar? If you use any of them, it means that you unconsciously “managed” by a computer system in your everyday life, because all the things I mentioned here have the same basic controlling system: computer. However, we also use computers – I mean Personal Computers- consciously and directly in banks, offices, schools, homes, and everywhere they are needed... We use computers in any cases, anyway, so this is the awful truth: We are totally surrounded by computers. Believe it or not, this is the reality.

As regards education, -in our case it is foreign language education-, do you still believe that foreign language teaching & learning process keeps unaffected by this ‘silent computer revolution’ and is trying to accomplish its aim through so-called “traditional” methods? I am giving the answer for you: Definitely not! Now, foreign language teaching methods are rapidly shifting from the traditional methods to the methods using computer applications and multimedia environments. These applications and environments are used extensively and successfully in reading, writing, listening and speaking practices by ESL teachers and students throughout the world. What’s more, the tools I mentioned here are truly helpful in practising the four skills of a language (reading, writing, listening and speaking) since these tools give language practisers almost exactly what they need; however, the main focus of interest in this article is developing listening & speaking skills via internet & multimedia tools. “The internet is suitable place to practise languages as it offers the possibility, with the right software, of using images and audio resources at the same time,

combining sounds and images as in communicative situations in the real world. It also provides users with a highly appealing and innovative format” (Labayen et. al., 2005, p.9). From now on, I will try to show you what computers, internet and multimedia environments offer and how using these tools can help ESL students practising listening & speaking throughout this text.

Originally, media environments’ high, fast and easy accessibility is what makes them an almost perfectly tailored solution to L2 effective and easy-to-reach learning & practising resources. Using media environments is convenient in itself, indeed, because it gives us the possibility to choose what is appropriate for us at a certain period of time. Hoven (1999) asserts that computers allow L2 learners to determine the way and the pace that suits them and their needs. For example, when an ESL practiser is in class, s/he can have access to the internet, TV/video to watch movies or educative programmes in the target language, or study on a listening/speaking application using a computer on his/her own. Ehsani et. al. (1998) emphasize that by combining sound, vision, text, video and animation, this self-paced interactive learning environments create much more educative and creative classroom environments. What’s more, besides individual work, two or more people can work together in a group activity which makes the process more interactive. Hoven (1999) believes that computers allow learners to add up what they know altogether more effectively and support peer correction. What’s more, Ellis et. al. (2005) suggest that technology has shaped the collaborative relationships between students and the way they interact with each other which eventually shape the learning opportunities in a classroom.

Frith (2005) indicates that even though some L2 students are often required to speak in English in their social settings, they mostly enjoy listening especially when they are watching television or films. This observation emphasizes the use of multimedia environments in L2 classrooms. What’s more, Frith (2005) believes that video lessons can be very stimulating. This is what is needed to actualize real development. Besides, this is also an enjoyable part of listening development, because for many students, learning is associated with dull and boring classroom activities. Unfortunately, in this case this generalization does not work, because L2 learners “do it” on their own in a convenient and different way. Verdugo et. al. (2007) assert that children actively take part in understanding the story because of the interactivity of internet based stories and this makes learning easy. This make the development of listening ability more effective and entertaining, but less effort-required. Consequently, this is what leads to real development and learning.

The use of the internet in classroom environment is relatively a new phenomenon. However, seeing that it offers almost unlimited resources and choices, it has become widespread all around the world. At this point, the important thing is how to use it effectively in classrooms. Labayen et. al. (2005) emphasize that only when the sources are properly selected can the internet be useful in a learning environment. Then, another problem arises: How to select appropriate web sites to make

use of them in a classroom to improve listening and speaking skills of students? Labayen et. al. (2005) show that the best way to find good web sites is to listen to a colleague's suggestions who actually searched the site on his/her own or find a "serious" web site which may actually help.

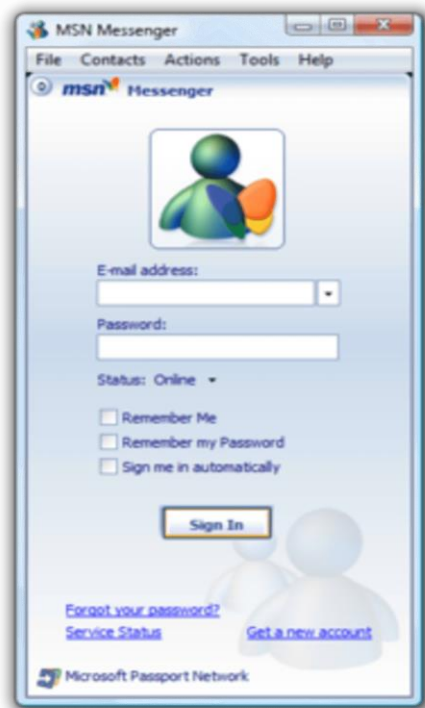
When it comes to speaking practice via the internet, there are cheap, useful and wise solutions available. For example, Skype, MSN Messenger, GoogleTalk and similar VoIP applications can be used to connect a native speaker on the internet and realize a real-time conversation for free. Volle (2005) notes in her research that using MSN Messenger to conduct her online lessons, she observed the development in oral proficiency of her students. Even though VoIP conversations cannot make up for some features of a real & face-to-face conversation, it is a precious opportunity for an L2 learner to use VoIP applications considering the hardships of finding a native speaker in the place where the learner lives. Labayen et. al. (2005) indicate that face to face communication has many advantages, so video-audio devices in CALL and on the internet are essential to teach oral skills.

The use of computer and the internet in classrooms is essential to actualize development in listening comprehension and oral skills, because computer environment allows fast developmental assessment and fast update. Kruse (2004) indicates that the web content can be updated easily and the information can be in use immediately. So, this allows the lesson contents to be much more updated which may eventually cause high levels of awareness and success. Another point Kruse (2004) makes clear is that the cost of using computer systems and internet can be relatively low. Since many video/audio resources and VoIP applications are available on the internet and the maintenance costs are relatively low, this makes it a wise and effective solution to development of listening and speaking skills of L2 learners.

As regards the interaction support of multimedia environments, people of the world are just one click away from each other as is conventionally said and this convenience makes the exploitation of such systems in language education vital as well. LeLoup & Ponterio (2007) argue that preventing an L2 learner from being isolated, technology is the ultimate solution to those who lack the speech generated by a native speaker. To illustrate, videoconferencing technology is an example of technologic solutions to this isolation. It has many useful and effective uses in learning environments. In the figure below (see Fig. 1) you can see the use of the application in a classroom environment.

Cabaroglu & Roberts (2006) argue that the use of VoIP applications in the classroom environment boosts the students' communication skills and intercultural awareness besides enhancing motivation and classroom performance. For example, Skype application is increasingly used as a

part of listening and speaking development process throughout the world today. Skype is an internet-based application that enables Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calls (Jenks, n.d.). It has a useful user-interface that enables the users easy and effective use (see Fig.2). What's more, there are similar online applications such as MSN Messenger and GoogleTalk and the likes. MSN Messenger also has millions of users worldwide and is used to improve speaking and listening skills by L2 students. Hampel et. al. (n.d.) assert that Skype and MSN Messenger increasingly create newer possibilities for the users. These softwares can also transmit video at the same time when the users speak to each other. So, this feature raises the level of interaction between practisers. Such level of interaction is also effective because of the highly useful features and user-interfaces of the applications. For the user-interface of MSN Messenger see Fig.



As an alternative, internet TVs and radios can be used to develop listening comprehension skills of an L2 student in an entertaining atmosphere; however, there is a relatively new emerging phenomenon: YouTube.com! This is a video upload-watch-download site and is increasing its popularity day by day. To have an idea how the site looks like see Fig. 4. According to statistics, the site has more than six million videos and the total time necessary to watch all these videos is 9.305 years! This huge video pool offers priceless opportunities to practice listening in an entertaining and convenient environment. LeLoup & Ponterio (2006) allege that television/radio shows, news, documentaries, music videos and any videos beyond the imagination of people are just one click away. All you need is an internet connection. The rest is almost totally free; however, LeLoup & Ponterio (2006) also suggest that videos should be carefully selected and prepared by

the instructor to maximize comprehension and minimize frustration of learners and they hope that improvement in search tools for videos will allow the teachers to find the right video clip for supporting language class.

Figure . YouTube.com is broadcasting many listening comprehension improving videos.



As BBC has always been seen as a genuine source of “right” form of English, it cannot be disregarded for English Language Teaching. Being aware of its educative role, BBC has been publishing books, audio/video materials and so on. With the rise of the internet, BBC has prepared an English Learning Page which is one of the best of its kind. LeLoup & Ponterio (2006) assert that the site gives ideas to the learner about material development and how to work efficiently with the aural input. Maintaining the publication at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/> , BBC provides the visitors with quizzes, videos, podcasts and games as well as radio archives and voice recordings. As regards listening activities, there are many activities based on listening comprehension.

Figure . A demonstration of BBC Learning English web site listening practice section



Throughout the lesson, the entertaining aspect of using multimedia environments is constantly emphasized. So why is it so necessary? Because it makes learning easier and the most important of all it makes learning permanent. For example, cartoons may be a good means of teaching children foreign language and improve their comprehension and the things beyond it. "Although we usually associate cartoons with entertainment, in fact they can have many more serious applications. Children love cartoons – as we all know from the fondness they have for the cartoon networks – so why not make this attractive medium work for teaching and learning?" (Hobson, 2005, p.1) When it comes to adults, the use of movies have a great positive influence on their motivation and performance. Frith (2005) suggests that although some L2 students are often required to speak in English in their social environments, they predominantly enjoy listening especially when they are watching television or films. Apart from that, songs can be highly useful for developmental process of listening skills of an L2 student. Lynch (2007) suggests that because music is everywhere in human life to change or boost the emotions and feelings, we can include music and songs in language learning as well. Besides, karaoke is also beneficial in that it requires a recitation which eventually leads to improvement in speaking skill. Lastly, computer aided games can also have striking effects on an L2 student's listening comprehension and sentence utterance. Keislar et. al. (1970) suggest that games , especially for children, are proved to be useful during their language education process. When games' attractiveness unites with convenience and flexibility of computers systems, it may cause positive results as well.

The aim of this article is to discuss some prominent benefits of using computer and multimedia environments to develop L2 students' listening & speaking skills and how the L2 students are affected from it. Jenks (n.d.) suggests that the internet and internet-based applications have great influence on us; however, since enough research hasn't been made over the issue, we are not certain 100 % about the outcomes of its use. Of course, we know that there are some limitations in its use as well; however, keeping it in our minds, ELT community should eliminate the limitations as much as they can and try to exploit its usefulness in every aspect of language teaching. To do this, much more research and experiments are required in the area. Hampel et. al. (n.d.) assert that finding an effective way to practise speaking is one of the biggest problems in both distant education and also online education. By determining the weak points of the method and fixing them, work force can be used more efficiently, more energy and material can be saved and more reliable and permanent development can be achieved. To achieve the better, we all should work very hard and do the best we can for it. As we are going to be totally in cyber age in the near future, at least we are obliged to do it.

Module -36**TOOLS USED FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS****Topic No: 54****Modern Technologies In Developing Speaking Skill; Literacy in the Digital Age: Nine Great Speaking and Listening Tools;****Modern Technologies In Developing Speaking Skill**

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

1. Communication lab
2. Speech recognition software
3. Internet
4. TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning)
5. Pod casting
6. Quick Link Pen
7. Quicktionary

1. How To Use These Technologies: Communication Labs

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

2. Speech Recognition Software

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

3. Internet

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

4. TELL

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

5. Pod Casting

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 any time. 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.

6. Quick Link Pen

Quick Link Pen allows learners to copy and store printed text, Internet links. It helps to transfer the data to computers and enables the reader to get the meaning of the word from a built in dictionary. Accessing this type of machine seems to be a more convenient method. Recent developments in machine translations presents translation engines like GO Translator and Bablefish.

7. Quicktionary

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

Literacy in the Digital Age: Nine Great Speaking and Listening Tools

The majority of the tools mentioned in this post and the four earlier posts in our series, transform the student experience from passive consumers of information to active creators of content, employing multiple English Language Arts standards and skills along the way.

We firmly believe this ought to be the new norm in the modern classroom. Kids have access to information; we must teach them how to navigate a world constantly evolving where content is at their fingertips. The traditional application of ELA isn't enough for future-ready learners. We would argue our students read and write more now than they ever have before -- between texting, social media, gaming, and everything else they do in their digitally fueled, online lives. Our vision

must evolve to incorporate a new approach to literacy instruction, one in which technology becomes an accelerator to personalize and create meaningful learning contexts.

In this digital age, storytelling, comprehension, and the writing process are evolving before our eyes. Schools, then, must recognize and value the fact that a narrative doesn't always have to be told with pencil and paper, or that the steps of the writing process aren't bound by tradition.

In this final installment of our series, we focus on speaking and listening. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) stress the importance of communication, and challenge students to engage in conversation by using evidence to support an argument, while evaluating and listening to others' perspectives. The nine tools below create opportunities for students to employ their speaking and listening skills as creators and producers, and as called for by the CCSS.

BookTrack Classroom

BookTrack is an awesome, free tool that enhances both reading and writing by incorporating music. Students can create soundtracks for plays, poems, stories, or even their own creative writing, and share their creations with the world. Text and music both have the powerful ability to elicit an emotional reaction from the audience. With BookTrack, students can merge the two and bring a new dimension to the written word.

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VideoNot.es

VideoNot.es is a platform that allows students to take notes synchronized with video. In other words, students can be viewing a video on half their screen while simultaneously taking notes on the other half.

This is an innovative way to help students engage deeply with a text, as called for by the Standards. The most amazing aspect to VideoNot.es is that each note is automatically synchronized with the video (think time-stamped). When students go back to review the notes they took, all they have to do is click on a line they typed and the video jumps to that specific point. VideoNot.es isn't simply limited to YouTube either (though it does work seamlessly there); Khan, Vimeo, and several MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) platforms work as well. Additionally, the tool connects with a person's Google Drive account, so it's perfect for Google Apps For Education districts around the world.

Several uses exist for the tool, but teachers may find great value with VideoNot.es as part of a flipped learning model. Teachers can assign a video and ask students to take notes on its content. Additionally, teachers may ask students to jot down questions, connections, wonderings, wow/a-ha moments, etc. Students can then either share their notes with the teacher as a vehicle for personalized feedback, or with peers as part of structured opportunities for collaboration and dialogue. The tool encourages students to not simply listen to the content, but also to employ visual and oral comprehension strategies, along with writing processes.

PlayPosit & EDpuzzle

PlayPosit and Edpuzzle are two of our favorite tools that allow teachers to create interactive videos. Teachers can record a screencast or leverage existing videos, and embed questions at strategic points in a video to monitor comprehension and/or push a student's thinking. Teachers can differentiate content and questioning and promote self-paced learning. Additionally, by embedding formative assessment checks throughout the video and analyzing real time data based on student response, teachers can provide precise intervention or enrichment along with timely and specific feedback.

Teachers can use this tool as part of a flipped or blended learning model to provide self-paced learning opportunities. Videos can be taken from YouTube or teachers can utilize their own creations. Don't think of it as just a teacher tool; encourage students to create their own flipped videos with questions.

Podcasting

Speaking and Listening Standards can be supported by the creation of podcasts in the classroom. Students can practice fluency, produce book reviews, record a solo on their instrument, or reflect on assignments, to name a few possible podcasting activities. How often do students have the

opportunity to listen to their own speech? Or process content and then be able to articulate the material in a way that is meaningful to them?

There are many ways educators can begin to implement podcasting, or digital voice recording, as part of their classroom practice. Teachers and students could begin using Google Voice to leave voicemail messages for one another. We've found this strategy to be very effective in helping students develop all six dimensions of fluency when acquiring a new language.

Additionally, web-based platforms such as Vocaroo afford similar opportunities to record audio. With this tool, students can download their recording, link to a QR code, or share via email and social networks. Students can also use programs like Spreaker or Audacity to add music and sound effects. The spectrum of podcast creations can be as basic or as "fancified" as a student would like it to be.

As we mentioned in an earlier post in this series, empower student voice by providing an audience. Student podcasts can be catalogued and utilized by fellow classmates to reinforce concepts. Beyond that, the CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) bring uniformity and consistency in terms of grade-level expectations. Consider posting podcasts on websites, blogs, or social media so students can share their work with others around the world!

ThingLink

ThingLink is a phenomenal tool that takes storytelling to a whole new level: an image or video becomes the canvas for students to create interactive media. Students start with an image as the foundation and add links to videos, content, audio, maps, and additional images to construct a multimodal story. ThingLink contains interactive hotspots for viewers to click to explore more around a given topic.

Asking students to create using ThingLink provides them an opportunity to employ comprehension, writing, and listening skills in a virtual context. Students must strategically select and embed elements that help facilitate their story. Perhaps it's a map that becomes interactive with content related to a series of battles, or the area's history of colonization, coupled with music and art of a particular era. Maybe students researching an author are able to embed tidbits of information about that author's life and writing. Teachers can even use this tool as a way to organize resources for units by providing an interactive experience through an image or video.

SOURCE:

- <https://calltask3.wordpress.com/speaking-skills/improve-speaking-skills-by-using-computer/>
- <https://www.amideast.org/blogs/english4success/june-27-2011-0818/shy-speaking-online-tools>
- <https://busyteacher.org/23820-improve-spoken-english-5-must-have-tools.html>
- <https://www.teachingchannel.org/blog/2015/09/02/literacy-in-the-digital-age-speaking-and-listening-sap>
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