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## Effectiveness of ICT Tools in Enhancing Listening and Speaking Skills

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### ABSTRACT

Listening and speaking are closely interconnected, like two sides of the same coin. Inside the classroom, learners can develop their listening and speaking skills through participating in various activities like role play, debates, and oral presentations that are designed on real-life situations. Good speaking and listening skills are specially required in today's world. In order to improve your speaking skills, you also need to improve your listening skills. Learners can improve their speaking and listening skills by getting acquainted with the standard pronunciation that is Received Pronunciation (RP). Learners can listen to standard podcasts, watch movies, interviews, and shows, and use learning apps in order to enhance their pronunciation. E-learning tools such as the internet, YouTube, and mobile phones expand the learning process. Apps like Duolingo and Rosetta Stone include speaking recognition technology that provides feedback on the learner's pronunciation. It enhances the listening skills of the learner. Websites like Fluent U and BBC Learning English provide a wide range of resources, such as videos and audio, to enhance speaking skills. ICT tools were being utilised in our classrooms before also but during the COVID-19 pandemic their use maximized and they played a significant role in the teaching and learning process. Applications such

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as Google Meet, Zoom, Google classroom, smart boards, power point presentations, digital classroom benefit the learners and enhance their learning experience. It creates a bridge between the learners and the teachers. These tools help the teacher to create an innovative and creative classroom. Moreover, these tools provide opportunities for the learners to minimize the problem of distance. Now we can get degrees by attending online classes. This is the real benefit of technology. This paper intends to underline the effective usage of ICT tools, and to show their impact on classroom learning. And also this paper helps to identify how ICT tools enhance the listening and speaking skills of the learners of the polytechnic classroom in CV RAMAN Global University.

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## **Introduction**

In the context of language learning, information and communication Technology ICT refers to the use of Technology as tools. Such tools comprise computer internet, smartphone etc which are put into use to enhance the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing ). It is a set of technology that helps in the exchange of information, data management and communication .

Listening and speaking are closely interconnected, like two sides of a coin. Good listening skills are essential for good speaking skills. When we actively listen to standard English, it helps us improve our pronunciation incidentally, it helps us acquire vocabulary and sentence structure. Inside the classroom, learners can develop their listening and speaking skills by participating in various activities such as debates, oral presentations and role play that are based on real-life situations. So to improve your speaking skills, you need to improve your listening skills.

ICT in schools was launched in December 2004 and revised in 2010 through the scheme of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) or National Mission for Secondary Education to provide opportunities to the secondary students to build their communication skills and make them learn through computers. The mission was sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The scheme provides financial assistance support to Union Territories and State Governments in establishing computer labs. The scheme was launched in March 2009. The aim was to provide funds

to all schools in backward blocks and SC/ ST/ weaker sections of the society. The ministry has approved 63 smart schools so far .

Initially both teaching and learning was dependent on text books and blackboards which made the learning fall short of expectations. Learning was not accessible to all. Learners were the passive listeners. But, now, after the incorporation of ICT in the Educational field, learning and teaching have become a fun activity. A lot of learning materials are available such as e-books, internet, audio video, browsers etc. Learning is now accessible to all irrespective of where they live. Learners actively participate in the classroom activity. Students are willing to learn and acquire knowledge with the help of new technology such as Smartphones, i-Phone, Computers and Internet.

The purpose of using ICT tools in language learning is to promote fluency in the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Now learning is not limited to the four walls of the classroom. Learners do not need to attend the physical classroom in order to acquire the language skills. It makes learning accessible to all. Learners get e-certificate from online learning, which helps them to develop their skills.

Coursera, edX, Udemy, Google and Great Learning are the platforms that provide online courses with the certificate. Most of the courses on these platforms offer free online courses to uplift the skills. Video conferencing, speech recognition software, internet , podcast, and blogging are some of the best tools for learning speaking skills. Duolingo, Josh talk, an English speaking app, etc provide free platforms to improve communication skills and to learn new languages. Apps like Cambly provide free trials for the learners to advance their skills.

### **Literature Review**

J. Karthikeyan in his article ‘ Application of ICT tools: A source to enhance the listening skills ‘(2019) discusses the significance of developing listening skills through the use of application of ICT at tertiary level in rural areas. The experiment was held on the engineering students in Salem district. The article provides the basic tools of ICT such as Technology tools, social networking tools, communication tools, e- Learning and Mobile learning. Advantages of tools in developing the listening skills such as transparency, enhanced communication skills, etc. The researcher uses a questionnaire method to collect data. This study has motivated the backward rural students and boosted their logical thinking and analytical skills. Students overcame the language difficulties and improved their listening skills .The

research findings demonstrate that the listening skills of engineering students from educationally backward rural areas have significantly developed. In conclusion, ICT tools are essential for the development of learners' communication skills.

In the paper ‘ Role of ICT in Developing Speaking Skills in EFL Classroom ’ (2022) , K.Suganthi discusses the effectiveness of automation on both the average and under average learners. The paper also mentioned the types of ICT tools used in EFL classes such as smart boards, TV shows, computers and projectors. A definition and the significance of speaking skills as well as the activities to teach or learn ICT speaking skills. Students can find learning material such as TV, audio, video, quizzes etc to enhance their speaking skills. To conclude, learners improved their speaking skills through their active participation in the classroom.

In the paper ‘ The use of Technology in informal English language learning: evidence from Yemeni undergraduate students ’ (2021), Wagdi Rashad Ali Bin-Hady and Nasser Omer Mubarak Al-Tamimi discuss the use of Technology based strategies by Yemeni undergraduate students to develop their foreign language skills that is English, in informal setting . The mix method is used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from 110 students. The research finds that students used four Technology-based strategies in informal settings that included social media, being inspired by someone, accessing social networks and websites . The students reported that these strategies helped the students to develop their listening, speaking and reading skills and also in their vocabulary was enhanced over grammar and pronunciation.

Similar work has already been done in this area but the effective use of ICT tools in ESL classrooms has remained untouched. Thus this paper will cover this research gap. This paper intends to underline the effective usage of ICT tools, and to show their impact on classroom learning. And also this paper helps to identify how ICT tools enhance the listening and speaking skills of the learners of the polytechnic classrooms in CV Raman Global University.

## **Methodology**

The study used the quantitative method. In the first phase of the study, 10 polytechnic students voluntarily participated in the interview and provided their feedback. Following the analysis, interview data and feedback, the researcher conducted the class and designed activities using ICT in the ESL classroom.

## ICT in ESL classroom

Information and communication Technology (ICT) refers to the tools that are used to communicate and manage information. In an English language classroom it includes the academic use of applications like smart board, slide presentation software, word processors. ESL stands for English as a second language. English language teachers help the English language learners(ELL) in improving their English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The use of technology and the Web has had a tremendous impact on the second language(L2) classroom with students no longer depending on their teachers and their textbooks as the main source of exposure to L2 (Trinder, 2017). Learners can improve their listening as well as speaking skills by becoming familiar with the standard pronunciation, that is, the Received Pronunciation (RP). As listening and speaking are interconnected, a good speaking skill needs good listening skills. Learners can listen to standard podcasts, interviews, tv-shows and use learning apps that provide pronunciation exercises. By attending seminars and workshops led by the native speakers is a great opportunity for the students to engage themselves in the language and culture. They can learn directly from the native speakers, practise the listening skills and engage in meaningful conversation.

In particular, the study aims to explore the following research questions:

RQ1. How much time does a student spend on ICT in the ESL Classroom ?

RQ2. How much time does a student get to listen and speak? Are they comfortable with ICT tools?

RQ3. What are the different types of activities or the methodology that the teacher uses ?

**Hypothesis:** Modern teaching methods of ICT tools help students to learn in a better way inside the classroom and use that knowledge outside the classroom in real life situations.

### Data collection

The interview was used to collect data from 10 students. Before observing the class, those students were interviewed individually in English and responses were noted down. Wherever necessary, mother tongue was used for clarification. The interview questions were related to the ICT tools that they used in their learning . The data was collected in a tabular form.

## ICT based Learning

<b>1.Accessing Website</b>	Using browsers	Reading ebooks
<b>2.Social Media</b>	WhatsApp	Zoom meeting and Google meeting
<b>3.Accessing Materials</b>	PDF books	Videos and audios

## ESL classroom observation

For the paper, the researcher asked for the permission of the teacher to attend a few classes of the second year polytechnic students with the help of the supervisor. For the first phase of the observation the researcher requested the teacher to conduct a class and design an activity based on the traditional teaching method . The observation aimed to ascertain the drawbacks of a traditional method in an ESL classroom . The researcher visited the ESL classroom of second year polytechnics. Here is the activity that the teacher conducted based on the traditional method .

**Activity name :** “Picture Description”

**Material :** A picture of deforestation from a textbook

**Objective :** To improve student speaking and listening skills in English

### Activity steps

1. The teachers select a set of pictures related to a specific theme " Deforestation"
2. The teacher displays one picture at a time and asks the students to describe what they see in the pictures .
3. Before the activity teachers provide a few vocabulary that are related to the theme to the student with the correct pronunciation .
4. After each student describes the pictures, the teacher provides feedback and corrects the errors if there are any.

This activity promotes language foundation vocabulary , expansion and fluently development in a structured and traditional classroom setting .

### **Positive aspects**

- The researcher noted that the teacher encouraged everyone to speak in English and provided helpful prompts to support their language development .
- Every student got the opportunity to speak for nearly 5 minutes .
- The teacher provided feedback to the students .

### **Negative aspects**

- The picture has been taken from a book therefore it was not clear enough for the students to recognise the small details given in the picture .
- Not every student was attentive when the teacher provided the vocabulary that was related to the theme, thus many students failed to describe the picture .
- The main focus was on speaking rather than listening .

### **Student's feedback**

Students were not that happy with this method as they found that the activity was not that enriching . The students who went towards the end to perform the activity did not get enough to speak and also remarked that the picture was not clear enough for them to identify the small details . As the previous students already described the picture in the border aspect . They could also perform well in this activity if they could analyse those small details in that picture .

The researcher then suggested the teacher to allow her to engage the class using ICT . Following the analysis interview and feedback the researcher conducted two activities for listening and speaking respectively.

#### **1. Activity name : “Audio-Visual ”**

**Material :** A video clip of climate 101: deforestation from National Geographic

#### **Objectives:**

- To improve the listening skills of the students.

- To familiar with the standard pronunciation that is received pronunciation (RP)

### Activity steps

- The researcher selected a video clip of climate 101 : Deforestation from National Geographic .
- The researcher played the video clip two times for the students convenience.
- The researcher as the students to listen to the video clip and answer this following comprehensive questions :
  1. What is the main environmental issue that is discussed in the clip ?
  2. What are the importance of trees that are mentioned in the clip ?
  3. What are the possible solutions mentioned?

After listening , the teacher encouraged the students to discuss the topic among themselves . This activity promotes the standard language foundation vocabulary, expressions and fluency .

### 2. Activity name :“Project Presentation”

**Materials :** Smartboard and PPT

**Objective:** To improve the students speaking skills

**Activity steps:**

#### Pre-Activity

- Each student chooses a topic according to their interest level .
- The students do the research and collect the data from the relevant sources. They used online resources , books and interviews to gather information .
- They can use presentation software like PowerPoint and Google slide to create slides with images, graphs and key points.

#### Classroom activity

- They used the projector or shared their slides digitally to display their visual aids.





- Each student got 5 -10 minutes for the presentation.
- After the presentation given by the student the researcher asked the question related to their topic and provided the feedback .

This activity not only allowed the students to improve this speaking skills but also there presentation skills, critical thinking and their public speaking .

### **Positive aspects**

- Authentic materials used for both listening and speaking skills activities.
- Each student gets the equal opportunity to participate .
- Unlimited resources for the students to collect information.

### **Negative aspect**

- Not all the students are familiar with the ICT tools and how to use them to collect information.

### **Supervisor's Feedback**

- Overall, the 'Audio-Visual' activity was well-executed. The video clip from National Geographic was engaging and relevant to the topic of deforestation. The comprehensive questions provided a good opportunity for students to practiced their listening skills. The subsequent discussion among students helped in their understanding and promoted fluency.
- The 'Project Presentation' activity was a great opportunity for students to improve their speaking skills. The use of presentation software like PowerPoint and Google Slides allowed them to create visually engaging slides. The follow-up questions and feedback provided by the researcher helped the students' understanding.

### **Researcher Assessment**

- The incorporation of ICT tools in the activity enhanced the learners' listening and speaking skills. The use of these tools enabled students to access a wide range of information from various sources, encouraged a deeper understanding of the topic.
- The researcher observed a significant improvement in communication skills as students effectively collected and utilised the data during their presentations.
- The use of ICT tools not only enhanced the overall quality of the activity but also provided students with valuable digital literacy skills.

### **Student's Feedback**

Students gave a positive response to both the activities . As compared to the traditional method, these activities were more interactive and authentic . Students who were not familiar with the ICT tools and how to use them to collect the information or data for their assignments were little worried about the “project presentation” activity but with the help of their co- learners they were able to perform well in the activity.

### **Overall Impact**

The interactive and authentic nature of these activities, as compared to the traditional method, helped students become more familiar with ICT tools.

### **Findings**

- Students make use of ICT tools in preparing for the class rather than using it in the class .
- Students get the sufficient time to listen and speak in the classroom as compared to the traditional method. All the students were not comfortable with the ICT tools as they were not familiar with them and how to use them to collect data and information from the various sources .
- Using ICT teachers use different kinds of activities like role play, language exchange, presentation, debate and audio visual .
- Students gave a positive response to modern teaching methods.
- With the help of modern teaching methods students got acquainted with the standard pronunciation that is received pronunciation (RP).
- The hypothesis of the paper has been fulfilled as we get to know that ICT tools enhance classroom learning.

### **Conclusion**

Traditional teaching method had limited resources, it was a teacher centric approach. It followed the deductive method of teaching. Whereas the modern teaching method contains unlimited resources. It is a student centric approach and it follows the inductive method of teaching. With the help of ICT tools students can enhance their skills.

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