

Using YouTube to Enhance Speaking Skills in ESL Classroom

Mohammad Jalaluddin
PhD Student at the Department of English,
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh
Email: mohammad.jalaluddin@fulbrightmail.org

Abstract

Technology has an important role in language learning and teaching. Technological advancement has opened multiple ways for teachers and learners to apply online resources in their learning and teaching. Using YouTube inside and outside of the classroom can be very useful to develop speaking, listening and pronunciation skills. YouTube can be a valuable tool through which multiple language skills can be taught. YouTube videos can be used to make the students aware of the varieties of English spoken around the world and to provide them with authentic materials for speaking skill. This paper suggests various ways of using YouTube to teach English speaking skill.

Key words: Technology, Online resources, YouTube, Authentic materials, Speaking skill, Tool

Introduction

Role of technology cannot be ignored in ESL classrooms. Technological advancement provides new opportunities for teachers to apply online resources to traditional classrooms. It makes both learning and teaching interesting and meaningful. If students and the teachers have adequate access to the internet, there is a vast number of audio-visual resources available online that can be used in a multiple ways in English classes. YouTube is regarded one of the most effective ways to achieve success in English classes. It can be used in ESL classroom for developing various skills such as listening, speaking, pronunciation and vocabulary etc. YouTube is a kind of a tool that can be very useful both inside and outside of the classroom to learn the language.

YouTube is a website that shares different kind of videos i.e., video clips, TV clips, music videos, movie trailers, and other content such as video blogging, short original videos and educational videos. It was started in February, 2005. The site allows users to upload, view, rate, share and comment on videos. It allows unregistered users to watch videos and registered users to upload videos to their channels.

YouTube is not only about entertainment videos but a large number of videos on learning English can be found easily. There are many short videos available on different English dialects. One of the main goals of learning English language is not only to interact with native speakers but also with non-native speakers of English. YouTube provides an opportunity to interact with native as well as non-native speakers of English and also to know the different dialects and varieties of English spoken around the world.

There are many researches on using CALL resources to teach English and results show that it has positively contributed to the learner's mastery of English language. Brook (2011) states that YouTube is a tool that facilitates language learning and teaching, boosts confidence, provides authentic materials and also increases the participation of the students. Jon & Michael (2011) maintain that YouTube is useful for the teachers who are interested in promoting learners' autonomy.

Sherman (2003) points out that video is today's medium and people spend more time with audio-visual than with printed material. While watching videos there is involvement of two different senses at the same time— seeing and hearing — and stimulates interest in the meaning of words. Moreover, authentic material proves to be motivating and people find it interesting to understand “real things”. Teachers can also use audio-visual material for different purposes such as for the interpretation of the spoken language, as a language model, to appreciate the cultural issues, as a stimulus or input for further activities, or as a moving picture book. Videos provide access to things, places, people's behaviour, and events.

Advantages of Using YouTube in the Class

There are many advantages of using YouTube in ESL classroom and some of them are being listed below:

- YouTube is considered very useful tool because it can be use outside and inside of the classroom.
- It provides exposure to authentic English.
- Videos have compelling power in the language classroom.
- It promotes a learning style that is more autonomous and students centre.
- It can be source of motivation for the students and they can stay in the class for longer time.
- It is enjoyed by the students.
- YouTube could be very useful online resource for learning and teaching process.
- Using YouTube in the classrooms attracts students attentions greatly and it makes classroom very interactive for language learning.
- YouTube provides an opportunity for students to comment on the videos and ask questions about videos.
- YouTube is not only a source to learn but it also inspires the students.
- YouTube also provides an opportunity for students to present what they learned by making a video and sharing it with the class.
- If a student finds a particular video on YouTube that is interesting and useful in English language learning, h/she can find more similar videos related to it easily.
- It offers authentic examples of everyday English spoken by the people.

2

Disadvantages of Using YouTube in the Class

- Students can face the problems in understanding the language of videos.
- The kind of language level used in the videos can be confounding for the students.
- There could be issues of privacy invasion.
- There could be copyright issues
- Some videos can sometimes be inappropriate without warning.
- No restriction on comments
- No control over using it.
- Sometimes tasteless and inappropriate contents can bother students while looking for resources.
- YouTube can easily distract the students and get them off the topic easily.
- There is no way to block the inappropriate content on YouTube when you are using it in the classroom.

Techniques of teaching speaking skills through using YouTube video in ESL classroom

YouTube videos can be used in a various ways to teach speaking skill in the classroom. It also depends on the instructor how s/he is going to use it in his/her classroom. There is no fixed way to use online resources in the class. An instructor is free to do anything that he/she think might be productive for the students.

- Select a culturally and socially appropriate video that is useful for language learning
- Play the selected video in the class and pause after one or two minutes
- Ask students to make prediction on the topic about the video
- Then let them watch full video
- Ask them to tell the genre of the video
- Ask students to tell what it is about
- Students may be asked to describe their favourite character in the video, why they like him/her most
- Let the students tell what he/she has said in the video
- Ask them to give their own individual opinion about the video
- Discuss the headline of the video
- At the end, the instructor can address questions of the students related to video, vocabulary and grammar etc.

Apart from this technique there are a large number of activities that can be used by English teachers to enhance the speaking, listening and pronunciation skills of the students. YouTube is mainly useful for teaching speaking and listening skills but reading and writing can also be taught through it.

TED Talks Videos (<https://www.ted.com/>)

TED talks videos can be another source for use in ESL classrooms. Many short, typical speech videos can be found that have amazing ideas and can be used for teaching speaking skills. TED talks has its own channel on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TEDtalksDirector>). The following simple activities can be very helpful in teaching speaking skills through using TED Talks videos.

1. Prediction

Students can be asked to tell what is the video about. After watching the video, the instructor can ask them to give their opinions whether the video met their expectations or not.

2. Vocabulary Building

While watching the video, students can be asked to write down words that seem interesting to them, are not comprehensible or which summarise the story. Instructor can discuss these points after watching the video. The instructor can also ask the students the reason behind selecting particular words.

3. Describing Main Points

Students can be asked to describe the main points discussed in the video.

4. Asking questions and sharing opinions

After watching the video, students can be asked to sit in groups and ask questions with each other and share their opinions.

Apart from all these activities, there are many more techniques that can be applied effectively to YouTube videos to enhance the speaking skill of the students in ESL classroom.

Conclusion

YouTube is a very useful online resource to teach speaking skills in ESL classroom. It has many advantages and disadvantages also. An instructor should be aware of the pros and cons of using

Using YouTube to Enhance Speaking Skills in ESL Classroom

Mohammad Jalaluddin

YouTube videos. There should be special instruction from the teachers for the students to use Youtube in appropriate ways. Nobody can deny the importance of using online resources in teaching and learning of English. There are thousand of English short videos available on YouTube that can be used for teaching and learning English language. It can be used in various ways for effective teaching and learning. It is not only useful to enhance speaking and listening skills but also to teach reading and writing skills. An instructor is free to use it in his/her own way that he/she think might be productive and meaningful for students.

References

- Alimemaj, Z. (2010). YouTube, Language Learning and Teaching Techniques. *The Magazine of Global English Speaking Higher Education* 2 (3), 10-12.
- Balcikanli, C. (2011). Long Live, YouTube: L2 Stories about YouTube in Language Learning.
- Berk, R.A. (2009). Multimedia Teaching with Video Clips: TV, Movies, YouTube, and mtvU in the College Classroom. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning* 5 (1) 1-21.
- Brook, J. (2011). The affordance of YouTube for Language Learning and Teaching. *Hawaii Pacific University TESOL Working Paper Series* 9 (1, 2), 37-56.
- Feldman, Barbara. (2007, 15 Oct.). Pros and Cons of YouTube. Surfnetkids, *Feldman Publishing* [On-line]. Available: <http://www.surfnetkids.com/tech/1197/pros-and-cons-of-youtube/>. Web. 29 April 2016.
- Kelsen, Brent. (2009). Teaching EFL to the iGeneration: A Survey of Using YouTube as Supplementary Material with College EFL Students in Taiwan. *CALL-EJ Online* 10 (2). [On-line]. Available: <http://callej.org/journal/10-2/kelsen.html>
- Khalid. Al-Zyoud & Muhammad. K. (2012). The Use of YouTube in Teaching English Literature, The case of Al-Majma'ah Community College, Al-Majma'ah University case study. *International Journal of Linguistics* 4 (4), 525-551.
- Sherman, J. (2003). Using Authentic Video in the Language Classroom, Cambridge: *Cambridge University Press*.
- Watkins. Jon & Wilkins. Michael. (2011). Using YouTube in the EFL Classroom. *Language Education in Asia* 2 (2), 113-119.