



Innovative Methods of Teaching English Language to the Rural Students through Technology

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Abstract: *English is now the language of global communication. Thus, the work of English as second/foreign language teachers is becoming more visible, and teacher education for English as Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) learners has gained prominence. The development of an interdisciplinary model of foreign language teacher education is described in this article. This innovative approach to language education aims to provide teachers with declarative knowledge and research tools on the one hand, as well as the ability to deal with a diverse classroom in a multicultural society on the other. English as a second language instruction has the potential to assist language learners in moving forward with a deep awareness and understanding of literacy development in both languages, as well as the knowledge that students' comprehension and verbal production are likely to be higher in the mother tongue than in the foreign language. Thus, ESL instruction would be tailored to the learner's level of foreign language acquisition, taking into account the fact that, even though it is not the learner's first language, many cognitive processes are already in place.*

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It can be difficult to stay awake and interested in class. What's more difficult is being in charge of keeping students awake and interested. This is the primary responsibility of an ESL teacher. To be a great ESL teacher, you must not only teach, but also inspire and empower your students. The goal is to motivate students to learn, speak, read, write, and comprehend English. Keep this article's advice as a tool to be used frequently, and you'll be one step closer to your goal.

Challenges in Teaching English as a Second Language

Teaching English as a second language is a demanding but rewarding profession. English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers must learn to constantly adapt to the needs of their students. This frequently entails dealing with a wide range of issues in the classroom, many of which are all too common. A good ESL teacher must be able to identify these common issues and work to solve them. Even minor changes to your teaching methods can contribute to a more productive and relaxed environment for both you and your students. English language teachers in particular face a challenge because the majority of students in our schools are first-generation learners. They do not understand English. And credit is to be given to English language teachers for developing the motivation within them to learn the language.

Common Classroom Problems Faced by ESL Teachers

Students become Overly Dependent on the Teacher

Many times, students will look to the teacher for correct answers rather than trying themselves. If the teacher always gives them the right answer, it can become a problem. Instead, concentrate on providing positive reinforcement. This will help students feel more at ease and willing to respond (even if incorrectly).



Use of First Language Consistently

This is possibly the most common issue when teaching English as a second language. As an ESL teacher, it is critical to encourage students to use only English. However, if students begin conversing in their first language, teachers can move closer to the students, creating a more conducive learning environment. Another approach is to create a set of class rules and a penalty system.

Uninterested Students

This will happen in every classroom, no matter what. If the entire class is acting out, it could be the teacher's fault, such as boring material or poor classroom management. If it is a single student, the ESL teacher should act quickly to assert dominance. To resolve such issues, an ESL teacher must be strict and, if necessary, impose discipline.

Students lack clarity.

When teaching English as a foreign language, this happens far too frequently. The truth is that it is frequently the fault of the teacher. Don't worry if the teacher's instructions to an assignment result in puzzled looks and soft whispers among students: there is a solution. To avoid this issue, make certain that the instructions are followed correctly. Gestures, mime, and short, concise sentences can help students understand. Most importantly, learners can be given models and examples of the activity.

Students become bored, distracted, or unmotivated.

It is frequently the teacher's fault that class is boring. Fortunately, with careful planning, this issue can be resolved. Choose a juicy theme for the lesson; one that the students will relate to and enjoy. This will automatically pique their interest and motivate them. The ESL teacher should get to know the students and identify their interests and needs before designing the course.

Strong Students Dominance

ESL teachers will encounter students with varying abilities and language skills. While it is beneficial to have some students who excel in the classroom, it is critical that they do not detract from others. If certain students begin to steal the show, it is important to focus on asking weaker students in the class to answer questions. Teachers must gently deflect some answers from the strong students while giving production time to other less-than-stellar members of the class to perform and participate.

Students are not well-prepared.

ESL teachers encourage students to drop out because they feel lost and/or unprepared. The emphasis should be on a more collaborative learning experience. Before moving on to a new topic, the teacher must ensure that all students are on the same page by concept checking multiple times and encouraging individual participation, thereby involving all learners in the classroom activity.

Autonomy is required for ESL learners.

Some individuals confuse learner autonomy with self-instruction. That could not be further from the truth. Learner autonomy refers to a student's ability to set appropriate learning objectives and manage his or her own learning. However, in some areas, autonomous learners rely on teachers to create and maintain learning environments that promote the development of learner autonomy. Teachers who model reflective practices for their students find it easier to create an appropriate learning environment that promotes learner autonomy. This environment is one that is positive and motivating, and encourages collaboration and social interaction. It embeds reflective practices into



daily learning activities. Learners accept responsibility for their learning, review their learning, and evaluate its effectiveness. The more learners begin to think about learning, the more transparent learning will become to them.

Creating Learner Autonomy

The role of a teacher is critical in this process because "the ability of students to behave autonomously is dependent on their teacher creating a classroom culture where autonomy is accepted." Teachers should try to motivate students on a regular basis to consider why they are learning certain things, what they are learning, and how they can learn most effectively. Learners should develop the ability to reflect and identify strategies that help them succeed. It is critical that both the teacher and the learner use the target language as much as possible in class because only by doing so can learners discover their strengths and identify areas of difficulty. English as a Second Language learners should be given numerous opportunities to use the target language in meaningful contexts with their peers. These activities create an environment that will reinforce each learner's goals, celebrate small successes, and gradually build awareness of the learning process.

Autonomous Learning Strategies

Here are a few ideas to help ESL teachers create an autonomous learning environment.

- Cooperative learning in pairs or small groups
- Problem-based learning situations in which students must apply their knowledge to solve specific problems
- Creating portfolios that document their learning process over time
- Using rubrics that include the learner's individual expectations and a self-assessment component
- Peer assessment that allows students to evaluate each other using rubrics and clearly stated objectives

Activities for Autonomous Learning

There are several activities that can be used in an ESL classroom to promote learning autonomy. Here are a few examples of activities that the ESL learners can be exposed to in order to create a self learning environment and to develop interest among the learners:

- Learner logs
- Think-Pair-Share
- K-W-L chart
- Application cards
- Admit and exit slips

Teaching English as a Skill

Today's job market expects candidates to have strong communication skills in order to succeed and thrive in a global environment. English teachers must exercise extreme caution in developing in their students the ability to perform four language skills, namely LSRW. As a result, teaching English as a skill rather than just a subject becomes essential. There is a growing perception in rural areas that English is a language of the elite. What makes matters more difficult is that even English teachers suffer from this phobia. It is important to remember that the task of an English teacher is not limited to simply rendering a prose or a poem in vernacular. The nuances of verbal



melody, proper pronunciation, and pattern use are also important for teachers to effectively deliver language skills to learners from rural backgrounds. How many English teachers have the patience to listen to their students recite a poem and then correct them when they get it wrong? A sincere teacher can go the extra mile by playing a recorded rendition of the poem and allowing students to recite in the same style. Some overly enthusiastic teachers frequently explain the poem, stifling students' creative abilities. Actually, if possible, they should be allowed to provide their own explanation. They could also be allowed to work in groups to select appropriate images, then write a brief report and present it later.

The learners can also be provided with some activities that can be performed individually through the support and guidance of the teacher. Such exercises, though may appear time-taking, yet are rewarding. These exercises help students enhance their four skills of language learning and also help them to develop an involvement in learning the language on their own.

Using Technology as an Aid for Teaching

Technology aids students in the learning process by changing the way information is delivered. In contrast to traditional teacher-centered and text-based education, which focuses on "conveying fixed bodies of information and viewing students as passive recipients of knowledge," learning has now become a personalized and meaningful experience that meets the needs of learners. As a result, regardless of their personal differences, preferences, or histories, technology assists in delivering individualized content at the time and place that students choose (e-learning and mobile learning), thereby expanding their learning spaces by taking learning outside of the classroom. However, technology-supported learning can be integrated into classroom teaching to provide a curriculum rich in diverse activities that meet the needs of every student (blended learning). The term blended learning refers to learning that employs a variety of "the most effective training solutions, applied in a coordinated manner, to achieve learning objectives," typically with a computer or another mobile device as a medium for facilitating learning and meeting learning objectives. The most effective use of technology in education is linked to the variety of tools and methods it provides, because no single teaching method can meet the needs of all learners.

Young people are the web generation, and they want more out of life. Our challenge is to channel our students' natural enthusiasm for ICT by incorporating it into their daily lives and purposefully incorporating it into the modern foreign language curriculum. There is significant value in incorporating new technologies as an integral part of the process, rather than as an add-on or reward. This enables students to develop the four c's: communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Learners can easily access authentic resources that promote intercultural understanding and interact with virtual peers in real, non-fabricated contexts thanks to ICT.

Publishing students' multimedia outcomes on a blog or wiki provides them with a real audience for their work, allows for peer assessment via commenting, and encourages them to raise their standards as a result. Virtual learning environments also provide students with the ability to learn from anywhere and at any time. Tools such as Padlet, Popplet, Linoit, and Pinterest enable students to easily collaborate with others as a class or in small groups.

Many ESL departments now have their own Twitter accounts to communicate with parents, notify students of important announcements, celebrate achievement, and retweet interesting tweets about language learning, such as authentic tweets in the target language or tweets for word/expression of the day. Technology supports personalized and independent learning by allowing students to work at their own pace, complete interactive exercises rigorously in class or at home, and receive immediate feedback. Gaining points for their efforts and being able to compare their scores with their classmates is motivating for them as well, and it adds an engaging gamification element to their learning. Students and teachers can easily create their own lists by searching for existing



ones. Another free cross-platform tool that allows for classroom voting, instant feedback, and formative assessment is Socrative. You can assign multiple choice, true or false, or short answer questions to students, as well as self-marking pre-made quizzes. Furthermore, using avatars rather than real students' faces may encourage increased participation, particularly among reluctant learners.

Students can improve their pronunciation, boost their confidence, extend their speaking time, and listen back as many times as they want by digitally rehearsing, recording, and editing spoken work. They can also create a script individually or collaboratively in Google Docs and import it into an online teleprompter like Cue Prompter or the Visio prompt app so they can record their audio while the screen scrolls up using Audacity or Voice Record Pro. This technique, as well as Textivate and Triptico, are used by some departments to help students learn their controlled assessment pieces.

Another effective tool in and out of the language classroom is video. Making videos engages multiple intelligences, encourages creativity, and promotes collaboration. Students take ownership of their work, which increases engagement. Pupils can create short films in the target language, animations using apps like Yakit Kids, Puppet Pals, and Explain Everything screencasts, and peer assess each other's work. These videos are easily uploaded and stored in the cloud, where they can be used to build an e-portfolio over time and are always accessible. Edmodo and Showbie are two other tools for creating e-portfolios and submitting homework. The benefit of these tools is that students do not need an email address, only a class code.

Another option is to use video to flip the classroom, in which learners access the lesson content they would normally learn in class at home, freeing up more class time for practice and accessing higher-order thinking skills. Wildern School in Hampshire is currently experimenting with flipping and documenting their findings on a dedicated blog. Flipping does not necessitate the creation of a large amount of new material. It could be as simple as sharing existing PowerPoint presentations or screencasts.

Here are some suggestions to help colleagues who are struggling with technology integration:

- Set a good example by introducing some of the simpler tools or apps to build confidence, and then share the results of their use.
- Teach a lesson using technology as a group and then discuss the successes and challenges.
- Provide in-house mentoring sessions during lunch, after school, or on professional development days.
- Designate student digital leaders who can troubleshoot problems and provide assistance in class.
- Suggest that technology be used as a performance management target.

Using digital media may be difficult for the current generation of teachers. The good news is that by leveraging social media for support and integrating available tools and apps, connected teachers can harness the power and potential of technology for language learning.

Conclusion

It is unusual to find a language class that does not make use of technology. Technology has been used to both assist and enhance language learning in recent years. Some technological tools allow ESL teachers to differentiate instruction and adapt classroom activities and homework assignments, thereby improving the language learning experience. Language educators can use distance learning programs to provide language-learning opportunities to all students, regardless of where they live, the human and material resources available to them, or their language



background and needs. To summarize, technology is becoming increasingly important as a tool for assisting English as a second language teachers in facilitating and mediating language learning for their students. While technology can help support and improve language learning, the effectiveness of any technological tool is dependent on the knowledge and expertise of the qualified language teacher who manages and facilitates the language learning environment. However, in some cases, school and university administrators have allowed technology to drive language curriculum and have even used it to replace certified language teachers. ESL learners will acquire the language effectively through technology without interaction with and guidance from a qualified language teacher.

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