

## USING AUDIO MATERIALS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL

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**Abstract:** This article highlights using audio materials to improve students' speaking skills. Audio sources like podcasts, audiobooks, lectures, and even voice recording software, can significantly improve learners' listening and speaking skills, which can help them to communicate fluently and effectively in various contexts. However, optimal use of these audio materials requires certain strategies from the teachers, including appropriate selection of audio sources, providing listening and speaking support, and follow-up activities that reinforce learning. By adopting these strategies, teachers can help learners gain confidence, improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, and develop fluency and interaction skills in the target language. Overall, the effective use of audio materials presents an innovative and practical approach to language instruction that can enhance learners' communicative competence.

**Key words:** podcasts, audio materials, speaking skills, audiobooks, conference, lecture, voice recording software.

### Introduction

In recent years, the role of audio materials in language learning has become more and more prominent. With the development of technology, a wide range of audio materials, including podcasts, audiobooks, and other audio resources, have become more accessible than ever before. This has opened the door to new opportunities in various areas of language learning, and especially for improving students' speaking skills. In this article, we will explore how audio materials can be used to improve students' speaking skills.

#### Importance of speaking skills

Speaking is considered one of the most important skills in language learning, especially for those learning a foreign language. A good speaker should be able to communicate effectively in various situations, such as fluently discussing various topics, presenting ideas, participating in discussions, and expressing emotions and feelings. Furthermore, the ability to speak correctly and confidently in a foreign language can help learners to improve their career prospects, interact more effectively with people from different cultures and build better relationships with them. Despite the importance of speaking skills, teaching this skill is often challenging compared to other language skills like reading and writing. There are several reasons for this. First, speaking is a

communicative activity that does not lend itself to traditional assessments, such as multiple-choice tests or written essays. Additionally, students may feel anxious or uncomfortable speaking in front of others, especially in a foreign language setting. Another factor that adds to the challenge of teaching speaking is the difficulty of providing learners with immediate and constructive feedback that can help them improve.

#### The benefits of using audio materials in teaching speaking skills

Audio materials can provide several benefits in teaching speaking skills. Firstly, audio materials can provide learners with valuable input as a model for proper pronunciation and intonation. Secondly, audio materials can be used to create authentic listening and speaking tasks, which can help learners to improve their interactive communication skills. Thirdly, audio materials can be used to promote the use of new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, which enhances the accuracy and fluency of speaking. Finally, audio materials can improve the confidence and motivation of learners, helping them to overcome their anxiety and fear of speaking in a foreign language.

#### Types of audio materials for teaching speaking skills:

a) Podcasts: Podcasts are audio recordings typically available on the internet and can be downloaded onto mobile devices. They often cover topics related to the culture, history, daily life, or news of the target language country. Teachers can use podcasts to provide learners with authentic listening and speaking tasks, such as summarizing, discussing main ideas, debating, or reacting to opinions or predictions.

b) Audiobooks: Audiobooks are recordings of books that are specifically produced to be listened to and not read. They are useful for improving listening and speaking, as they can provide learners with exposure to natural language, complex sentence structures, and literary devices such as metaphors and idiomatic expressions. They can also allow learners to practice pronunciation and intonation by listening and repeating sentences.

c) Conferences and lectures: Conferences and lectures are audio recordings of professional or academic presentations that target language speakers have given. They can provide learners with opportunities to improve their listening and speaking skills by summarizing, paraphrasing, or questioning the material presented. Furthermore, these audios can expose the learners to specialized vocabulary, structure and style that are used in their discipline.

d) Voice recording software: Voice recording software can be used to create speaking practice tasks that involve learners recording their own speech. They can be used to record speeches, oral exams, feedback, and regular speaking practice tasks that students can work on outside of class. Learners can analyze their own recordings and work on areas in which they need improvement. This makes self-assessment possible,

which is an important skill and motivator for effective language learning.

To effectively use audio materials in teaching speaking skills, faculty must adopt some strategies. These strategies include:

- Selecting appropriate audio materials
- Preparing for the task
- Providing listening support
- Providing speaking support
- Providing follow-up activities

### **Conclusion**

The use of audio materials can be a practical and effective method for improving students' speaking skills. Audio materials can provide learners with the opportunity to enhance pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, interaction, and confidence. However, to maximize the potential of audio materials, teachers must develop strategies and apply them effectively. Teachers should select appropriate audio materials, prepare learners to listen, provide support in listening and speaking, and design follow-up activities that consolidate learning. In conclusion, audio materials present teachers with an innovative approach to teaching speaking skills, which should be fully exploited to enhance learners' communicative competence.

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