

Abstract

The study, **Enhancing Basic Communication Skills through Listening Using TELL**, explores the possibilities of improving the communication skills of learners at tertiary level by developing their listening skills with the aid of easily available technologies. By following a principled eclectic approach to language teaching, the investigator incorporated a variety of approaches, methods, techniques and technologies to improve the communication skills of the chosen sample through developing their listening skills, while being a part of the syllabus and curriculum.

Most of the non-native speakers of English learn English for communication purposes. Broughton et al. (1978) rightly observed that earlier English communication was confined to academic, administrative or commercial activities where “a limited command of language chiefly in written form, was found reasonable and adequate. But ... interpersonal communication is now more vital than academic usage” (35). A command of English is, therefore, essential to express oneself in different contexts. Good communication skills include establishing rapport, expressing opinions, describing things, feelings and emotions, engaging in serious discussions, persuading someone on something, clarifying information, giving instructions, making enquiries, raising complaints, making requests, and so on. Moreover, effective communication skills encompass not only the ability to use well-formed and appropriate language and knowledge but also the skill to overcome the barriers of communication strategically (Murray, 2010).

Though 50% of communication is spent on listening (Gilman and Moody 1984), listening comprehension enhancement had only a minimal place in the teaching of English until the 1970s as it was assumed that the development of listening comprehension skills or the learners’ ability to comprehend the spoken language could

be improved only through exposure and practice. Listening started gaining prominence from its incidental and passive state to a complex and active state in the mid1960s. It began to get acknowledged not just as a transient and invisible process but as an active and dynamic process which involves receiving of the speakers' message, decoding and unpacking the content of the message to construct and represent meaning through negotiation in order to respond appropriately to complete the process of communication (Rost 2011). According to Mendelsohn and Rubin (1995), "while listening, learners must comprehend the text by retaining information in memory, integrate it with what follows, and continuously adjust information" (35). This is because unlike reading, the possibility of getting a second chance is impossible in live listening. As a result, within the short span of short term memory the information contained in the message has to be analysed and understood.

In spite of being recognised as a crucial element in language learning, listening still remains out of the pedagogy of language teaching most of the times. Though, with the advent of communicative language teaching (CLT), the teaching of listening has started to receive some attention, it is not yet fully integrated into the curriculum. Many studies have been conducted to propagate the importance of listening and the need to incorporate it into teaching by providing opportunities for the learners to listen to significant inputs both inside and outside the classroom.

It is a fact that even after learning English for more than a decade, the majority of ESL (English as Second Language) learners at tertiary level in Kerala lack good communication skills and one of the main reasons for this is the poor attention given to developing the listening skills. Though listening skills development activities are included at all levels of English learning, they are either not properly executed or ignored as listening comprehension is not being tested or evaluated in any of the board

or university examinations. As a result, listening skills development activities are least prioritised by both the teachers and learners and for the majority of learners, the only listening exposure they get is their teachers' English in the classrooms.

In the present study, (which comprised of three phases- preliminary investigation phase, material development phase and intervention phase) an attempt is made to establish the necessity of developing the listening skills to enable tertiary level ESL learners to overcome their lack of confidence in communicating in English. Furthermore, the study intends to prove that by following a principled eclectic approach to language teaching, a remarkable change can be brought in to learners' communication skills, if the teacher puts in a little effort to integrate listening skills development activities using technological assistance or TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning), even if it is not specifically mentioned in the syllabus.

(Keywords: Listening, Communication skills, Technology, Language Learning)

• The blended TFL instructional model was constructed based on basic data of related theories and the problems and opinions in teaching Thai as a foreign language. • The related instructional media including the textbook for in-class instruction and blog (embedded with community content) for online were developed. 1.7 Evaluation. Listening and speaking skills of the foreign learners were measured and evaluated by using the test of listening and speaking skills, the pre-test and the post-test. The details are as follows:

- o The test of listening skills and speaking skills is an assessment of the conversational ability. The Path to Improving Student Communication Skills. These 8 tips can help you immensely with improving student communication skills. They can be adapted for most every kind of student from kindergarten to high school. • Reinforce building good listening skills by encouraging students to practice asking clarifying questions to fully understand the speaker's intended message. 4. Offer Group Presentations and Assignments. • Another task-based method for improving student communication skills is through critical thinking exercises. These can be done verbally or through written assignments that give students the chance to answer questions creatively using their own words and expressions.

Basic Communication Skill #1: Asking vs. Telling. Unless you're intent on starting a fight, when you're sharing something close to your heart with your partner, it's best to stay away from any kind of communication that TELLS your partner how to be. For example, any sentence beginning with "You should", "You really ought to" or "You must" is best being removed from your vocabulary, because it comes across as a covert attack and immediately puts your partner on the back foot in defensive mode. • We divert when we use sentences starting with "You" It's the verbal equivalent of pointing a finger at someone. For example, "You are impossible." or "You make me mad!"