

THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARDS IN ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILLS IN THE CLASSROOM

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Annotation:

This article explores the role of Interactive Whiteboards in enhancing the speaking skills of elementary school students, highlighting their potential to create engaging, interactive, and effective language learning experiences. This technological tool can display multimedia content, support interactive activities, and facilitate real-time collaboration. These features make IWBs a versatile tool for language instruction, particularly in developing speaking skills.

Keywords: Interactive whiteboard, tool, projector, engagement, real-time collaboration, word map, constructive feedback, peer review, multimedia, integration, personalized approach, confidence, specialized, auditory learners, visual aids, pronunciation drills.

The development of IWBs marked a significant advancement in educational technology, providing new ways for teachers to engage students and enhance learning experiences. Among the various technological tools available, interactive whiteboards (IWBs) have gained significant popularity in classrooms around the world. Interactive whiteboards (IWBs) were first developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The concept of an interactive whiteboard was pioneered by companies like SMART Technologies, which introduced the first SMART Board in 1991. This technology combined a whiteboard with a computer and a projector, allowing users to interact with the computer's content directly on the board's surface. They allow teachers and students to interact with digital content through touch, gestures, and specialized pens. Interactive whiteboards (IWBs) have revolutionized the way educators deliver lessons, making them more engaging and interactive. One of the significant benefits of IWBs is their ability to enhance speaking skills in the classroom. This interactivity makes presentations more engaging and allows for a dynamic exchange of ideas. Users can write, draw, and highlight directly on the board, which is particularly useful for emphasizing key points during lessons or



meetings. IWBs also offer real-time editing capabilities, enabling users to make changes on the board that can be saved and shared instantly. This is particularly useful for brainstorming sessions and collaborative projects, where ideas can be captured and refined on the spot. Furthermore, IWBs can be connected to the internet, providing access to a vast array of online resources, educational tools, and software applications directly from the board. By incorporating multimedia elements such as videos, audio clips, and interactive activities, IWBs make speaking exercises more dynamic and interesting for students. This increased engagement helps students to be more attentive and motivated to participate in speaking activities (Smith, Higgins, Wall, & Miller, 2005). IWBs cater to both visual and auditory learners, making them an excellent tool for diverse classrooms. Visual aids such as images, diagrams, and videos can be displayed to support speaking activities, providing students with visual context that can aid in understanding and retention. Additionally, audio recordings can be played to model pronunciation and intonation, giving students clear examples to emulate. As Glover & Miller (2001) stated that “This dual approach ensures that all students, regardless of their preferred learning style, can benefit from the lessons”. Visual and auditory support is crucial in language learning, especially for young learners. IWBs can display visual aids such as pictures, diagrams, and word maps that help students understand and remember new vocabulary. Audio support, such as recorded dialogues and pronunciation guides, can be played directly from the IWB, allowing students to hear and mimic correct pronunciation. Pronunciation drills can be conducted using audio clips and visual aids, making the exercises more engaging and effective (Smith et al., 2005). This multimodal approach reinforces learning and helps students develop their speaking skills more effectively.

Collaborative learning is another area where IWBs excel. They facilitate group work and peer learning by allowing students to work together on speaking tasks, such as role-plays or group discussions, and use the board to present their ideas. This collaborative environment encourages students to practice their speaking skills in a supportive setting, where they can learn from each other and build confidence (Beauchamp & Kennewell, 2010). Teachers can use IWBs to facilitate group activities where students work together to complete tasks. For instance, students can collaborate on creating a story, with each group member contributing a part and presenting it to the class. This collaborative approach encourages peer learning,



where students learn from each other's strengths and provide constructive feedback on speaking performance. IWBs can be integrated with other educational technologies to create a comprehensive language learning experience. For example, IWBs can be connected to language learning apps and software that offer additional speaking practice and assessment tools. Teachers can also use IWBs in conjunction with tablets or smartphones, allowing students to participate in interactive activities from their devices. This integration enhances the overall effectiveness of language instruction and provides students with more opportunities to practice speaking. Immediate feedback is crucial for the development of speaking skills, and IWBs provide an excellent platform for this. Teachers can record students' speeches and play them back for the class, highlighting areas for improvement and celebrating successes. This immediate feedback helps students to understand their mistakes and learn how to correct them, leading to faster improvement in their speaking abilities. Interactive Whiteboards support a variety of interactive activities that can enhance speaking skills. For example, interactive storytelling allows students to create and tell stories using images and text on the board. Debates and discussions can be more structured with the help of the board, as key points and arguments can be displayed for reference. Pronunciation drills can be conducted using audio clips and visual aids, making the exercises more engaging and effective. Access to online resources is another significant advantage of IWBs. Teachers can easily incorporate language learning websites, educational videos, and interactive games into their lessons. These resources provide a wealth of material for creating engaging speaking activities that motivate students to practice their speaking skills. The ability to access and display these resources seamlessly makes IWBs a powerful tool for language instruction (Glover & Miller, 2001). Students can listen to their recordings and identify areas for improvement, while peer reviews provide additional perspectives and constructive feedback. This reflective practice helps students to become more aware of their speaking abilities and work on their weaknesses. IWBs also support differentiated instruction by allowing teachers to tailor speaking activities to the needs of individual students. Teachers can create different levels of speaking tasks or provide additional support for students who need it. This personalized approach ensures that all students, regardless of their proficiency level, can benefit from the lessons and improve their speaking skills. The use of IWBs can significantly increase students' motivation and confidence in speaking. The interactive and multimedia



elements make speaking activities more enjoyable, and the immediate feedback helps students feel more confident in their abilities. This increased confidence can lead to more active participation and a greater willingness to take risks in speaking activities (Smith et al., 2005). One of the primary advantages of IWBs is their ability to create an engaging and dynamic learning environment. Traditional chalkboards and whiteboards are limited to static text and drawings, whereas IWBs can incorporate videos, audio clips, animations, and interactive exercises. This multimedia approach caters to different learning styles and keeps students motivated and interested in the lesson. For instance, teachers can use video clips to introduce new vocabulary, followed by interactive pronunciation exercises where students can practice speaking and receive immediate feedback.

Additionally, creating slides with interactive elements like clickable links, embedded quizzes, and drag-and-drop activities can keep students actively involved in the lesson. Vocabulary building is another area where IWBs can be highly effective. Teachers can create interactive word maps where students add synonyms, antonyms, and example sentences. Digital flashcards with images and sounds can also help students learn new vocabulary in a fun and engaging way. For grammar and syntax lessons, interactive exercises where students drag and drop words to form correct sentences can be very beneficial. Real-time corrections on the board allow students to come up and correct grammatical errors, providing immediate feedback and reinforcement. Interactive whiteboards (IWBs) can be highly beneficial for developing speaking skills in English lessons. One of the primary ways IWBs enhance speaking skills is through role-playing and dialogues. Teachers can project scripts or conversation prompts on the board, allowing students to practice speaking in front of the class. This not only aids in improving pronunciation and fluency but also builds confidence in public speaking. Additionally, they can integrate audio clips of native speakers, enabling students to listen and mimic pronunciation. Recording features on the IWB can be used to record students' speech, which can then be played back for self-assessment or peer review, providing an immediate feedback loop crucial for improving pronunciation and intonation. Also, Pronunciation practice is another area where Interactive Whiteboards are invaluable. Phonetic charts can be displayed to practice sounds and pronunciation, and videos of mouth movements can be shown to help students understand how to produce specific sounds. Debates and discussions can be more organized with the help of



IWBs. Debate topics or discussion questions can be displayed, and argument mapping can be done on the board to outline arguments and counterarguments (Kennewell & Beauchamp, 2007).

In Conclusion, Interactive whiteboards have the potential to significantly enhance the speaking skills of elementary school students. By creating an engaging learning environment, facilitating interactive activities, providing visual and auditory support, encouraging collaboration, and offering real-time feedback, they can transform language instruction and help students develop their speaking abilities. As technology continues to evolve, the role of IWBs in education is likely to expand, offering even more innovative ways to support language learning and improve speaking skills. Furthermore, Interactive Whiteboards support cultural awareness, differentiated instruction, self-directed learning, and confidence-building, making them a valuable tool in the language classroom. As technology continues to evolve, the role of IWBs in education is likely to expand, offering even more innovative ways to support language learning and improve speaking skills.

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