

ENHANCING STUDENTS’ INTONATION IN ESP CLASSES THROUGH VIDEO-BASED LEARNING

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The article explores the crucial role of intonation in effective communication. It examines how various video materials can be used in English for Specific Purposes classes for IT students to enhance the teaching of intonation and pronunciation. These multimedia resources expose learners to diverse accents and professional communication styles, improving their ability to apply appropriate pitch, stress, and rhythm in speech. By mastering intonation, IT students can refine their pronunciation and presentation skills, engage more effectively in discussions, and collaborate successfully in international tech environments.

Key words: *intonation, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), communication, listening comprehension, pronunciation, video-based learning.*

Intonation plays a crucial role in communication, conveying meaning beyond just the words we say. It helps highlight important information, emphasize key words, making speech clearer and more understandable. Additionally, intonation expresses emotions, attitudes, and feelings, clarifying meaning as the same sentence can take on different interpretations depending on its delivery. Furthermore, it enhances the flow of communication, making speech sound more natural and engaging. For IT students learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP), mastering intonation is particularly important for delivering effective presentations, participating in technical discussions, and cooperating successfully with international colleagues and clients.

The role of intonation in teaching and learning processes has always been at the center of attention of many scholars and educators. They emphasize that meaning in English is conveyed not only through lexical choices but also through intonation (Kurt, Medlin, & Tessarolo, 2014). Researchers examine intonation as a pragmatic resource in EFL interaction (Pickering, 2009), stress its vital role in communication (Nagendra, 2018; Yates, 2024), highlight intonation universals that actualize English emotional utterances (Kalyta, 2020), study the prosodic organization of English sympathy utterances by identifying their typical intonation patterns (Taranenko & Kutsenko, 2020), along with other aspects.

Among the most effective techniques for teaching intonation using video in ESP classes are the following:

YouTube videos. IT students frequently watch a wide range of tech-related content, covering not only topics directly related to their field, but also advancements in state-of-the-art technology. These videos may include short interviews, product reviews, tech conference presentations, and speeches by renowned industry leaders.

By engaging with diverse speakers, students are exposed to various pronunciation, speech rhythms, and accents. This regular exposure helps them train their ear to recognize different intonation patterns and naturally adopt appropriate English intonation in their own speech. Additionally, analyzing these videos allows learners to observe how professionals use stress and pitch to emphasize key points, making their speech more persuasive and engaging. To reinforce learning, students can participate in follow-up activities such as summarizing key ideas, role-playing situations presented in the video, reproducing selected excerpts while imitating the speakers' intonation, or creating their own video reviews using correct intonation patterns.

TED Talks and tech presentations. This activity is closely related to the one mentioned above by exposing students to high-quality presentations from tech leaders. TED Talks feature multinational speakers who not only introduce innovative ideas but also showcase diverse accents and speech patterns. This exposure helps students improve their listening comprehension and expand their technical vocabulary in an authentic context.

A major highlight in the tech world is Apple's annual product launch events, where members of the company's team present their latest innovations. These events are renowned for their distinctive communication style, which fosters a strong emotional connection with their "affluent, tech-savvy consumers" worldwide (West, 2023). Analyzing Apple presentations allows IT students to focus not only on the cutting-edge technology being introduced but also on the critical role of intonation in delivering impactful messages.

By closely examining these presentations, students can observe how speakers skillfully vary speech tempo, loudness, and timbre, as well as how they effectively use pauses and pitch range to enhance engagement. Many IT students, who are highly skilled in their technical fields, often find it eye-opening to realize that the success of these presentations is not solely due to technological advancements but also to the speakers' masterful communication strategies.

Apple presenters, for instance, combine intonation with various lexical and stylistic devices such as compound adjectives, emotive words, rhetorical questions, repetitions, and enumerations to maximize their persuasive impact on the audience. This use of speech elements significantly contributes to the company's ability to

captivate and influence its listeners. By analyzing and applying these techniques, IT students can develop a more engaging and effective communication style, which is essential for their professional success in international tech environments.

Films and TV shows. Incorporating films into ESP classes for IT students serves multiple purposes. Not only does it make English lessons more engaging, especially when dealing with complex technical topics, but it also helps students develop their communicative skills in a more natural and enjoyable way. Exposure to authentic dialogues in various professional and informal settings enhances their fluency and confidence in discussing different topics.

Several tech-related films and TV shows can be particularly beneficial for IT students, such as “Silicon Valley,” “The Social Network,” “I, Robot,” “The Imitation Game,” and “Hackers.” These productions provide realistic portrayals of the tech industry, innovation, and ethical dilemmas while exposing students to different accents, rhythms, and conversational styles.

To improve English intonation, students can analyze selected scenes from these films, focusing on how speech patterns vary in different contexts. For instance, they can examine how pitch, stress, and rhythm shift in moments of excitement, frustration, or persuasion. Follow-up activities could include role-playing key dialogues, imitating actors’ intonation, or even recording short excerpts to refine pronunciation and prosody. These exercises not only enhance listening and speaking skills but also help students acquire natural speech patterns, making their spoken English more expressive and effective in professional communication.

Video recording and self-assessment. Video recording proves to be a highly effective technique for teaching intonation in ESP classes. Students are given the task of recording themselves speaking on an IT-related topic, creating a short video of up to five minutes. The activity encourages learners to focus not only on pronunciation but also on clarity, fluency, and the effective use of intonation.

The process of preparing for the recording requires thorough planning, as students need to research the correct pronunciation of technical terms, structure their speech logically, and practice delivering their message with appropriate intonation. Unlike spontaneous speech, where intonation may sometimes be inconsistent or unclear, recorded speech allows students to refine their delivery, ensuring that their message is both precise and engaging.

Moreover, self-assessment plays a crucial role in this exercise. By reviewing their own recordings, students can identify areas for improvement, such as monotonous delivery, misplaced stress, or unnatural pauses. Peer feedback can further enhance the learning experience, as classmates can provide constructive

criticism and suggest improvements. Over time, this practice helps students build confidence in their spoken English, making them more effective communicators.

Thus, teaching intonation and pronunciation through video materials is an effective and engaging approach in ESP classes for IT students. By integrating YouTube videos, TED Talks, tech presentations, films, and TV shows, students gain exposure to diverse accents, speech patterns, and communication styles. This not only enhances their listening and speaking skills but also helps them adopt appropriate intonation, making their speech more expressive and effective.

In the ever-evolving tech world, clear and engaging communication is as crucial as technical expertise. By mastering intonation and pronunciation, IT students can improve their ability to deliver interesting presentations, participate effectively in discussions, and collaborate successfully with their international colleagues. Besides, integrating video-based learning into ESP classes helps IT students not only refine their English proficiency but also enhance their overall communicative competence, build confidence in their future professional interactions.

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