

English Listening and Speaking Teaching Approaches with Integrated Interaction and Tasks in the Rain Classroom

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ABSTRACT

With the development of technology related to teaching aides, the application of both interactive and task-based approaches to English listening and speaking instruction is becoming ever more important. This article considers how Rain Classroom, a smart teaching platform, can help promote these pedagogical approaches for oral language development. Based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Interactive Learning Theory (ILT), it discusses how Rain Classroom supports four dimensions of classroom activity: pre-task preparation, real-time activity, in-class engagement, and post-task reflection. Its central functions, including bullet-screen comments, live quizzes, and learning analytics, empower a more individualized, student-focused learning style and enable teachers to plan scaffolded, purposeful tasks that develop active listening and spoken output. Rain Classroom has challenges, such as limited real-time speaking support, disparate levels of digital literacy, and occasional task-design mismatches. This work suggests that while it is not a panacea, Rain Classroom is promising when combined with sound pedagogy and teacher training.

KEYWORDS

Rain Classroom; task-based language teaching; interactive learning; listening and speaking instruction; educational technology

1 Introduction

In the era of globalization and digital interconnectedness, the capacity to read, write, listen, and speak English effectively has evolved as one of the fundamental tools for academic success, career growth, and cross-cultural communication. Of the four basic language skills, listening and speaking are perceived as the most difficult to teach and test, especially in non-English-speaking regions with limited access to authentic input and face-to-face conversation ^[1]. In the traditional method of teaching English, regular interaction with the language is largely restricted to reading skills and writing activities, leaving learners with fewer opportunities for spontaneous conversation and exposure to varied speech patterns in real situations.

One of the greatest challenges in college Japanese classes is the development of speaking ability, and in recent years digital tools and resources have proven to be useful supports for oral communication teachers. Specifically, the combination of interactive learning environments with task-based pedagogy seems to have great potential to create more authentic, meaningful, and student-centered learning experiences in English language instruction. By combining PowerPoint delivery with mobile interaction, Rain Classroom enables in-class quizzes, bullet-screen comments, real-time feedback, and after-class data records. These features give English teachers the opportunity to design flexible, interactive listening and speaking activities within blended or flipped classrooms.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the convergence of interactive and task-based approaches to teaching English listening and speaking in Rain Classroom ^[2]. It examines the pedagogical principles underpinning this integration, how Rain Classroom's functionality can be harnessed to achieve communicative and task-based objectives, and the practical obstacles instructors may encounter when implementing the system. By combining insights from educational theory, classroom practice, and digital affordances, this paper advances our understanding of how smart learning environments can support oral language development. It also identifies directions for further improvement and study, especially in instructional design, teacher training, and learner engagement.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The CLT is grounded in real-life communication, making communicative use the foundation of language learning. It shifts the focus from grammar-based teaching to functional language use in social situations. In CLT, students are expected to communicate with one another, negotiate meaning, and use language for authentic purposes in the classroom. This approach naturally complements listening and speaking practice, as it fosters fluency through activities set in realistic contexts. This article examines how Rain Classroom's features (e.g., live polling and bullet-screen feedback)

can support CLT by providing opportunities for synchronous interaction and contextualized communication, thus enabling students to practice language use in active, purposeful contexts.

2.2 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

The TBLT centers on completing meaningful tasks—such as problem solving, role-play, or information exchange—rather than on the direct teaching of language forms. It holds that language is most effectively learned when learners engage in activities for which language is required. TBLT is particularly useful for enhancing speaking skills, as it mirrors communicative situations requiring both listening comprehension and spoken production. In Rain Classroom, teachers can embed interactive activities (e.g., in-class quizzes, peer-discussion prompts) within the digital course, encouraging learner autonomy and participation ^[3].

2.3 Interactive Learning Theory

Interactive learning theory emphasizes the role of social interaction, viewing active learning as a crucial component of knowledge construction. Grounded in constructivism, it holds that learners build understanding through discussion, cooperation, and feedback. In speaking and listening instruction, the goal is to create environments where students can interact with peers, receive feedback, and refine their output. Through the real-time teacher – student and student – student interactions facilitated by Rain Classroom, the principles of “interaction” (mutual communication and information exchange) and “active learning” (two-way communication and engagement) are enacted, enhancing learner responsiveness and participation.

2.4 Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)

Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) refers to the use of digital tools in language education, designed to make teaching more effective, accessible, and engaging for learners. TELL frameworks support personalized, multimodal, and data-driven learning experiences. These principles are integrated into Rain Classroom’s design, which combines traditional instruction with a mobile interactive approach, allowing flexibility in learning modes. For listening and speaking training, features such as immediate voice feedback, on-the-go quizzes, and asynchronous voice submissions enable learners to improve pronunciation, comprehension, and confidence. Thus, TELL becomes not just a scaffolding activity but a transformative element in contemporary language learning.

3 Rain Classroom: Features and Educational Potential

3.1 Overview of Core Functions

Rain Classroom is an intelligent interactive learning system developed by Rain, designed to bridge the gap between online and in-class environments and provide an enhanced learning experience. Integrated into Microsoft PowerPoint, it lets educators embed real-time quizzes and polls, push preloaded content to student devices, collect and analyze responses, and display results instantly. A key feature is the “bullet screen”, which lets students post live comments during lectures—giving quieter learners a voice without interrupting the flow ^[4]. The in-class quiz function supports formative assessment by measuring listening comprehension or speaking ability on the spot. Post-class analytics reveal review behavior, submission rates, and learning patterns, enabling teachers to offer personalized follow-up instruction. These diagnostic and interactive tools are crucial for oral language development, where real-time input, feedback, and practice are essential. By integrating live presentation with interactive participation, Rain Classroom facilitates task-based, student-centered instruction that was not previously possible.

3.2 Opportunities for Enhancing Student Engagement and Feedback

The efficiency of student – teacher interaction in Rain Classroom is substantially enhanced by its multi-angle communication pattern. Listening-speaking exercises in a traditional face-to-face classroom often suffer from one-way communication, low participation, and tight time constraints. To encourage deeper engagement, Rain Classroom supports real-time bullet comments, mobile quizzes, and other polling features. During a listening activity, students can send instant comprehension checks or discussion points based on a video they’re watching on their devices. Teachers can then adjust the pace of instruction to match real-time feedback, making their teaching more responsive.

For speaking exercises, open-ended questions and opinion polls can instantly collect peer responses and foster cooperative learning. Independent or shy students—who might otherwise be reluctant to speak—gain confidence and

can participate without fear of misunderstanding, which helps even the playing field with more vocal peers. Post-class review resources, such as replayable audio or interactive exercises, offer additional practice and reflection, strengthening speaking fluency and listening accuracy. To sustain motivation, the environment includes game-like features (e.g., participation statistics and rankings). Rain Classroom transforms a passive listen-and-speak lesson into a dynamic, interactive experience, placing learners at the center rather than having them merely receive language input.

3.3 Comparison with Other Smart Learning Platforms

With integrated support for both classroom PowerPoint and mobile-side interaction, Rain Classroom stands out as an intelligent teaching tool. Most other platforms primarily deliver content or host videoconferences, whereas Rain Classroom emphasizes formative feedback, interactivity, and data-driven instruction. MOOC platforms, by promoting asynchronous learning, sacrifice the immediacy crucial for developing listening and speaking skills. DingTalk and Tencent Classroom offer live teaching, but their interaction is limited to text or voice chat and cannot support structured activities^[5]. In contrast, Rain Classroom embeds pedagogical functions—knowledge tests, instant polls, pre-class previews, and post-class reports—directly into lesson flow. I also appreciate how it enables a seamless shift between teacher-centered and student-centered phases. Its learning analytics dashboard lets teachers track who viewed content, who answered questions, and who did not respond—data that can guide instruction. The modular design is ideal for task-based listening and speaking activities, where timing, sequencing, and feedback must be tightly controlled. As a smartphone-compatible system, Rain Classroom is accessible even in resource-constrained environments.

3.4 Affordances and Constraints in Listening and Speaking Instruction

However, Rain Classroom has some weaknesses for teaching listening and speaking. Its affordances—mobile interactivity, real-time feedback, and data-driven tracking—support communicative language teaching but depend on an uninterrupted internet connection and a sufficient level of digital literacy among teachers and students. Educators new to digital pedagogy may use it primarily for quizzes rather than for facilitating genuine communication. A second drawback concerns synchronous speaking tasks. Although Rain Classroom supports text entry and asynchronous audio recording, it lacks in-system audio recording and peer evaluation for live speaking—features essential for oral-skills development. Moreover, too much screen-based interaction can inadvertently reduce live speaking practice if not balanced with face-to-face or video conversation. When properly designed, these issues can be mitigated. Teachers might pair Rain Classroom activities with small-group speaking exercises, use recorded materials to model pronunciation, and transition from interactive tasks to live presentations. Ultimately, effective implementation depends on aligning the tool's capabilities with pedagogical goals and adapting its use to the dynamic needs of listening and speaking instruction.

4 Pedagogical Integration of Interaction and Tasks in Listening and Speaking

4.1 Types of Classroom Interaction for Listening and Speaking Instruction

Interaction is essential for the development of listening and speaking, because language is best learned when used for a real purpose. In an EFL classroom, there are three types of interaction: teacher–student talk, student–student talk, and whole-class talk. Each serves a different pedagogical role. Teacher–student interaction provides controlled input and immediate corrective feedback, both vital for listening comprehension and accurate speech. Learner–learner interaction—through pair work or small-group discussion—promotes fluency by encouraging negotiation of meaning and risk-taking in language production. Whole-class discussion, including opinion sharing and Q&A sessions, cultivates critical thinking and public-speaking skills^[6].

Rain Classroom supports all these interactions via its multitasking features. For teacher–student interaction, in-class quizzes or open-ended questions can launch a dialogue and elicit feedback. For student–student interaction, bullet-screen comments and asynchronous discussion prompts facilitate real-time collaboration. Aggregated polls or comment feeds can be projected for whole-class discussion. For example, a typical task might have students listen to a short audio clip, submit their summaries via mobile input, and then discuss differing interpretations. This not only engages students in active listening but also stimulates genuine speaking. Rain Classroom's multimodal communication—combining text, voice, and video—lets learners choose the mode that best suits their preferences and accessibility needs.

Strategic insertion of interaction must be planned carefully. Tasks should be designed to scaffold students' current level and include clear aims, role assignments, and time limits. For example, a sequence might begin with a listening task, followed by students exchanging perspectives via bullet-screen input, and conclude with a select few delivering oral summaries in class. Integration of interaction must balance digital and vocal communication—ensuring that learners move beyond passive, silent participation on devices and verbalize their thoughts. Rain Classroom thus serves not only as

a digital pedagogical supplement but also as a space-enabling interface within a nuanced instructional design. Tasks, as a core element of TBLT, play an active role in applying its principles. Meaningful communicative tasks reflect authentic language use and involve learners in purposeful interaction. Listening and speaking tasks work best when they replicate real communicative contexts—such as giving directions, conducting interviews, making presentations, or discussing an issue. These activities help students develop both receptive and productive skills, as well as their understanding of pragmatic and sociolinguistic features.

4.2 Designing Communicative Tasks for Listening and Speaking Development

Tasks that revolve around interaction can be digitized, built up in “stepped stages, and interleaved with other activities at any point within Rain Classroom’s flexible lesson structure. For instance, a problem-solving assignment might require students to watch a short video about a real-life scenario via Rain Classroom’s pre-class push feature. In class, they submit their interpretations or solutions through the in-class quiz function and then discuss them via bullet-screen comments. Teachers can randomly invite students to share their group’s opinions aloud, providing on-the-fly speaking practice. Finally, students record a brief audio reflection, which teachers can listen to and annotate after class—completing a full task cycle of encounter, engagement, interaction, production, and reflection. When designing such tasks, considerations include task complexity, cognitive load, and learners’ linguistic levels. Lower-proficiency students may need extra support—vocabulary hints, sentence starters, or dialogue models—which Rain Classroom makes easy through built-in multimedia: guiding questions, visuals, or voice prompts can be embedded directly in the slide deck. A continuum of tasks can then progress from structured speaking activities to more open-ended communicative tasks. Evaluation and feedback are also vital. Rain Classroom allows post-task reflections to be collected via anonymous forms, peer ratings, and instant polling, integrating formative and summative assessment into the task cycle. Linking activities to real contexts—cultural festivals, environmental issues, or campus events—further motivates learners to speak and comment based on their experiences. In this way, Rain Classroom becomes more than a tool: it creates an educational ecosystem that fosters productive, meaningful, and measurable communicative English listening and speaking.

4.3 Embedding Tasks and Interaction within Rain Classroom Workflows

One of the reasons we prefer Rain Classroom lies in its flexibility with different teaching workflows, especially flipped and blended teaching. To include exercises in Rain Classroom, we need to know both the pedagogical sequence of language learning and the application’s interface. The general process may include a pre-class period (input delivery), an in-class period (task performance and interaction), and a post-class period (recap and reflection). In this framework, teachers can construct an integrated series of steps—each facilitating the next—so that listening and speaking development is fully supported. Before class, teachers can push short videos or podcasts for listening practice in Rain Classroom. Learners can access the material at their own pace, optionally completing warm-up quiz questions or recording reflections on key points via mobile input. This phase cues into what students already know and sets the stage for the next steps. During the face-to-face stage, teachers can give students a challenge (such as resolving a communication breakdown in a cross-cultural situation) that requires real-time collaboration through comment threads and group work. Teachers can gauge understanding quickly via polls or multiple-choice questions and adjust the pace or depth of discussion accordingly. The bullet-screen feature allows students to agree, ask follow-up questions, and share other views, all of which support the interactive negotiation of meaning. After class, as part of a consolidation task, students might reflect on the content and provide a live Q&A summary recorded via a third-party tool link. Rain Classroom helps you track these tasks—who did what, when, and how thoroughly—a great way to monitor participation and accountability. Teachers can then review student reports to guide future instruction, identify the most challenging problems for the class, and offer targeted feedback in the next cycle^[7]. Embedding tasks in this cyclical loop ensures that session-level activities connect to an overarching pedagogical approach. Importantly, Rain Classroom keeps interaction consistent throughout the learning process rather than allowing it to occur in isolation.

4.4 Instructional Strategies for Fostering Active Learner Participation

Encouraging active learner engagement in listening and speaking sessions requires thoughtful use of online tools, staged activities, and motivating elements. Rain Classroom promotes participation through anonymity, gamification, immediate feedback, and social visibility. However, effective listening goes beyond mere participation; it demands active engagement with the language, peers, and task. Therefore, teachers must do more than simply “use the platform”—they must design for engagement. One proven strategy is participation modeling, where the teacher demonstrates how to respond to a question, post a bullet comment, or take a speaking turn. Clear task instructions, rubrics, and desired outcomes should be shared in advance. Staged interaction—beginning with low-stakes, guided responses and

progressing to open-ended activities such as opinion statements or personal narratives—helps calm nerves and gradually draws shy students out of their shells. Anonymous submissions in Rain Classroom offer a low-risk environment for early participation, and publicly sharing selected high-quality responses can foster peer learning.

5 Challenges and Limitations

The platform's technological and infrastructural requirements pose the greatest hurdle: smooth operation depends on stable internet connectivity, functioning mobile devices, and a satisfactory level of digital literacy among both students and teachers. Many school environments—especially in low-resource settings—cannot guarantee these conditions, reducing opportunities for effective engagement. Teacher training in digital pedagogy is also essential; without it, instructors may struggle to create meaningful communication tasks, relying instead on quick polls or bullet comments that fail to elicit genuine language use. Moreover, Rain Classroom constrains real-time speaking practice. Although it supports text input and asynchronous feedback, it lacks in-system audio communication, pronunciation models, and peer-to-peer voice features—critical components for developing speaking skills. Cognitive overload is another concern: requiring students to juggle listening, speaking, screen input, and device manipulation can increase rather than reduce mental burden, potentially leading to disengagement or mechanical task completion.

6 Conclusion

The study investigated how Rain Classroom could facilitate interaction and task-based teaching in English listening and speaking. With proper linking to Communicative Language Teaching theory, as well as to language practice through real-time quizzes, bullet-screen feedback mechanisms, and an after-class tracking system in effect, teachers can further encourage learners to engage actively and carry out meaningful oral exercises effectively. With Rain Classroom, teachers can integrate three stages of pre-task input, in-class interaction, and post-task reflection into one instructional system—this allows for student-directed, active learning. Limitations persist, however, including technology challenges, limited real-time speaking opportunities, and issues related to task fit and teacher readiness. To sum up, Rain Classroom is a good tool for facilitating oral English teaching in terms of interaction and task fulfillment. Its effectiveness depends on pedagogical integration, teachers being supported in their pedagogical development, and well-designed authoring packages. These features position Rain Classroom to potentially have a real impact on more engaging, effective, and tech-enabled language learning.

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