

CALT and Multimedia for Communicative Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of MCALT (Multimedia and Computer Assisted Language Teaching) instructions for communicative language teaching among M.S University, Tirunelveli students. Twenty students from the English department of M.S University participated in this study. This study focused on to enhance students' communication skills in English language. The result indicates that the students have benefited from the MCALT technology .It was concluded that MCALT technology could fulfil the needs of the students to enhance their communication skills.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The present status of English as a global language, demands everybody that they should be communicatively competent in order to achieve their goal. “ Language teacher has long been searching for effective and efficient ways to render the learning experience in class as true to life as possible and to assist students in developing the necessary independent study skills”(Gunn 1997). One popular mode to develop communication skills can be using computers in the language-teaching classroom. “... Computer technology represents a landmark invention that has the potential to assist human cognition in a way that was previously not possible” (Mayer 2001). Emerging technology could increase student’s motivation, self-confidence, mastery of basic skills, and interest in second language learning. MCALT software has captured an interesting attention among the language teachers and students it offers an authentic opportunity for students to develop their communication skills.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC

In recent years, the development of technology has created the need for investigating the effects of CALT and Multimedia on communicative language teaching and learning. The aim of MCALT technology is to enhance students’ communication skills in a second language. Using Verbal and pictorial form in an activity students can understand the situation and the context where to reuse it. It arouses student’s capacity to recognize and recall the sentence than the traditional way of language learning (Mayer 2001).

Traditional way of language learning is teacher-centred.“... In a traditional classroom, the teacher provides the topic specific situation for students to make use of language as much as they can. Since the traditional classroom is far from any similarities to the real life situation ...” (Shih 2000). Students have to memorize the rules and dialogues to reuse it .The author of the journal ‘Putting Learners First: An Integrated Multimedia Environment for Language Learning’ emphasizes the traditional way of language learning as “Old wine in new wine skins”(Wible).

MCALT technology can act an important role in teaching second language effectively. The researcher noticed the need of an employment oriented education and understood the existing problem in English language teaching.

III. CALL AND MULTIMEDIA

CALL has discovered as an appropriate tool for language teaching. Levy defined computer assisted language learning as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy2009). “Computer assisted language learning (CALL) involves the use of technology in the form of computers, and a transformation process in the institution where the implementation actually takes place...” (Timucin 2006). “The term multimedia was originally used to describe packages of learning materials that consisted of a book, a couple of audio cassettes and a video cassette.... Now that the term multimedia refers to computer based materials designed to be used on a computer that can display and print text and high-quality graphics, play pre-recorded audio and video material and create new audio and video recordings...” (Davies 2009). Mayer defines the term multimedia as “... different things to different people...” (Davies 2009). Verbal and nonverbal presentation modes combined with MCALT technology.

The learner can use the available materials as visually and auditorily in multimedia language learning environment.“...The multimedia software offers the opportunity for students to visualize the situation. The

computer software creates a virtual world that is very similar to the real world..." (Shih 2000). Many researches on MCALT technology proves that MCALT technology has the potential to enhance students' understanding, remembering capabilities as well as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, four basic skills and culture (Davies 2009, Levy Mike 2009, Mayora 2006, Huimin 2004 and Sum 2002).

MCALT programs carried great support to the students to work at their own pace. Text, graphics and audio are included in this program. MCALT presentation is interesting and motivating to watch it. "It is generally acknowledged that the interaction between interest and motivation contributes enormously to learner's language acquisition" (Huimin 2004). MCALT programs motivate the students to learn second language interestingly, which help them to understand the situation and context where to reuse it. MCALT technology can play an important role to make better communication skills.

IV. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Learning English as a second language is a great challenge for students from a non- English speaking background. M.S University students are from middle-to-low socioeconomic population of urban and rural zone. Most of the students were very good at their studies but they failed to get a job because of their deficiency in spoken English. The aim of this study is to help the college students to develop their communication skills. The researcher found that the students were able to grasp the meaning but they fail to respond in turns with fluently. This issue tends the researcher to try a new way of language teaching to solve the needs of the students. The researcher found many indications that CALT and Multimedia can provide many benefits to the students.

V. HYPOTHESIS

This study sought to scrutinize whether MCALT technology could lend a hand to the students to boost their communication skills. Mike Levy argues that using technology in second language learning would develop the basic skills as well as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and culture. This study suggests that effective use of MCALT would help the students to improve their communication skills.

VI. AREA OF STUDY

The participants are from the department of English of M.S University. The researcher has select freshmen for this study. The pretest conducted in their classroom itself. Twenty Students were participated in this study. (Age between 20 and 25 years, 10 males and 10 females) The posttest took place in the multimedia language lab.

VII. METHODOLOGY

Methodology describes the nature of the present study, the method adopted, the tools and techniques used. The researcher conducted a pretest in this study to understand the level of the students. Various activities introduced and examined their performance. Posttest carried out in the multimedia language lab for six months. Students got a three-hour class per week. The researcher followed an effective method in testing and evaluation of this study.

VIII. METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS

Computer, software programs, language lab internet.

IX. ROLE OF A TEACHER

Using MCALT technology in the classroom does not mean it would work for the teacher or replace the text. "... The role of the teacher was to help the students to recognize the problems and to provide them with necessary scaffolding..." (Shyu 2000). The teacher must be a part of learning to give advice and train the students to use it in a proper way. The computer technology will teach the students and the teacher assumes the role of a mentor or coach in MCALT environment. The CALL software act as a tool in teaching second language. Therefore, the technology and the teacher become an interrelated part of learning. "... Technology use in language instruction must be based on sound pedagogical and theoretical principles, and that both teacher and technology are part of an interrelated system" (Mayora 2006).

The technology, method and the activity used in the classroom must be appealing and motivating for second language acquisition. The success of an approach depends on the way the teacher uses the materials in the classroom. "... Effective method and techniques as well as a wide verity of activities will ensure active viewing and participation from students ..." (Hemei 1997). Hence, the teacher has an active role as an adviser and trainer to use new technology in an appropriate manner. MCALT technology will improve student's attitude

towards second language learning and motivate them to learn language effectively. Therefore, MCALT technology makes the teacher's job more productive and rewarding.

X. TESTING AND EVALUATING

Testing and evaluation is very useful and important process of language Teaching. Through this process, the teacher can assess how much the learner has learnt and the strength and weakness of the teaching materials. Assessment and evaluation assist to enhance student's education and to improve teacher's instruction. A student can be assessed by testing and evaluation method. In the process of evaluation, the teacher takes decisions. To assess the performance of the students, the teacher used criterion method of testing and evaluation in this study. Testing is of three types. They are,

- 1) Informal - often parentally devised daily, weekly and monthly
- 2) Standardized- Norm referenced
- 3) Diagnostic - Criterion referenced

Criterion referenced test provide the score as a percentage. It provides students' strength and weakness in this study. Among this information, the teacher can determine what way the teacher could make improvements for their future development. The researcher has scrutinized the performance of the students in MCALT activities. The class consisted of twenty students and their performance graded as below.

- Below average - below 40
- Average - above 50
- Above average - above 60
- Fair - above 70
- Good - above 80

Activity 1: Reading

This activity helps the learner to improve their vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure.

Table: 1

Task	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Task 1: Read the text and answer the following questions	✓				
Task 2: Read the text and identify the similar word		✓			
Task 3: Read the text and write a para about it		✓			
Task 4: Read the text and identify the correct place			✓		
Task 5: Read the text and answer the questions briefly				✓	

Activity 2: Listening

Listening skill helps the learner to develop their ability in communication. Students can become a good communicator when they are good listeners. It widens their knowledge.

Table: 2

Task	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Task 1: Listen to the passage and make notes in the table given	✓				
Task 2: Listen to the passage and answer the questions		✓			
Task 3: Listen to the passage and complete the notes			✓		
Task 4: Listen to the passage and answer the question briefly		✓		✓	
Task 5: Listen to the passage and identify the stages					

Activity 3: Conversation

This activity helps the students to develop their speaking and writing ability.

Table: 3

Task	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Task 1: Casual conversation		✓			
Task 2: Making request			✓		
Task 3: Expressing sympathy				✓	
Task 4: Completing the dialogue					✓
Task 5: Giving Instruction					✓

Activity 4: Description

In this activity, students asked to describe about their personal experience, speaking about what they read or listen, describing places and persons. This activity helps the students to develop their speaking skills, thinking ability.

Table: 4

Task	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Task 1: Describing personal experience			✓		
Task 2: Speaking about what they listen or read				✓	
Task 3: Describing a great personality				✓	
Task 4: Describing places					✓
Task 5: Describing things					✓

Activity 5: Role Play

This activity helps the students to develop their communication skills without fear. It develops their speaking skill.

Table: 5

Task	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Task 1: Role play between two persons				✓	
Task 2: Complete the role play				✓	
Task 3: Role play as great personality					✓
Task 4: Prediction test					✓
Task 5: Describing a place to his friend					✓

From the above checklist, the researcher has provided the assessment of the performance of the students.

Table: 6

Activities	Below average	Average	Above average	Fair	Good
Activity 1	1	2	1	1	0
Activity 2	1	2	1	1	0
Activity 3	0	1	1	1	2
Activity 4	0	0	1	2	2
Activity 5	0	0	0	2	3

- 1) Growing stage (above 40)
- 2) Improving stage (above 50)
- 3) Developing stage (above 60)
- 4) Developing towards perfection (above 70)
- 5) Developing towards complete mastery over the language (above 80)

XI. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of the performance determines the effect of MCALT activity on learners. The first activity Reading helps the learners to improve their vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure. During the first few tasks, their performance was very poor because they do not have mastery of the language. In the fourth and fifth tasks, their performance was better than the previous one. Their performance was in the above average level at growing stage.

Listening skill facilitates students to widen their ability in communication. Different task introduced to the students and asked them to listen to the text and make notes on it in a given table. Their performance was below average level. The researcher gives different activities in the next four tasks and their performance were gradually improved one another. In the fifth task, they performed well and their score was above seventy. Third activity, Conversation lends a hand to develop their speaking and writing ability. Students had to speak casually on the topic of their own interest. At first, their performance was in average level and when the teacher gave different activities, they were interested and their performance was gradually improved.

Describing about something as a great personality, things or their personal experience helps the students to improve their thinking ability. They gradually improved their speaking ability to perfect level. In the fifth activity, students were trained to speak without fear and developed their speaking skill. Different task introduced to the students. They did with interest and their performance was excellent.

The effect of MCALT technology has detected in this study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the competence of training with MCALT technology. The result indicates that the MCALT program has a significant impact on developing communication skills. The steady growth from one another exhibited the positive attitudes towards second language learning. Students were motivated and interested to learn second language in MALL (Multimedia Language Lab) environment. Introducing verbal and nonverbal in the activities made the learners to perform well. MCALT activities help students to understand the context naturally and to expose their innate ability to the maximum extent.

XII. CONCLUSION

As a medium of language teaching, MCALT technology has a myriad of instructional possibilities. The result provides empirical evidence that MCALT technology is more effective than the traditional way of language learning. It supports students to engage in meaningful, authentic and truly communicative activities. Students have responded positively to the MCALT technology. They like the flexibility and variety of activities. They are willing to use this technology and they trusted that it would help them to learn a second language effectively.

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