THE INNOVATIVE MEDIA TO EXPLORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNINGSKILLS AN OUTLOOK TO LINGUISTIC APPROACH

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Abstract

The most innovative endeavor the teachers of English have undertaken so far is to integrate media technology in ELT classroom, in order to improve learners' motivation, integrated language skills and self-learning environment.. The aim of this study is to statistically explore EFL learners' response towards media technology in general and its impact in improving accentual patterns of individual English words in particular. It also explores the impact of internet and teacher's role in improving learners' writing skill. Three statistical surveys were undertaken at JCC, King Abdul Aziz University, KSA and the result of using electronic devices was found marvelous and interesting.

Keywords: media technology, power point presentation, chat forums, audio-visual presentation, , significant performance

Introduction

Over the past several decades, technology has become a fixture in many homes around the world. Its influencehas permeated into all facets of life, including English language teaching. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of integrating media technology in ELT classrooms and to statistically analyze how much it assists learners in acquiring four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Integration of media technology began in the 1950s when small language schools began to use the phonograph, movies and the tape recorder as tools in English language teaching. In the '70s and '80s, audio and video courses were improved through the added use of video projectors and slide shows. By the late '80s and early '90s, language labs were part of many of the more expensive language schools throughout the world. However, by the mid '90s many multimedia language programs became available for teachers on the Internet. In modern era of English language teaching, media technology such as video, pictures, animation and interactive games, CDs or DVDs, the use of internet, chat rooms and video conferencing and

Apple's iPad have narrowed distance and turned the whole world into a global community. It provides opportunities to learners to converse not only with local community but with global community as well. It has revolutionized learning and teaching methodologies thereby turning them more enjoyable and productive. According to (Balaaco 1996) digital learning is "just in time" and on-demand delivering knowledge when and where the employees need it. This concept of "anywhere-anytime" is serving learners on the larger scale.

Literature Review

According to study conducted by Jackson et al. (2006), it has been found that students who used the internet more, got higher scores and grades. According to the research activities, the internet changes the interaction between learners and teachers (Kern, 1995): there is less teacher and more learner talk in computer classes. Furthermore, it changes teacher and students' roles (Peterson), 1997) and makes learning more students centered. (Warschauer,

Turbee, and Roberts, 1996). Vision and hearing are the two dominant senses that media technology can provide to the students and present greater opportunities for learning linguistic inputs. (Linfors, 1987). As Pope and Golub (2000) asserted, it is also important for English educators to model effective practices of teaching with technology. As students perform diverse task with the computer, they broaden their repertoire of metacognitive, cognitive and effective learning

.As Kajder (2003) wrote, "Focus has to be placed on learning with the technology rather than learning from or about the technology" . He further claims that with the help of hypermedia (e.g. World Wide Web), multimedia becomes a more powerful tool for language learning. He maintains that one of the advantages of using hypermedia for language teaching is that it provides learners with a more authentic learning environment, as, for example, listening can be combined with seeing. The second study (Chandrasegaran and Kong, 2006) focused on the potential of discussion forums to harness learners' argumentation skills – that is, to raise learners' awareness of their ability to present arguments in oral. Recent research in the field of first language literacy suggests that text messaging might improve students' reading and spelling abilities (Plester et al., 2009). Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) is the broad term for technologies which allows language learners to communicate with other learners or native speakers through text or audio including e-mail, discussion forums, text messaging, chat and conferencing.

Methodology

To find out the impact of media technology in ELT classes in general and in improving listening & writing skills in particular on EFL learners at JCC, King Abdul Aziz University, KSA, three types of statistical survey were conducted. First and foremost a survey was undertaken to explore the general response of the students to the integration of media technology in ELT classes. 100 students at graduate level were chosen for the survey. Six statements on the integration of media technology were given. The students were asked to check highly agree, agree, I can't say, and disagree against the six statements on media technology. The second survey is based on impact of media technology in improving pronunciation of individual words. This test was based on pre-test and post- test. Pre-test was conducted before the use of media technology. 100 learners comprising different sections were asked to pronounce 100 English words. Their pronunciations were recorded. Afterwards the same students were given 10 days to practice the pronunciation of the given words with the help of internet. At this juncture the students were given the post-test. The pre-test took 5 days. Every day each student was given 20 words to pronounce without the help of media technology. Their pronunciations were recorded. The correct pronunciation of each word received one point. There was no penalty for false responses. The participants ranged in age from 18-25 were elementary users of English having a little prior exposure to the English language. The aim was to find out how Received Pronunciation (RP) available on internet helps learners identify their own mistakes in producing the accentual patterns of English words. The third test was based on writing skill which incorporated pre-test, post-test and the final test. The pre-test for writing skill was given at random to 100 students of the same college. They were asked to write informal letter to their parents informing them about their progress in their studies. Then in the post-test which was conducted after 5 days, the students were motivated to browse internet in order to find many samples of informal letters. The final test was conducted after the teacher explained how to write formal letter to parents. The result was found excellent. The role of teacher was found central. Every aspect of letter writing became clearer when the teacher explained keeping the level of the students in mind.

Conclusion and Implication

All the l surveys carried in this study speak volumes of the excellent impact of integration of media technology in English language teaching. Almost all the students and the

teachers strongly supported the use of technological devices for teaching English. They were of the view that media technology increase learners' enthusiastic participation and hence turn the whole learning process learners centered and hence exciting. The students learn tremendously by trial and error process. But teacher's role in learning process is still central. It is the teacher who gives proper guidelines as to how to make the best use of media technology for acquiring language skills. The performance of the post test on the impact of media technology in improving accentual patterns of individual words is really very significant. 60% students after the use of media technology pronounced 80% of words correctly. After listening to native pattern of pronunciation the students found easier to pronounce the given words. By listening regularly they learned perfectly the accentual patterns of the given words. They enjoyed the learning process while listening to native speakers. So it could be concluded that listening to native speakers on TV, radio, BBC, chat forums and on internet is viable means to improve the pronunciation of words. The third test was based on writing skill. The performance of the students in the pre-test of writing skill was abysmally bad but after reading many samples of formal letters on internet the students produced better result. When the teacher explained grammatical components, proper use of words and phrases and the latest format of formal letter writing, the performance of the students was remarkably significant. With regard to the use of video in the classroom, the role of a teacher is often misconceived. But the fact is that the teacher plays an eminent role in promoting active viewing. Hence the teacher still remains central in all teaching programs taken up with the aid of media technology.

Acknowledgements:

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