EFFECTIVENESS OF MALL IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL OF THE ESL LEARNERS

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Abstract: In this study the researcher proposes the effectiveness of mobile assisted Language Learning(MALL), that provides the opportunity for the students to learn English language outside the classroom and encourages them to get actively involved in their own learning process. MALL is considered a new phase of E-learning, which gives a lot of effectiveness and opportunities to L2 learners. The use of mobile phone is very common among the students. M-Learning is a very good platform for the students. Now a days, huge number of applications are available to enhance language skill of the L2 learners. Podcasting tools and vocabulary Development are very good applications to enhance the students speaking skill. The problem of this study is L2 learners speaking ability. They can understand English very well but they are facing some difficulties in speaking. So that this study is to enhance their speaking skill. The objective of this study is to enhance the speaking skill and enrich their usage of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency level. It is an action research, which was conducted to II MA English students of TBAK. The number of populations are six students, who selected randomly based on simple random sampling. They were divided into three level according to their speaking skill, Such as intermediate, advanced and proficient. The instruments to gather the data are classroom observation and unstructured interview. The researcher used experimental method. The design of this study includes pre- test, speaking activities and post-test. The mobile application such as Podcasting tools and vocabulary Development are used as a tools to develop the L2 learners. These applications are free of cost and easy to access. The researcher assessed the students progress in person and Whatsapp group also. The students' activities are keenly watched and feedback given to them. The result of the study shows that mobile assisted language learning (MALL) could be utilized as one of the beneficial methods to assist students in learning integrated second language. There are positive responses from the students during the implementation of mobile assisted language learning process.

Keywords: MALL, Mobile Applications, Developing Speaking skill.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1.Introduction

The importance of communication skill in English is increased day by day. Good communication skill leads one to place in a good job. Students' academic and professional development is based on good communication skill. In this current scenario, speaking skills are definitelycrucial for successful careers. Students are faced some language barriers such as stress, anxiety, fear in the language class. The present study claims to identify the language barriers of the students and suggest appropriate speaking strategies to

them. To enhance speaking skill, one must concentrate on the following skills, such as pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, content and fluency.

1.2 Objectives

1. To identify the difficult factors of speaking skills.
2. To provide an appropriate intervention to help them to overcome those difficulties.

1.3 Review of Literature

ThirumangaiRajendrana and MelorMdYunusb (2021) illustrate on "A Systematic Literature Review on the use of Mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL) for Enhancing Speaking Skills among ESL and EFL Learners". Mastering all the four language skills has been the topmost priority among both ESL and EFL learners all over the world. Apparently, speaking skills remains to be the most challenging among other skills in which many learners are still struggling to speak proficiently. There are limited reviews done on current studies which indicate the effectiveness of MALL for speaking particularly in ESL and EFL contexts. The findings of the review suggest that the application of MALL propagates the concepts of the constructivism theory, promotes stress free environment, supports situated learning, and provides ease of use. Further analysis indicates that mobile devices general built-in features and mobile applications could be used as possible tools in helping learners to enhance their speaking skills in MALL environments. Thus, there is a need to study the implementation of MALL in both primary and secondary schools so that it could be benefited by ESL and EFL learners of all ages particularly in developing speaking skills.

JaroslavKacetl and BlankaKlímová (2019) stated language learning through mobile technology. Such learning supported with mobile device is called M-Learning, which beneficial especially thanks to the unique features of mobile applications and teachers' encouragement and feedback. The results reveal that mobile learning is becoming a salient feature of education as it is a great opportunity for foreign language learning. Its key benefits are learners' cognitive capacity and formal and informal settings.

WoroKushmaryani et al (2019) propose the study on "The influence of mobile applications on students' speaking skill and critical thinking in English language learning". Mobile assisted learning especially in language learning gives both benefits and challenges in optimizing students' outputs toward learning targets. They investigated the influence of mobile applications as learning assistance which can help students improve their speaking skill and critical thinking in English language learning. The result showed that mobile applications used as learning assistance positively optimized students' speaking skill and critical thinking in English language learning. Technology in the form of mobile learning applications provides opportunities to both the teacher and the students in improving the quality of teaching and learning. It is applicable for any subject by selecting appropriate mobile learning applications.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Methodology

It is an Action Research. The researcher was identified a real pedagogic problem in her own setting and initiated this study to find a solution to the problem. This study was carried out to the students' intervention period. The research was divided into three phases: Pre-test, Intervention (Speaking task), and Post-test. The questionnaire was given to students to know speaking skills interest meanwhile they were interviewed. The purpose of this study is to support the students' need with regard to speaking tasks and effective activities using mobile.

2.2 Research Sample

The experimental study was conducted at ThassimBeevi Abdul Kader College for Women,Kilakarai, Ramanathapuram.(state of Tamilnadu). The sample for the present study included six students, from second year postgraduate English.Among the 6 students, 3 students were from English medium schools, and 3 students were from Tamil medium schools. All the students were in the age group of 19 to 20 years. They were selected randomly from the second year postgraduate class of II MA English.

2.3 Research Tools

The researcher used qualitative methods for data collection. The research tools include questionnaire, interview, tasks and activities, and classroom observation. The purpose of students' questionnaire was to know their background. The students were used Whatapp application for speaking tasks. Meanwhile the students are asked to use to Mobile Applications such as Podcasting tools and vocabulary Development.

2.4 Use of MALL in Speaking Skill

Mobile technology is an effective tool for improving different English Language skills. It also enhances vocabulary and speaking skills. MALL is very much help to L2 learners to improve their speaking competence. There are a lot of online applications available. By usingthatapplicationsL2 learners can become proficient in L2. Now a day's mobile devices act as connecting tools. Through that teachers and students can engaged in teaching and learning process. The researcher used Whatsapp as a connecting tool to engage in speaking activity. The speaking tasks were conducted through Whatsapp and in the classroom also. The researcher encouraged and motivated the students to use vocabulary development and podcasting tools for their speaking skill development.

III RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Identify the challenges of the speaking skills of the students

To identify the challenges of the speaking skill of the students is very important for them. Then only the language teacher can suggest appropriate speaking strategies to them.The researcher was an English teacher, who was not satisfied with the level of performance of the students especially spoken English. The students' low proficiency in English was an obstacle in their speaking skill as well as in getting jobs. Most of the students, after the completion of the course, definitely go for jobs. Wherever they go for jobs, a good proficiency of English is expected. The students are not confident at their low of speaking.That is why, the researcher initiate the study in order to identify issues and problem related to teaching of speaking skills and offer possible solutions to the problems. The study was carried out to II MA English (2020-2022).

3.2 Speaking Skill Activities

According to Villimec (2006), the effective organization of activities is one of the several aspects, which contribute to the development of the speaking competence. So, the researcher creates real life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks to develop speaking competence. There are different types of language activities to develop the speaking skills of the students. It includes role play, group discussion, mock interview, picture description, storytelling, poem review, story review, and so on.

3.3 Analyse of Students Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire is to know students attitude on speaking skills. The students were using bilingual language in the class room. L1 is primary language in day today life. So L1 dominated L2. The student's confidant level was normal. They felt that L2 is necessary for their future development. They were faced some of the difficulties in speaking. They were grammatical errors, lack of right words, framing proper sentences, pronunciation and lack of confidence. They were in need to improve their speaking skills. The students were ready to participate in speaking activities especially in individual and group tasks.

3.4 Speaking skill Criteria

The researcher framed the following criteria to assess speaking skill. They are vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and presentation. Vocabulary is an important element in speaking. If the students use new vocabulary, they can catch the audience's attention. The second criterion is grammar, which stands for accuracy. The third one is pronunciation, which denotes the phonetics accuracy, intonation, stress and voiced and voiceless sounds. The next criterion is fluency, which denotes how the students express their ideas, thoughts spontaneously and without stumbling. The final criterion is presentation. It includes body language, eye contact, gestures. A good presentation helps the audience to engage in speech, and make an uninteresting content to more interesting one. The researcher provided two marks for each criteria and overall score is ten.

3.5 Pre-test

Pre-test is an essential component in any experimental research. Pre-test isconducted to know actual language level of the students and it also help to evaluate the post–test performance. To know about the existing knowledge of language is a very important one in language measure, which is termed as 'Schemata'. In this this study, a pre-test was conducted to evaluate the preliminary level of speaking proficiency of the students. The researcher had given a short speaking task to them.

Performance of Pre-test

The following (1.1) table shows the pre-test score of the students

Table1.1

Students	Grammar/2	Vocabulary/2	Pronunciation/2	Fluency/2	Presentation/2	Total Scores10/10
Student 1	-	0.5	0.5	-	-	1
Student 2	1	0.5	0.5	-	0.5	2.5
Student 3	1	1	1	-	1	4
Student 4	1	1.5	1	-	1.5	5
Student 5	1	1	1	-	1	4
Student 6	0.5	0.5	0.5	-	0.5	2

3.6 Speaking Tasks

There were eighteen tasks given. It includes

- Own topic
- Own topic
- Own topic
- Just a Minute
- Storytelling (Any moral story)
- Review of the poem (Prometheus Unbound)
- Picture Describing
- Developing Hints
- Speech (Is online class useful or not?)
- Role play (If you are Prime Minister)
- Story Narrating (The Feminist)
- News Reporting
- Self-Narration
- Group Discussion
- Peer Introduction
- Mock telephone conversation
- Dual conversation
- Group Seminar (The raise in the sun)

3.7 Speaking Strategies

Lewis (2011) elaborately discussed the communication strategies and their teach ability in the EFL classroom. His study focused on the different types of communication strategies and probable methodologies that could be espoused in the classroom to promote learners' awareness of these strategies and develop their strategic competence through the implementation and practice of the language. Moreover, the study highlighted some of the classroom activities which would facilitate the process of acquiring strategic competence and make the learners more confident while communicating in English.

3.7.1 Communication Strategy

The ultimate goal of communication strategy is to acquire communicative competence. In the beginning level of the three tasks, the students were asked to follow the communication strategies because it helped to overcome the speaking difficulties. It helped to avoid linguistic and cultural background information of the L2 learners. And it switched down the communication problem in the classroom. Communication strategies motivated them and opportunity to involve in speaking. They can convey their intended meaning while communicating others. According to Bialystok (1990), "the ease and fluency with which we move from one idea to the next in our first language is constantly shattered by some gap in our knowledge of a second language. The gap can take many forms-a word, a structure, a 25 phrase, a tense marker, an idiom".

3.7.2 Rehearsal Strategy

Rehearsal strategy is referred as practising the language components such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. It is one the best strategy for L2 learners. It helped them to practice and involve in real communication.

3.8 Post-test

After completing the speaking intervention tasks, the post-test was conducted to the students to know the real variation of achievement. The topic of the post-test was own experience of preparing documentary. They performed well in post-test.

Performance of Pre-test

The following (1.2) table shows the post-test score of the students

Table1.2

Students	Grammar /2	Vocabulary/ 2	Pronunciation/ 2	Fluency/2	Presentation/ 2	Total Scores10/10
Student 1	1	1	1	1	1	**5**
Student 2	1.5	1	1	1	1.5	**6**
Student 3	2	2	2	1.5	2	**9.5**
Student 4	2	2	2	1.5	2	**9.5**
Student 5	2	2	2	1.5	2	**9.5**
Student 6	1	1	1	1	1.5	**6.5**

Different between Pre-test and Post-test

Table 1.3

Students	Pre-test	Post-test	Different between Pre-test and Post-test
Student 1	1	5	**4**
Student 2	2.5	6	**4.5**
Student 3	4	9.5	**5**
Student 4	5	9.5	**4**
Student 5	4	9.5	**5**
Student 6	2	6.5	**4**

IV CONCLUSION

4.1 Findings of the study

In view of the pre-test and post-test performance of the students, it is found that there is significant improvement in their speaking proficiency after the strategy training and MALL technology. The study has proved that the strategy training and intervention tasks given for the Students. It helped them to move to satisfactory level. They are capable of communicating effectively accuracy in grammar, use new vocabulary correct their pronunciation. It implies that continuous strategy training, Speaking tasks and effective use of MALL technology enhance their speaking proficiency and make them good communicators.

4.2 Suggestion/Recommendations

1. The study focuses on only speaking, and future study may focus on other language skills such as Listening, Writing, and Reading.

2. The participants of the present study are from post-graduation education and the study undertaken by researchers in future may select the participants from under-graduate level to see whether there is any significant difference in terms of the impact of strategy training and use of MALL technology on their speaking proficiency.

3. As technology is extensively used in education, the future study can be undertaken to design an online course focusing on strategy training for language skills development and see the impact of the course.

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Appendix-1

Questionnaire for Students

Dear Student,
As a part of my research study TBAK college for Women, I have developed this questionnaire to obtain some information for my study.

I would be grateful if you could spare some time and fill in the questionnaire. The information provided will be kept confidential and will be used purely for the purpose of academic research. Your sincere participation is expected and deemed valuable.

1. **Name:**

2. Class:

3. Medium of Instruction in school:

4.Languages known:
5.Languages used at home :
6.Languages spoken in the classroom :
7. Languages spoken outside the classroom:

8. UG grade: Outstanding/Distinction/First/second/Third

9. Education qualification of parents

Father's qualification:

Occupation:

Mother's qualification:

Occupation:

10. How do you are rate level of spoken English?

a) Poor

b) Normal

c) Excellent

11. Are you listening videos or podcasting?   Yes/No

12. Do you need extra activities for speaking skills?   Yes/No

13. What type of difficulties do you face while speaking in English?

Mention it here _____

14. Do you think English is necessary for you?   Yes/No

If yes, mention _____

15. Do you think English is difficult for you?   Yes/No

If your answer is 'Yes', what difficulties do you face when you speak in English?

> a. Grammatical
> b. Use of right words
> c. Framing proper sentences
> d .Pronunciation
> e. Lack of confidence

16.Which of the four language skills do you want to improve most?

   a. Listening   b. Speaking   c. Reading   d. Writing

17.Do you speak in English with your teacher and other students in class or outside?

        Yes/No

18. Do you enjoy doing the speaking tasks and activities?

        Yes/No

19. How do you want to learn English: individually or in groups?

20. Does your teacher give you feedback on your spoken performances in English?

21. Is speaking skills tested in the year-end exam? Yes/No