IMPLICATION OF MULTIMEDIA AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

English language has its own demanding place in the current competitive world. Students lack interest, sufficient knowledge and fluency in English language, though they have learnt it from childhood. Technology development blessed teachers and students with multimedia audio-visual aids which increase interest in the language learning classroom. Even though, these multimedia audio-visual aids are not being fully utilized in Sri Lankan education system. This study was conducted to illustrate the importance of using multimedia audio-visual aids in the English language learning classrooms at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Purposive sample method is used for this study and the sample size is 80 students. Primary data was collected using interviews and observations. Secondary data were gained through records, journals, articles, annual reports and websites. Collected data were analysed by using both quantitative and qualitative data analyse methods and presented in a descriptive way. The study explored that still the facilitators practice same traditional method of teaching. Nearly all students pointed out that using multimedia audio-visual aids is a motivation tool and makes students active in the language learning classrooms, maintains a high level of interest in language learning and highly encourages students' participation and enrolment and it is helpful for better English language learning. Lack of technical facilities, absence of proper training, knowledge and experience among instructors are identified barriers behind the inadequate use of multimedia audio-visual aids in the English language learning classrooms. Compared to traditional method teaching class the students paid more attention and interest in the classroom where multimedia audio-visual aid teaching method is used. Students were very much responsive, performed well and obtained more marks where the facilitators used multimedia audio-visual aids. Using multimedia audio-visual aids in the language learning classroom is essential to increase the interest, knowledge and proficiency in English language among students.

Keywords

Audio-Visual aids, English language, Multimedia, Proficiency, Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in eradicating poverty and makes the citizens as a powerful source of the nation. Maintaining and providing quality education is the basis of present and future of students. Teachers and facilitators should empower the youth by providing better education which helps them to become knowledgeable, bold and powerful (Anil, 2015). English language has its own demanding place in the current competitive world as it is the international language that is almost used by two third of the countries in the world as a tool of communication and

it indeed is a necessary requirement for a country like Sri Lanka which has multilingual dwellers. English language is taught from primary to advanced level in school as well as students are required to follow it as one of the compulsory subjects in their higher studies too. Also most of the students follow tuitions to improve their knowledge in English language. Though, our students are still lack of sufficient knowledge and fluency in English language (Wijetunge, Jayasinghe and Weerarathne, 2016). Resourceful English language teacher with different approach is desirable among the students because he/she makes them involve with the use of variety of language learning activities. Technology development in the modern era assists teachers in creating a collaborative learning environment. Integrating technology education into the classroom initiates when a teacher prepares lessons that use technology in relevant ways (Kausar, 2013). There are different kinds of technological methods used in the language learning classrooms. Assimilation of audio-visual aids into curriculum refers that using it as a tool to promote higher-order thinking skills of the students and to teach academic subjects.

Considering Sri Lankan education system the terms audio-visual aids is not new but their usage is sporadic in the university classrooms. Audio-visual aids are considered an effective tool especially for language learning. The use of these aids in third world countries especially in Sri Lanka is not very copious. Classrooms in the universities are equipped with new technological teaching aids for teaching-learning process in a resourceful and interesting way. A beginner at undergraduate level course in learning English language has to complete subjects related to speaking, listening, writing and reading successfully. Most of the activities related to speaking and listening need audio-visual aids to carry on the course.

Advanced technological developments have opened new potentials to integrate multimedia audio-visual aids in English language classrooms, though these aids are not being fully utilized in most of the language learning classrooms. Even the students find that using audio-visual aids is a motivation tool to improve the interest to learn English language; very often it is not used by the instructors at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka in the language learning classrooms. This exploratory study was conducted to illustrate the importance of using multimedia audio-visual Aids in the English language classrooms, to check for what extend audio-visual aids are used in teaching English at ESL classrooms at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, to test how effective audio-visual aids are to promote learning English and to suggest the best practices to

promote the use of audio-visual aids to stimulate learning English language among undergraduate students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

English language plays a vital role in the globe as a number of English language learners are growing up. Different teaching methods have been tested to view the effectiveness of English language teaching and learning. Pun (2013) analysed usage of technology in learning English language among teachers and learners. He emphasized that rapid development of science and technology such as multimedia which refers to computer-based interactive applications, allow people to share their ideas and information. It is a combination of text, graphics, animation, video and sound. This usage of multimedia technology has created a favourable condition in improving the Interest in English language learning (Pun, 2013).

Using multimedia audio-visual aids stimulates thinking and improves learning environment in a classroom (Mathew and Alidmat, 2013). Gilakjani (2012) conducted a study to understand the impact of multimedia tools on the teaching process and expressed that it is easy for English instructors to incorporate multimedia into their teaching and there are different multimedia tools such as visual, auditory in which students take information for their better learning. All students use all senses to take needed information. Instructors and teachers should incorporate these multimedia tools in their curriculum activities so that students are able to succeed in their classes (Gilakjani, 2012). Kausar (2013) presented on importance of audio visual aids for learning English and declared that the students are facing many problems in learning English language and feel it is difficult to learn English language without the use of any audio or visual aids. The study endorses that audio visual aids should be used in an English language classroom to facilitate maximum learning.

Anil (2015) emphasized that visual aids used to develop the thinking skills of students. Pronunciation, accent, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening and speaking skills can be taught using multimedia. Students' creative, analytical and productive skills can be improved by showing colourful pictures, inspiring speeches by great people. These methods help students to improve their communicative skills in English language. Regarding the usage of multimedia related aids in language teaching classrooms such as combinations of pictures, sound and text are obvious. She also criticised that English language teachers and learners have not yet maximized the benefit of using multimedia in English

teaching classroom (Anil, 2015). New technological improvements have opened new opportunities to integrate multimedia audio-visual aids in the English language learning classroom, but these aids are not being fully utilized.

Yunus, Salehi and John (2013) investigated about the teachers' views on the use of visual aids as a motivational tool in enhancing students' interest in learning English language. The study indicated that the majority of the teachers had positive views and attitudes towards the usage of audio-visual aids (Yunus, Salehi and John, 2013). Halwani (2017) explored that reading and writing improved when teachers used audio-visual aids and multimedia helps the students to grip the content and become interactive in the classroom with no fear, of having trouble because of shyness (Halwani, 2017). Daniel (2013) talked about the advantages of using audio-visual aids in teaching English among learners. It creates interest for learning in the students, it is time saving because it explains the idea easily and precisely, burden of teacher is reduced, teacher can improve his/her own English knowledge, new varieties of experience for students, it makes learning English easy, it helps in concentrating the attention of pupils in the lesson (Daniel, 2013).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Field Setting

This exploratory study was conducted at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka which is located at Addalaichenai Divisional Secretariat division of Ampara district. Presently the university is operating with 6 faculties as Arts & Culture, Management & Commerce, Applied Sciences, Islamic Studies & Arabic Language, Engineering and Technology. English Language is a compulsory subject for all faculty students of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka at least in the first year of their study (SEUSL, 2017).

3.2 Sampling

Normally, the study population is very large and complex to handle and getting complete observation is impractical and impossible. The sample represents a subset of small size. Purposive sample method is applied in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The sample size is 80 students from two different faculties who are following same English Language course and same study materials. These selected two groups students are in the 3rd year 1st group who have equal and better knowledge in English compared to other group students.

3.3 Data Collection Method

The source of data can be classified as Primary data and Secondary data. This classification depends on the nature of the data and mode of collection. These two types of data come under the internal data which is useful in decision making field. In order to achieve objectives of the study, both primary and secondary data collection methods were used for this study.

3.3.1 Primary Data Collection Method

Primary data are data that were previously unknown and that have been obtained directly by the investigator himself/herself for a specific research purpose. Interview and observation methods are used for this study to collect the primary. 60 students were interviewed to get sufficient data from two groups. They were mainly asked about the importance of using multimedia audio-visual aids in the classroom. Two classes of 40 students per each were observed closely during two continuous English lessons about whether they are interested in learning with audio-visual aids or not. At the end, the test which was made to both groups of students to monitor the usage of audio-visual aids lessons was more productive than a traditional one.

3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection Method

It refers to the data collected by others and used by others for another purpose. The Annual Report of Census & Statistics and Annual Performance report of Department of Examinations, report of University Grant Commission, magazines, newspapers, journals, articles and reliable web sites are the Secondary data sources used for the study.

3.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying data with the aim of discovering useful information and conclusion to suggest and support decision making. According to this study collected data were analysed by using both qualitative and quantitative data analyse methods. Mainly qualitative analyse method was applied, because analytical part is related with descriptive outcomes. After the data collection process, the next important step is to organize and present the data. Therefore, there is a need to process data and present in an efficient way that can be easily understood and easily utilized. According to this study, collected data were summarized and presented in text and figures in an appropriate and attractive manner.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using multimedia audio-visual aids in the classroom is not a new concept in Sri Lankan education system. All higher educational institutions are using these technological tools to provide and promote high quality education to their students in an effective way. The study found that, advanced technological developments have opened new potentials to integrate multimedia audio-visual aids in English language classrooms, though these aids are not being fully utilized by the instructors in the classrooms at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. There are sources available to teach English Language using multimedia audio-visual aids, in most of the classes multimedia audio-visual aids are not utilized for teaching. Still the lectures and instructors are using same traditional methods to enhance the English language of students manually by providing study materials. Majority of the students are not interested in English language learning and they mostly attended the classes for 80 percentage compulsory attendance rather than acquiring language knowledge to survive in the competitive world.

The study explored barriers behind the inadequate use of multimedia visuals aids in the English language learning classrooms. Lack of multimedia facilities in lecture halls is one of the main reasons for this poor usage of audio-visual aids. Multimedia facilities are not available in all the lecture halls at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka where English Language classes are conducted. Many of the instructors who conduct English language lectures do not have technical knowledge and they are not fully satisfied with their current traditional approach of teaching. The study found that these instructors find difficulties while using technology due to the lack of technical knowledge and experience. Lack of proper training is also another factor contributes to this situation, the instructors and facilitators are not fully trained in using advanced technologies in the classrooms. Time consumption is also another barrier to the absence of using multimedia audio-visual aids in English language learning classrooms. And also they found difficulties to conduct lectures among weaker students, because it consumes too much time to explain them. Using multimedia audio-visual aids among the English knowledgeable students is easier and it consumes enough time to cover the total syllabus which they have already planned. Though, they suffer to complete the lessons to the weaker students who have poor understandings.

The findings of the study elaborate that the students admit the importance of multimedia audio-visual aids for learning English language as a beneficial tool. 92% of the students report that multimedia audio-

visual aids make them active in the English language learning classroom. 85% of the students said that, usage of audio-visual aids encourages learning English language. 95% of students report that, multimedia audio-visual aids are used to maintain a high level of interest in English language. All students report that, using multimedia audio-visual aids provides self-motivation to learn English language and it highly encourages students' participation and enrolment. 95% students report that, multimedia audio-visual aids are helpful for better English language learning. Overall collected data from the students emphasise that using multimedia audio-visual aids in learning English language in the classroom is essential and it is an effective way to enhance their language knowledge. Nearly all the students pointed out that usage of multimedia audio-visual aids for English language learning is very rare in South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. The following figure 1 illustrates the Students' perspective about Usage of multimedia audio-visual aids in English language learning classroom.
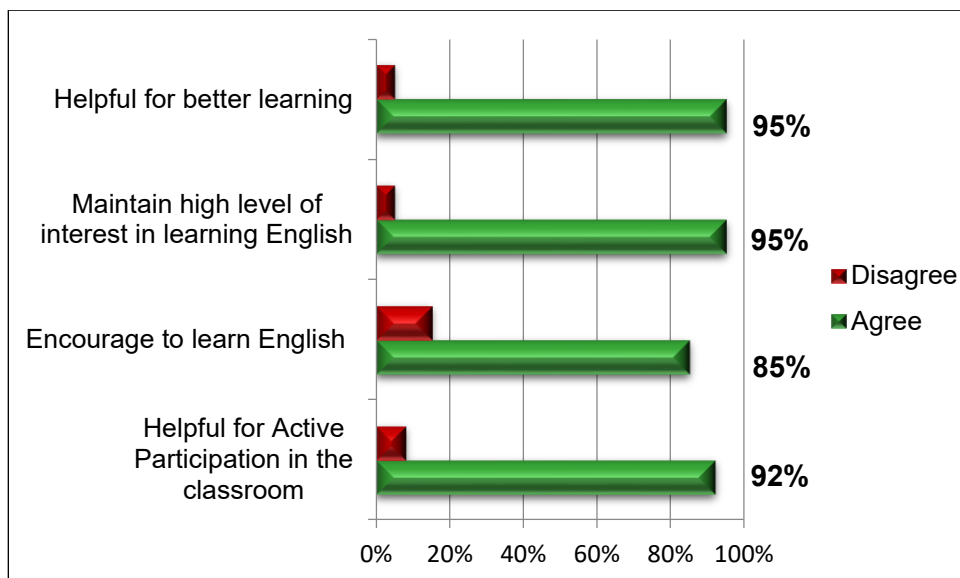

Figure 1: Students' perspective about Usage of multimedia audio-visual aids in English language learning classroom

A test using multimedia visual aid was made to the selected 2 groups from two different faculties namely Faculty of arts and Culture and Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language to monitor the usage of audio-visual aids lessons which is more productive than traditional method. Selected topic was taught to one group by using multimedia visual aid and the test result was recorded accurately. The same topic was taught to other group students by using traditional method in oral way and test result was recorded accurately. It is noted that these two groups possess high level of English language proficiency. The group of students who was taught by using multimedia visual aid method

performed well and obtained more marks than the group of students who were taught by using traditional method. The study explored that, students were very much responsive where the teachers used multimedia audio-visual aids. Compared to traditional method teaching class the students paid more attention in the classroom via multimedia visual aid teaching were handled. They have participated with much enthusiasm and energy in the class. After watching the pictures and videos shown to the students they came up with different ideas. Thus the class became an interactive one with the active participation of the students.

The study also explored that usage of multimedia audio-visual aids in the classroom is the best way to make students' participation in elicitation in the classroom in a learner centered approach lesson. The introduction of this new strategy helps to stimulate answers from the students rather than pouring knowledge by the facilitators which contributes greatly to the learning process. The study recorded the student talk time and teacher talk time in the both classes where traditional and multimedia audio-visual aids methods was used to teach the selected topic. According to the findings, in traditional method of teaching, the student talk time is limited to 35% and in the multimedia audio-visual aids usage of teaching, student talk time is exceeded up to 80%, it is clearly visualized in figure 2 as follows.
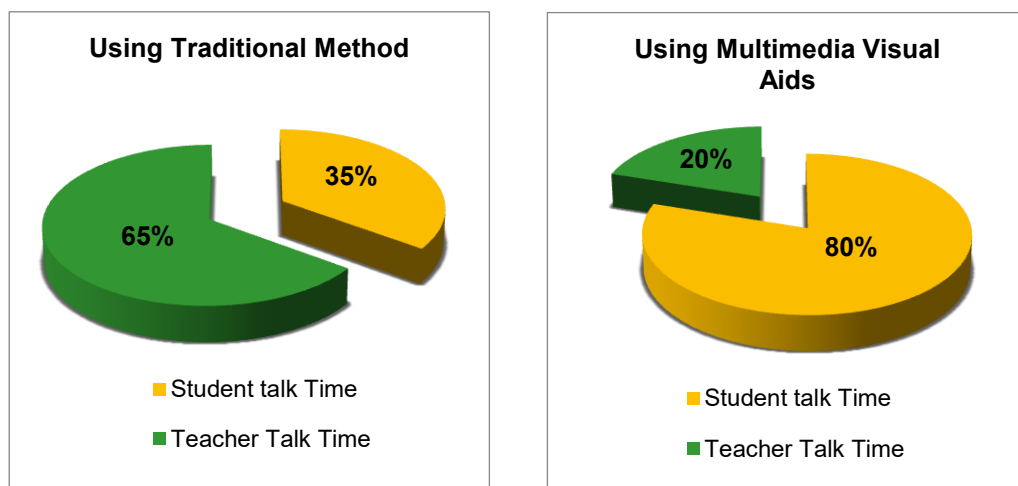

Figure 2: Student Talk Time vs. Teacher Talk Time

According to the findings of the study almost all the students came with the idea that, use of multimedia visuals aids makes the class interesting and encourages them to learn. Often the instructors conduct English

language lessons for 2 continuous hours pay week. This lengthy class makes really tough and bored for the students teaching with traditional method which is based on written modules and students often lose their attention in the middle of the lesson. Moreover the students described that they can understand the language better if the instructors visualize the contents relating with any multimedia visual materials especially use of pictures, video clips of conversation, dialogues, short video clips, short films and PowerPoint slides make the class more interesting and stimulating.

5. CONCLUSION

English language as a tool of communication is a necessary requirement for a developing country like Sri Lanka. Majority of the students lack fluency and have low interest in acquiring knowledge in English language. Advanced technological developments have opened new potentials to integrate multimedia audio-visual aids in English language classrooms, though these aids are not being fully utilized in the language learning classrooms at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Still the facilitators are based on traditional methods to enhance the English language of students manually. Lack of multimedia facilities in all English language teaching lecture halls, lack of sufficient technical knowledge, proper training and experience among instructors in using multimedia, difficulties in conducting lectures among weaker students are identified barriers behind the inadequate use of multimedia visuals aids in the English language learning classrooms. Nearly all the students pointed out that usage of multimedia audio-visual aids for English language learning is very rare in South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Even the students find that using audio-visual aids is a motivational tool to improve the interest to learn English and they have participated with much enthusiasm and energy in the classroom where multimedia audio-visual aids were used. Multimedia audio-visual aids encourage learning English language among students, it is the best practice to maintain a high level of interest in English language among students. All the students came with the idea that, use of multimedia visuals aids makes the class interesting and encourages them to learn. Using multimedia audio-visual aids in learning English language in the classroom is an essential and effective way to enhance the English language knowledge of the students. It will definitely increase the interest, knowledge and proficiency in English language among the students in future. Appropriate actions should be taken in order to address this absence of using multimedia audio-visual aids in the English language classroom in near future to enhance our future leaders' English language proficiency.

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