The Effect of Using Mobile on EFL Students Speaking

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ABSTRACT: The use of technology in teaching and learning environments is an important aspect which has received considerable attention in recent years. In a similar vein, the use of mobiles to increase effectiveness of instruction has been acknowledged through a number of experimental studies carried out so far. The following study was made to improve the speaking knowledge of EFL students through using mobile phones. 40 students including male and female up to 18 years old and with average age of 25 participated in this study. The participants in both experimental and control groups were provided with an opportunity to review and recycle English drills about speaking. In every session the participants in the experimental group talk on their mobile phone in English. As an out-of-class assignment they should practice their mistakes in English speaking. Participants in the control group, however, received no extra treatment at all. The results showed that the participants who had benefited from mobile-assisted learning had a significantly better performance on a speaking posttest than the participants in the control group.

Keywords: EFL Student, Mobile Phone, Speaking, Pretest, Posttest.

INTRODUCTION

Several years ago, it was already being claimed that, at least in the UK, mobile technologies were "a familiar part of the lives of most teachers and students" (Facer 2004). Most of the people, all over the world, are walking around with mobile in their pockets and purses, now. Kukulska-Hulme (2008) claims that Mobile learning includes the use of any portable learning materials including audio cassettes, audio CDs, portable radios and DVD players. Other overview texts provide more detail about the regions of the developing world; Rao and, Mendoza (2005) chapters on the industry structures of various developing countries on the continent, and Schwartz’s (1996) book on wireless technologies laid out the technical and policy issues which would challenge the mobile’s growth in the developing world. Many research studies and projects have examined mobile learning from an identified theoretical perspective (O’Malley, et al., 2005; Naismith, Lonsdale, Vavoula, & Sharples, 2004; BECTA, 2006; Thornton & Houser, 2004; Wood, 2004; Cortez, et al., 2004; Chesterman, nd; Rogers et al. 2002; Proctor & Burton, 2003; Perry, 2003).

In general, mobile learning—or m-learning—can be viewed as any form of learning that happens when mediated through a mobile device, and a form of learning that has established the legitimacy of 'nomadic' learners (Alexander, 2004). All in all, M-learning can be identified by the tools which are available anywhere, any time (Geddes, 2004). However, it is time to begin thinking of our cell phones which is an inseparable part of our lives. The development of mobile technology has changed not only the way people communicate and interact with each other, but also the landscape of education (Huang, 2010; Liu, 2008). Cell phone has come in handy especially for communicating and interacting among people in no time. The cell phone are not only made for making a phone call, but you could call the multitask communicating devices, use many different or several system are built in this device such as: GPRS, internet access and so on.

There are several different answers to the questions. Nowadays, there are different high technology mobile phones available to market and almost all people can afford to buy a good one. This has made a valuable opportunity for all people to save time doing their affairs. The definition of M-learning has evolved with the advent of mobile computing technology and has become an attractive application for learning. M-learning is coined as “E-learning with mobile devices” (Kinshuck, 2003). Using E-learning, if students have cell phone, students can learn anytime and anywhere, can use materials repeatedly, and can study the difficult part for them. The goal of this
paper leads to the effectiveness of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) within an EFL context. As I already mentioned, MALL learning method has opened EFL eyes to the new world of foreign language learning in which most learners could wish for. The learning system focuses on following up students if they study what they are taught in class. It actually persuades them to do so. Moreover, they would get the impression that they have a phone call from a nonnative person who they can speak to.

This point of study is designed to answer these questions:

1) Does using cell phone have any positive effect on EFL learners’ speaking?
2) Does using cell phone have any effect on EFL learner’s confidence?

Previous Studies

In March 1999, one of the first laptop programs in Germany started at EvangelischStiftischesGymnasiumGuetersloh. More than 300 students of this high school and their teachers were gradually furnished with networked laptop computers. Students of four cohorts entered the program in grade 7 and are using laptops regularly at school and at home until the end of grade 10. The promise of a spread of mobiles into places where currently there are not many telephones might be as much of a mention as the developing world gets (Lochooe, Wakeford, and Pearson 2003). For now, most educators still see the cell phone as very different device, with the tiny cell phone being a much more personal (and ubiquitous) accoutrement, especially among young people. In the United States, the penetration of student mobile phones is 40% in many junior high schools and 75% in many high schools (NOP World 2005); according to a Student Monitor survey (as cited in Kinzie, 2005), penetration is 90% in U.S. colleges. The use of mobile devices has progressed beyond their primary function as simple communication and entertainment tools: researchers have argued that more far-reaching possibilities should be considered (Sharples, 2003), even expressed as a “new mindset” for mobile language learning (Kukulska-Hulme, 2006; 2009). Recent scenarios extend to learner-centered, self-directed language learning, which may be based around communities of learners sharing resources based on common needs (Michelsen, 2008; Pemberton et al., 2009).

The cell phone—generally called a mobile phone outside of the United States—has proved so useful elsewhere that there are 1.5 billion around the world, with half a billion new ones sold every year (Stone, 2004). In some countries—including the United Kingdom, Italy, Sweden, and the Czech Republic—cell phone penetration is greater than 100%, which means that individuals own and use two or more of these devices (Borghese, 2005; Agence France-Press, 2004). Cell phone penetration in Asia continues to climb: Hong Kong and Taiwan have already surpassed 100% according to one prominent survey (IT Facts, 2004; Simon, 2004). Several years ago, more than 90% of Tokyo high schoolers carried mobile phones Japan magazine, 2001). In Botswana, roughly one of every four citizens owned a mobile phone by 2002 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2005). Moreover, students in China, the Philippines, and Germany are using their mobile phones to learn English; to study math, health, and spelling; and to access live and archived university lectures, respectively (BBC Press Office, 2005; Villafania 2004; Chapman, 2003). McNicol (2004) believes, learners can dial a number on their cell for short English lessons from ALC Press's Pocket Eijiro or Japanese lessons from Enfour's Tango Town. In China, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and others are providing cell phone English-language training (BBC Press Office, 2005). One company, MIG China Ltd. (working with First International Digital) is even subtitling pop songs with their lyrics, highlighting each word as it is sung (First International Digital, 2004).

Young Japanese learners prefer to use mobile phones for many activities, from emailing to reading books (Thornton, 2003). Research on the use of mobile phones for the delivery of vocabulary materials to English learners in Taiwan shows that students enjoy using their phones because of easy access to materials and the ability to practice anytime and anywhere; in addition, some students like the screen size limitations, which make the amount of content more manageable than that of other teaching materials (Chen, 2008). The Canadian corporation Go Test Go has developed English vocabulary testing software. While many of these sites have quickly moved to the mixed media that the phones in their regions support, much of what they offer can be made available easily on voice-only phones. Other types of voice-only learning applications exist and are growing in popularity. In Concord, Massachusetts, you can use a cell phone for guided tours of Minute Man National Historical Park, where the "shot heard 'round the world" was fired. As part of Ultralab's seVIVA project, Anglia Polytechnic University (in the United Kingdom) has experimented successfully with using cell phones for exams, with the students' voice prints authenticating that they are the ones being tested (BBC News 2003; McGuire, 2004). Usually any act of language learning and teaching involves the use of a particular type of technology (Warschauer, 2000).

Since the mobile phone started gaining momentum in the domain of m-learning, a large number of studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using mobile phones as a learning tool, and the results of such studies have pinpointed the benefits of their usage (Chen, 2008; Thatcher, 2008; Thornton, 2005; Tsai, 2010).
In terms of the application of M-learning to language education, earlier research also ascertained that mobile phones could be a potential facilitator in language acquisition (Kiernan, 2004; Levy, 2005; Stockwell, 2007; Taylor, 2003).

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Participants**
In our survey were 40 students including male and female up to 18 years old and with average age of 25 at Elmgostareneamin department in Gorgan, Iran. We choose these participants to solve their major problem in speaking. These participants had little chance to correct their problem and wrong utterances which are related to speaking. Researchers were persuaded that by using mobile phone and giving the chance to learners to correct themselves, they could help them become conscious of their problems in speaking.

**Instrument**
These are collaborative learning activities that use mobile phones. Further, there is mobile phone language course. The Vocabulary in Use Book is used for this process, this course structure includes 20 courses and for each course there are various subjects for dialogues have been created. The learner use mobile phone to connect with their teacher and she verifies the mistakes and errors and remind the learners to correct them. Mobile phones have positively contributed to the field of learning in many different ways. Mobile learning helps learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and to recognize their existing abilities. Also, it helps learners to identify areas where they need assistance and support. Moreover, it helps to remove some of reluctances by creating motivation due to using mobile phone as technology. Besides, it helps learners to remain more focused for longer periods. Ultimately, it helps to raise self-esteem and self-confidence. (Attewell, 2004). Also important, by using technology children are feeling “more of a sense of mastery and are feeling good about themselves” (Cited in Katz, p.95).

**Treatments**
The material which are used in this paper consist of 30 chapters that point to the subjects which are related to routine issues as family, life, favorites, relatives, weather and some other article that due to speaking subject, each chapter has several standard questions about certain topic. In this paper, we have pretest and posttest that are used for participants to determine the proficiency level of students. We used standard oral test as pretest and posttest which included 15 questions that were divided to three parts as, Biographical questions, Guided questions and Opinion questions. All subjects as treatment include various issues that referred to routine subjects which are useful for improving speaking. Also we used lists of arranged questions. For data gathering and to investigate the study questions we collected oral test for Assessing Oral Social Interaction. According to these questions as pretest and posttest, we evaluated the student’s level.

**Procedures**
This study was evaluated to measure the effect of mobile phone in improving the speaking of EFL student that is different from previous experimental studies. The focus of most studies which was written in the past featuring fields such as: grammar, vocabulary, test, etc. in comparison with these studies, the focus of current paper is on improving the ability of speaking on EFL students. All of us, as EFL instructors, know that if student cannot speak in front of others that may cause student to shy away from speaking, the main goal of this survey was to use simple and useful way to improve speaking ability of student. Using mobile phone can help our learners to develop their speaking skills. Generally, this study helps the EFL student to prepare themselves to overcome their problem and mistakes in conversation.

In order to achieve this goal, this survey used two groups and each group had 20 participants, the first group was the experimental group, which received 30 sessions and per sessions included 10 minutes speaking on mobile phone which were totally same as 8 sessions in class room. The topic which is used in this study was related to routine topic. During phone discussion, every student can discuss about topic on the phone and phone teacher correct their mistake during conversation. Another thing was done that every mistake and problem of student in speaking were written by phone teacher and next session they would be asked whether they had reviewed correct mistake. If they did, the teacher would start next lesson. And this process had continued for one month. The second group was the control group, which continued their studying lesson with other methods without using mobile phone. At the end of treatment period, the posttests were given to both groups to evaluate outcome of the treatment.
RESULTS

Following charts display the descriptive statistic obtained. The result of a t-test used to compare the differences between the two groups indicates that the mean score of the experimental group or group 2 (5.95) is significantly higher than the mean score of the control group (5.20). This result indicates that my method which I used for group 2 is acceptable, both groups have developed but the treatment for group 2 is more acceptable than group 1.

Table 1. The Comparison between Pre 1 and Post 1 Paired Samples Statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>air 1</td>
<td>re1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1.482</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ot1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1.281</td>
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</table>

Table 2. Paired Samples Test.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre 1 - Post 1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>air 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.950</td>
<td>.887</td>
<td>.198</td>
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95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

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<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>.000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2.365</td>
<td>-1.535</td>
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<tr>
<td>-9.831</td>
<td>-9.831</td>
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Table 4. The Comparison between Pre 2 and Post 2 Paired Samples Statistics.

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<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>air 1</td>
<td>re2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ot2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>1.146</td>
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Table 5. Paired Samples Test.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre 2 - Post 2</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
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<td>-3.450</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>.276</td>
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95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

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<tr>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>12.499</th>
<th>.000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-4.028</td>
<td>-2.872</td>
<td></td>
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In other words, it can be concluded that the treatment had effect on speaking accuracy of student. This suggests that student who used to speak English on the cell phone about ten minutes per day, can improve their speaking ability and accuracy more than the student who were not offered this opportunity.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our aim in this paper is to present and discuss Findings the impacts of using mobile on language speaking and the effect of that on confidence. The overall objective of the project was to investigate students' activity when speaking on the phone and the student's ability on speaking. Finally the main findings, lessons learned and their implications are discussed. This study was explored the effect of talking on the phone on speaking ability and the student's confidence. The study also shed light on the extent to which E-learning can help EFL student to improve their speaking ability. To achieve these goals, an experiment was conducted and a survey carried out. After analyzing the oral test as pretest and posttest and according to the method which is mentioned in procedures.
section of this paper, the findings showed that E-learning has an important effect on EFL student conception and can help the student to reduce their stress and help them to increase their self confidence. This result consists with previous studies for various disciplines (Cavus & Ibrahim, 2008, Chang, Lin & Lin, 2008; Nesteletal, 2010).

According to texts which mentioned above, learning is the result of a joint social collaboration between a more knowledgeable person (e.g. a teacher) and less knowledgeable person (e.g. a student). According to Clifton (2006), for classroom interaction to be facilitative it must break from the traditional pattern of teachers having the power over discussions and offer language learners greater participation rights which give them the potential to take more initiative and hence responsibility for learning. One of the tentative reasons for the success of this project should be attributed can follow usual pattern of preparation, practice and evaluation. The teacher can use preparation stage to establish a context for speaking (where, when, why, with whom it will occur). As a result, that study allowed us to show the positive effects of using mobile even step by step on EFL students speaking ability. In just the last five years, technology developments have provided remarkable opportunities for teachers with English learner students. The Using mobile phone technology has provided alternatives for people to learn and teach without limits of time and space. The clearest examples of impact studies come from the ICTDperspective, where researchers are interested in whether mobiles promote or enable economic growth or broader well-being (Sridhar and Sridhar 2006). This study extends current understanding of the potential of m-learning for EFL student. Using mobile phone to learn English increases opportunities for language learning by taking advantage of a tool that, students are intimately familiar with and carry around at all times. The mobile phone is a self-referential technology and, after only a few hours, teachers can teach hundreds of words and phrases and for improving their ability in English language speaking. By this method, teacher has found it to be a worthwhile investment of their time a welcome addition to their language teaching method. Finally, recommendations for further research are suggested in order to avoid the limitations of this study in terms of the number of subjects and the use of mobile phone as an example of using mobile technology in educational setting.

REFERENCES