The Importance of Online Smart Board in improving EFL Learners' Oral Performance

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Abstract

The present paper attempts to investigate the importance of online smart board in improving EFL learners' speaking skill, and to draw the attention of the teachers and educationists toward the importance of smart board inside classrooms. The aim of this study is to come out with constructive recommendations for teachers and educationists in order to improve the processes of teaching and learning spoken English. In addition, it attempts to draw the attention toward learning speaking skills via modern technology. This study investigates the effect of using networks inside classroom via smart boards, and its pedagogical impact on students' oral achievement. The instrument of this study was a speaking test for (20) beginners students from Arab Open University, Riyadh branch, in the year 2017. The pre-test and post-test were given to students in their formal class schedule, every student in isolation. After two months training a post test was given to the same students within the same questions in their pre-test. Data was statistically analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The findings of the study indicate that smart board has a great impact on speaking. It also suggests that the teacher who wishes to improve his students' speaking skill have to make use of this smart board positively, and make sure that it is connected with the internet. Therefore, students will avoid boring lesson via listening and watching English video conversations.

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1. Introduction

Life is very plane and easy by using new technology. One of the great technologies that has changed the world is the internet and its power in providing online communication. People use the online communication in doing some regular daily life activities like marketing, connecting to friends and reading news. Electronic communication and computers are things people or students have to deal with every day. The world is engaged with connections such as well as by physical and situational conditions (Davies and Hewer, 2012).

According to the researchers' observation, the target of learning English language now a day is for oral communication. It is the most widely spoken language in the world. A great number of non-English speakers as well as native speakers use English as an important medium of international communication. English is no longer the language used in English speaking countries. No developing country can ignore the role of spoken English in improving its international profile and prominence. Subsequently, the ability to socialize with native and non-native speakers through the network all over the globe contributes positively in improving students English language oral performance. English learners are very intelligent. Most are highly motivated when they begin. Most students are very successful in school, in their jobs, in their business, and in their relationships. So why many learners fail to speak English easily and fluently? What are the problems? Why do good learners fail in this area? That is because we do not provide the classroom with internet connection and smart board. Therefore, this paper points out that using modern technology inside the classroom is the way to improve our students' oral communication skills.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Using Technology in Learning Language

The use of technological media in education like the computer, the Internet, and a data projector, the projector optic, smart board, are considered of the media that will help to bring about effective learning. some efforts have been made and studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of the use of certain media technology in the development of educational computer skills use in general , and among these studies Abed study (2007), which aimed to identify the effectiveness of a proposed program to develop the programming skill among teachers, and the study of the Aqel (2007), which aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the program (WebCT) in the development of the skill of designing visual computerized forms among the female students in the Faculty of

Information and Technology. And Audeh (2005) held a study in order to identify a proposed program to train teachers on the production of educational techniques. while the study of Hasan (2005) was aimed to detect the effectiveness of the technical program for the development of practical skills in teaching technology among the Student/ teachers.

According to the researcher, technology now a day is unable to be avoided. It is the most powerful tool in almost every aspect of human's daily life. Technology is regarded as a major revolution and this has a significant impact on education. The use of Information Technology (IT) and the internet are the new ways of learning now days. These technological advancements allow people to access, gather, analyze, and share, transfer data and knowledge. Now the students are Net Generation or digital natives. These digital natives bring new challenges to the teaching and learning environment. In the last eight years, the social media technology becomes more popular characterization of websites that allowed digital users to interact with each other as contributors to a website. Therefore, we need to make use of this new technology here in Sudan widely.

Ybarra and Green (2003) state that students need further language support to learn English as a second language in order to develop their oral communication skill. For doing such tasks, they are in need of using various tools which can help them speak the language easily and effectively.

According to Davies and Hewer (2012), the term New Technology includes communication techniques for language teaching in which the personal computer plays a central role. However, there are other technological tools that can be utilized in language learning besides computers. Each technological tool has its specific benefits and application with one of the four language parts (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). However, in order to use these techniques successfully, the EFL learners should be familiar with using computers and internet, and capable of interacting with these techniques.

Sharma (2009) states that the effect of technology has become huge in teaching and learning the language in addition to the instructor's role. In other words, the role of the instructor together with the role of the technology can lead to advance learning results.

Lee (2000) states that the use of computers in language teaching dates back to 1960's and since that time, it has been seen the shift of the role of computer from a mechanical tutor

used primarily for drills into a real usage of language in an authentic context by students self-discoveries and developments. When microcomputers entered in the daily life in 1970's, the era of computer assisted language learning has begun at schools and computers were used primarily for drilling activities in language classes with maintain of using text-based materials in language classes in general. Then, internet delivery changed the language learning from being text-based to more interactive ones.

According to Seale and Rius (2001), social media networking can encourage student participation, improve student-student and student-tutor interaction and facilitate independent learning and peer learning. Web-based communication tools are also an excellent means of supporting group work, project work and reflective task. Still in early development for education, these tools can facilitate tutorial support in real time or be used to invite "external experts" into a session. A web camera is needed, and a limited number of people from each location can participate in the session, and that is known as video-conferencing.

Conole and Alevizou (2010) see problems with collaborative activities. They found that the learning perception of students constructing knowledge with collaborative assignments was lower than students adopting a traditional knowledge acquisition model. Such problems with collaborative work are acknowledged but the positive online and in-class atmosphere that resulted from collaborative exercises was seen to increase motivation and improve willingness for learning. Accordingly, using technology in language learning provides authentic materials to increase student motivation (Arnold, 2007) and benefit from it to create a learning environment with a combination of video, graphic, audio and other interactive properties (Muehleisen, 1997).

According to the researcher, technology is the way to add excitement to your lessons and the only way to hold your students' attention.

Lacina (2004) and Lin (2009) state that utilizing and combining graphics, video, and audio can address varied styles of learning in a more effective way and be a tremendous support to English language learners. They also say that finding a way to infuse technology into instruction not only helps English language learners acquire a second language, but also enhances motivation and confidence. There are different hardware that teachers can use inside the classroom to make their lesson more interactive and effective.

2.1.1 Interactive Whiteboard

Smart board is an electronic board connected to a computer laptop or desktop device and Data Show and both the teacher and the learner can use this board as a white board by writing on it by using a special pen or fingers. Smart board allows the user multiple options by opening all computer applications and World Wide Web, and work on it through touch and clicking your fingers, as well as the use of different writing and drawing tools. And it allows viewing the text, images, audio and video files with various extensions. The user of smart board can move any element on the screen with the finger of the hand, such as moving graphics, shapes, and create virtual forms with original shapes. Through the use of smart board teacher can record and replay the presentation of lessons after saving it (Saraya, 2009; Swaidan, 2008).

According to Davis (2007), many schools are installing new types of hardware into classrooms and computer labs that can make a tremendous impact on instruction. One of the most common types of hardware used is the interactive whiteboard. This technology is an excellent tool for presenting multimedia lessons and encouraging student participation. If you are unfamiliar with how an interactive whiteboard works, think of the board as a large computer screen and the pen as the mouse. There are numerous benefits of an interactive whiteboard over a traditional chalk-board. For example, the teacher:

1. No longer needs to erase notes from the board in order to make room for more information. This is problematic for English language learners who have difficulty copying and comprehending simultaneously. Notes and visuals can be saved for students to review later.
2. Can save the note files and post them to a website or print them out.
3. Can go back and forth between different pages of notes in order to help students make connections with previous lessons.
4. Is able to incorporate pictures, videos and organizers with ease, thus assisting English language learners to more fully understand concepts and learn new vocabulary.
5. Aid learners to improve their speaking skills through watching and listening to video conversations.

Figure 2.1 Interactive Smart board

3. Methods:

The measuring instrument used for collecting data for the present study was a student pre-test and post-test from Arab Open University, Saudi Arabia, Riyadh branch, (20 subjects), in the year 2017. Pre-test and post-test took about three hours to examine (20) students. Each student attended the speaking test in isolation for 10 to 15 minutes including the warm up questions, general questions, and students' opinions as well. There were two major questions (A) and (B), and each student assessed on four categories: content, vocabulary, grammar, (pronunciation and fluency). Then, the collected data was statistically analyzed by (SPSS) Statistic Package for the Social Sciences program.

Students practiced English oral communication inside the classroom with the researcher via watching English videos through the smart board. The students found that more interesting and were able to participate during all session. Therefore, they were able to avoid the rigid formal classroom. The classroom was well set with internet connection, and smart board. The students watched and listened to videos conversation related to their curriculum (Headway Plus for beginners). These videos were about different topics related to the book modules. The students found that interesting. Therefore, they were able to watch and listen to videos in a relaxed atmosphere inside the classroom using the smart board. In addition, discussions took place inside the classroom, and students were highly motivated. Finally, after two month training the researcher made the final post-test.

4. Results:

4.1 Pre and post speaking Test

The test is conducted before and after to check if there is a progress within the students' performance. Through the usage of this test, the researcher aims to find answers to the following question:

To what extent do online smart boards improve students' oral communication skills?

The table and figure below describe the analysis of the pre and post speaking test.

4.2 Comparing Mean Result

Table and Figure 4.1 Descriptive analysis for pre and post speaking test

Part	Pre-test	Post-test
Content	1.5	2.7
Vocabulary	1.35	2.25
Grammar	0.95	1.85
Pronunciation & Fluency	0.8	1.65
TOTAL	4.6	8.45
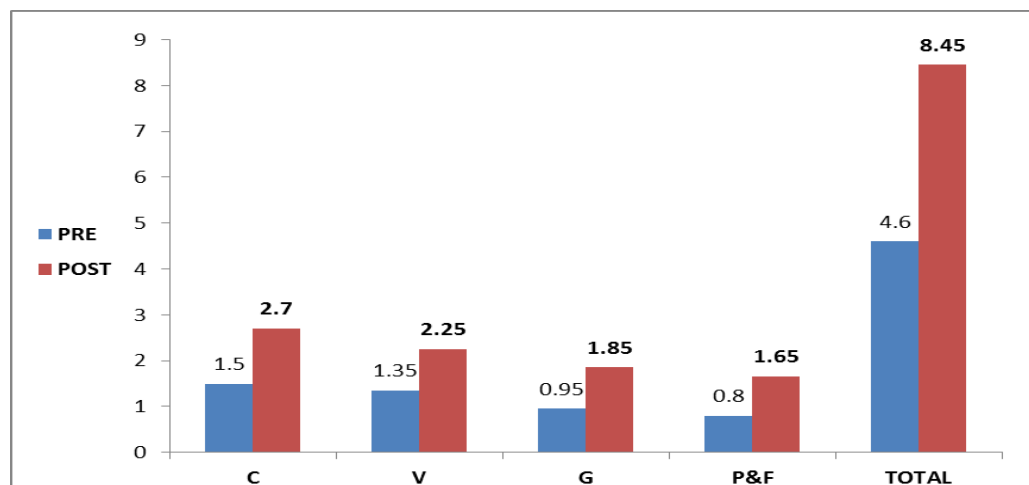
The above table and figure show that there is a remarkable difference in all test components. In the content, the mean was 1.5 while it jumps to 2.7 in the post test. In vocabulary, the mean was 1.35 in the pre-test while it increases to 2.25 in the post test. In grammar, the mean was 0.95 in the pre-test but it goes up to 1.65 in the post test. In Pronunciation and fluency, the mean was 0.8 while in the post-test it rises to 1.65.

Generally, in the pre-test the mean was 4.6, while it jumps to 8.45 in the post-test which indicate that the students benefit from the training. Therefore, there is a considerable difference between the score of the students in the pre-test and post-test. The speaking skills of participants score increase to some extent which means that there is a progress.

Table 4.2 Paired sample : Result dependent sample t-test

			Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Paired Samples Statistics						
Pair 1		content_pre	1.5000	20	.68825	.15390
		content_post	2.7000	20	.92338	.20647
Pair 2		vocabulary_pre	1.3500	20	.58714	.13129
		vocabulary_post	2.2500	20	.71635	.16018
Pair 3		grammar_pre	.9500	20	.39403	.08811
		grammar_post	1.8500	20	.81273	.18173
Pair 4		pronunciation & fluency_pre	.8000	20	.41039	.09177
		pronunciation & fluency post-	1.6500	20	.58714	.13129
Pair 5		Total_pre-test	4.6000	20	1.69830	.37975
		Total_post-test	8.4500	20	2.70429	.60470

Table 4.3 Paired Samples Correlation

			N	Correlation	Sig.
Paired Samples Correlations					
Pair 1		content_pre & content_post	20	.828	.000

Pair 2	vocabulary_pre & vocabulary_post	20	.782	.000
Pair 3	grammar_pre & grammar_post	20	.468	.037
Pair 4	pronunciation & fluency_pre & pronunciation & fluency_post	20	.568	.009
Pair 5	Total_pre & Total_post	20	.889	.000

Table 4.4 Paired Sample Test

Paired Samples Test								
		Paired Differences						Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df
					Lower	Upper		
Pair 1	content_pre - content_post	-1.20000	.52315	.11698	-1.44484	-.95516	-10.258	19	.000
Pair 2	vocabulary_pre - vocabulary_post	-.90000	.44721	.10000	-1.10930	-.69070	-9.000	19	.000
Pair 3	grammar_pre - grammar_post	-.90000	.71818	.16059	-1.23612	-.56388	-5.604	19	.000
Pair 4	pronunciation & fluency_pre - pronunciation & fluency_post	-.85000	.48936	.10942	-1.07903	-.62097	-7.768	19	.000
Pair 5	Total pre – Total post	-3.85000	1.42441	.31851	-4.51664	-3.18336	-12.088	19	.000

From the above table, it is clear that the(2-tailed P-value) of the paired t-test, which is 0.0000. As the P-value is less than 0.05 (i.e., $p < .05$), it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between our two variable scores. Therefore, it is clear to say that online smart boards have great impact on students' speaking skill.

5. Conclusions

To fulfill the lack of the target language environment in improving students' English oral communication skills that should be through utilizing the new technology online smart board inside classrooms. The right use of smart board inside classroom helps the teachers to benefit more from it whether in improving the students speaking and listening by putting them in real context or in motivating and engaging them in a real relaxed atmosphere.

Smart board expands the reach of education. Barriers of time and of place are breaking down, allowing students to learn in much different and more profound ways than ever before. Today, it is essential to improving students achievement and preparing them as professionals in the global economy and develops students' oral communication skill.

According to the results , this paper led us to conclude that using smart board inside the classroom is very important in teaching English because it helps to improve the students' speaking skills via watching and listening to English video conversations.

6. Recommendations

In the light of the results of this paper, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations to improve EFL learners' speaking skill.

1. Using an effective smart board inside classrooms encourages students to improve their English speaking skills through watching and listening to video conversations.
2. Smart boards inside classrooms must be set with internet connection.
3. A strict action must be taken by the government to set the classrooms with internet connection and smart boards.

All the above mentioned recommendations have emphasized the importance of online smart boards in improving English language speaking skill.

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