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The Impact of Using PowerPoint Presentations on Students' Learning and Motivation in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Different studies show that the use of technology in schools (as the most important part of education system) has developed new ways of teaching and learning. It enhances learning by providing a better understanding of the topic as well as motivating students. This study was carried out in Lar to investigate the effectiveness use of technology on teaching English (TEFL) process and if the learners prefer this new way of teaching over traditional instruction methods. Fifty-six female students of a secondary school in Lar were the subjects of this study. The subjects were split into two groups, (Experimental and Control). Each group was taught separately, one by using technology in class (e.g; video-projector , power-point , ...), the other through a traditional method such as textbooks. An independent sample t-test was carried out and showed that there was a significant difference between the means of the two groups. It represented that teaching based on the use of technology had a significant positive effect on learners' scores. Analyses showed that the experimental group learners performed better than the control group.

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1. Introduction

Today technology plays an important role in pedagogy. When teachers use it in their classrooms, in fact, they want to attract the students' attention, so that they can enhance effective ways of learning. It is obvious that learning a new language in a traditional way is not so enjoyable for today technology-dependent students, for this, the environment of the classroom has been changed. According to Ybarra & Green (2003), the process of learning a new language can be boring and painful for students, so they need much language support and the teachers who teach English know that any language support is helpful for language acquisition. One of the most important factors for learners, in FLL, is the method that teachers use in their teaching process to facilitate learning (Ahmadi Gilani, Nizam Ismail, & Gilakjani, 2012). Ilter (2009) referred to the positive aspects of using technology on both students and teachers. When students are active in learning environment, their interest increases. Teachers must try to

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motivate students to be excited learners. Technologies make learning more fun by placing control over learning in the hands of students (Wartinbee, 2009). So, this study tries to show the impact of using PowerPoint software, as an example of technology tool, on students' learning and motivation in language classes.

2. Literature Review

Microsoft Power-Point is a presentation program developed by Microsoft. It is a part of the Microsoft Office system which is widely used by business people, educators, students, and trainers. As a part of the Microsoft Office suite, Power-Point has become the world's most widely used presentation program. It is a complete presentation program that allows teachers to produce professional-looking presentations in EFL classroom (Segundo & Salazar, 2011).

Ozaslan & Maden (2013) concluded in their study that students learned better if the course material was presented through some visual tools. They, also, reported that teachers believed that PowerPoint presentations made the content more appealing; therefore, they helped them to take students' attention. The results of Corbeil's study (2007) showed that students exposed to power-point presentations preferred them over the textbook presentations; she believed that the students were learning better when their attention was captured via highlighting, colour, different fonts, and visual effects. Power-point presentations could be used for presenting new structures to students, practicing and drilling, or for reviewing language structures which have already been taught (Segundo & Salazar, 2011). Stepp-Greany (2002), reported, in her study, a number of benefits for students related to the general use of technology in classrooms including increased motivation, improvement in self-concept and mastery of basic skills, more student-centered learning and engagement in the learning process. Zhao (2007) conducted a qualitative research to investigate the perspectives and experiences of 17 social studies teachers following technology integration training. The research showed that teachers held a variety of views towards technology integration. These views influenced their use of technology in the classroom. Most teachers were willing to use technology, expressed positive experiences with technology integration training, increased their use of technology in the classroom, and used technology more creativity.

3. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This study aims to examine if using power-point presentations in the classroom can improve the efficiency of English language teaching and learning. It also intends to determine the role of technology on motivation in the language classroom. So the study addresses the following questions:

- Does teaching language using power-point presentations contribute to better learning compared to traditional way of teaching?
- Does the use of technology in classroom have any impact on students' attitudes towards language learning?

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

The participants of this study were selected from a secondary school in Lar, in the south-east of Iran. Fifty-six students were the subjects of this study. They were all girls aged 12-13. The subjects were chosen by an entrance exam, so they were at the same level at the beginning of the academic year. The students were divided into two groups of 28, randomly: Experimental and Control.

4.2. Procedure

Each group was instructed by the researcher (their teacher), separately. The experimental group was exposed to power-point slides and smart-board, whereas the control group was exposed to the textbook and traditional oral

presentation with teacher writing on the board. At the beginning of the year, a pretest was given to both groups and at the end of the year a posttest was given in order to compare the mean scores of the two groups. During the year, the same materials were taught to both groups. A questionnaire of ten (10) statements based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), was administered to the experimental group and then an item analysis was done to find their perceptions about the use of power-point presentations in English classes. The questionnaire was taken from Oommen (2012).

5. Results

The scores of students' pretest and posttest were computed through SPSS 16, and an independent samples t-test analysis showed that at the beginning of the year the two groups did not differ significantly (as shown in Table 1), but results in Table 2 show that the experimental group who was taught with the aid of power-point presentations did better than the control group with traditional way and there is a meaningful distinction between the means of two groups at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the responses given by the experimental group to the questionnaire (summarized in Table 3) show that the majority of learners who exposed to power-point presentations in the classroom, had positive attitudes towards the benefits of them to facilitate learning.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the tests

		Group Statistics			
	Ss	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
First-test	Experimental	28	17.23	1.803	.341
	Control	28	17.29	1.718	.325
Second-test	Experimental	28	19.29	.763	.144
	Control	28	17.39	1.474	.279

The Mean scores of the first test for both groups show that the two groups didn't differ at the beginning of the year, but after the treatment the mean score of the experimental group, show their higher level compared to the control group.

Table 2. Statistics for Independent Sample T-test on Group Means

		Levene's Test for		t-test for Equality of Means						
		Equality of								
		Variances								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
First-test	Equal variances assumed	.216	.644	-.114	54	.910	-.054	.471	-.997	.890
	Equal variances not assumed			-.114	53.876	.910	-.054	.471	-.997	.890
Second-test	Equal variances assumed	12.731	.001	6.034	54	.000	1.893	.314	1.264	2.522
	Equal variances not assumed			6.034	40.494	.000	1.893	.314	1.259	2.527
P < 0.05										

Table 3. Results of the likert-scale questionnaire (N = 28 students)

	SA (5) Strongly Agree	A (4) Agree	U (3) Undecided	D (2) Disagree	SD(1) Strongly Disagree			
statements				SA	A	U	D	SD
1. The lesson with power-point was interesting.				17 61%	9 32%	2 7%	0 -	0 -
2. It was easy to follow and understand.				13 46%	11 39%	3 11%	1 4%	0 -
3. It held my attention throughout the class.				16 57%	9 32%	2 7%	1 4%	0 -
4. It helped me to learn more language elements.				17 61%	10 36%	1 4%	0 -	0 -
5. It required extensive note-taking.				0 -	0 -	4 14%	16 57%	8 29%
6. It helped to use class time efficiently.				11 39%	14 50%	1 4%	2 7%	0 -
7. I prefer lessons without power-point presentations.				0 -	0 -	2 7%	14 50%	12 43%
8. I could take better notes during the lesson.				18 64%	7 25%	2 7%	1 4%	0 -
9. It helped to review key points during the lesson.				16 57%	10 36%	2 7%	0 -	0 -
10. I prefer lessons with power-point.				20 71%	8 29%	1 4%	0 -	0 -

The mean scores ranged from 4.14 to 4.82 on a 5- point scale show high perceptions of the learners towards power-point presentations in the class.

Conclusion

The study results show that technology plays a big role in language classes; it can be used as a tool to facilitate teaching and learning. As one of the most important goals of using new ways of teaching language in secondary schools is to promote students' motivation towards learning, we can see in this study that using power-point presentations operates as a powerful pedagogical tool in English classes. This study supports the effect of superiority of technology-based lessons as compared to traditional lessons. English teachers should consider their students' needs and interests, and the questionnaire results indicate that the majority of the students show their positive perceptions towards using technology in English classes. This study is supported by the results of the earlier studies of Corbeil (2007), Ilter (2009), Oommen (2012), and Wang (2011).

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