

ABSTRACT

English language teachers of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh have the responsibility of teaching English language learners in the classroom according to the prescribed syllabus. But the irony is that the syllabus and text books do not cover all language components. So, English language teaching (ELT) in the classroom only emphasizes certain components of the language. There are some components of language not covered in the syllabus, such as correct pronunciation, vocabulary, paralinguistic features, and activity based teaching. And another related issue is that limited periods have been allocated for the language class. English language teachers mainly focus on reading and writing and listening and speaking skills are less emphasised in the classroom. These are the drawbacks of the situation for students to learn and practice the language in the classroom. Limited time of class, fear of making mistakes and limited classroom practice are the cause of lack of confidence among the students in using the target language. The language learner requires more learning experiences, student and teacher interaction and increased number of periods for developing English language proficiency in the classroom. In the context of Aligarh Muslim University large classrooms are also one of the major problems in teaching and learning the English language, because in such an environment healthy interaction is not possible between teachers and students.

However, these shortcomings can be compensated by the use of **multimedia** inside and outside the English language classroom. The facility of multimedia is provided by Aligarh Muslim University at present through multimedia language labs installed in various institutions and departments. Zakir Hussain Engineering College, Department of English and Department of Linguistics are some of these. Smart classrooms have also been established in these places for special lectures, presentations, for debates and discussions and to provide knowledge from across the globe, to enhance language, soft skills, personality development of students, and to encourage innovative research and teaching skills with the use of multimedia technology.

However researchers have observed that the traditional method of English language classroom teaching and learning can no longer effectively fulfil the communicative needs of the students for language teaching and learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- I. To assess practices of students and teachers with regard to the use of multimedia materials (MMM)
- II. To study students' and teachers' opinions regarding the use of multimedia materials
- III. To examine the current status of MMM in the departments and institutions of Aligarh Muslim University.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the students' and teachers' practices regarding the use of Multimedia Materials (MMM) for learning the English language?
- ii. What are students' and teachers' opinions towards the use of Multimedia Materials?
- iii. What are the problems faced by students in the use of MMM and what are their recommendations for enhancing the facility?
- iv. What is the status of available MMM in different departments and institutions of the university?

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H01: There will be **no significant differences** between MMM user and Non-MMM user students with respect to their **practices** regarding the use of multimedia materials for learning English.

H02: There will be **no significant differences** between MMM user and Non-MMM user students with respect to their **opinions** regarding the use of multimedia materials for learning English.

H03: There will be **no significant differences** in the **practices** of MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers of English language regarding the use of MMM.

H04: There will be **no significant differences** in the **opinions** of MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers of English language regarding the use of MMM.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to highlight the attitudes, practices and opinions of the students and teachers and the current status of the use of multimedia materials at Aligarh Muslim University. This area has not been studied comprehensively earlier for English Language Teaching (ELT). The study also focuses on multimedia learning theory which derives supplementary support from Mayers' cognitive theory of multimedia learning (1997, 2001, and 2002). Multimedia materials especially computer-based technology such as audio, video, picture and animation are significant tools for developing effective communication skills among learners. This study will hopefully encourage and attract the attention of English language teachers and students towards the effective use of multimedia materials for developing English language skills. It is hoped that it will support the ESL teachers in implementing multimedia technology in such a way that will decrease the students' extraneous cognitive load.

RESEARCH METHOD

A descriptive method of research is used for the current study. As this method of research is concerned with surveying, describing and exploring the present status, issues and relation, this technique of research enabled the researcher to explore students' and teachers' practices, opinions and current status of multimedia materials with respect to multimedia users and non-multimedia users.

PARTICIPANTS

The participant of the study consisted of ESL students and teachers of Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh. Students were from undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The sample comprises MMM user and Non MMM user students and teachers. For the study 268 students were selected from the Women's College, Faculty of Arts, Science, Social Science, Commerce and Zakir Hussain Engineering College of AMU, Aligarh and 34 teachers were also selected. Students were studying English as main subject or as a compulsory subject and teachers are teaching English with the use of multimedia and without the use of multimedia materials.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study compared the mean score of MMM user students with Non-multimedia user students and mean score of multimedia materials user teachers with Non-MMM user teachers, to explore the differences among MMM user and Non-multimedia materials user students' and teachers' practices and opinions. Students among MMM users are taught with the help of technology and in the Multimedia language lab and MMM user teachers are those who are using multimedia materials for teaching English language in the language lab. Non-MMM user teachers and students have less exposure to the technology for language teaching and learning process. A survey questionnaire was applied to three variables that are practices, opinions of students and teachers and current status of multimedia materials in AMU.

To compare the mean score of two groups that is MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers and students, a quantitative method was used in the study and Mean (M) variance, standard deviation (SD), degree of freedom (DF), T-value and P-value were used for the descriptive statistics. The hypotheses of the study were tested with the help of paired sample t-test. Moreover, for the statistical calculation SPSS student version 17.0 was applied for Windows.

FINDINGS RELATED TO HYPOTHESIS

1. Findings of the study on students' practices regarding use of MMM show that there is a significant difference in practices ($t=15.058$, $p=0.001<0.05$) between multimedia materials user and Non-multimedia materials user students of English language. The results show that MMM user students have more positive practices towards the use of multimedia materials than Non-multimedia user students. Moreover the above results also make it clear that the MMM users make much more use of multimedia materials for learning English language than non-multimedia users. Thus our hypothesis H_{01} , stating that there is **no significant** difference between MMM user and Non-MMM user students with respect to their practices for the use of multimedia materials for learning English language is rejected.
2. Results revealed that there is no significant variation in the opinions ($t= 1.443$, $p=0.150>0.05$) between multimedia materials users and non- multimedia

materials user students of English language. The results demonstrate that both multimedia and non-multimedia user students have positive opinions towards the use of multimedia technology for learning English. Thus, our hypothesis H_{02} , stating that there will be no significant difference between MMM user and Non-MMM user students with respect to their opinions regarding the use of learning English language is accepted.

3. Further, findings of the study on teachers' practices towards use of MMM show that there is a significant **difference** in the score of MMM user (Mean=58.92, SD= 10.23) and Non-MMM user teachers (Mean=47.60, SD= 12.54) practices because t-test value is ($t=2.78$) and significant value is ($p=0.009$) which is lower than the level of significance ($p < 0.05$). So, there is a significant difference found. The result reveals that MMM user teachers have more positive attitudes and practices towards MMM for teaching English language in comparison to Non-MMM user teachers. Consequently, our hypothesis H_{03} , stating that there will be no significant difference in the attitudes and practices between MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers of English language regarding the use of MMM is rejected.
4. As the outcome of the comparative analysis reveals, there is no significant difference in the opinions of MMM user (Mean=54.50, SD= 3.87) and Non-MMM user teachers (Mean=55.70, SD= 10.13) because t-test value is ($t=-0.42$) and significant value is ($p=0.67$) greater than the level of significance ($p > 0.05$). So, there is no significant difference found. The results show that both MMM user teacher Non-MMM have positive opinions towards the application of MMM for learning English language. Therefore, our hypothesis H_{04} , stating that there will be no significant difference in the opinions between MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers of English language regarding the use of MMM is accepted. The finding from the data analysis reveal that majority of the English language students and teachers of Aligarh Muslim University have positive opinions towards the use of multimedia materials for teaching and learning English language and many have positive practices too.
5. Findings related to the current status of MMM: Responses of 94% students and 100% teachers confirmed that a well-established multimedia language lab exists

in the Department of English, Linguistics and Zakir Hussain College of Engineering and technology of Aligarh Muslim University. But facilities in the multimedia labs are not up to the mark. There is a need to improve the condition of existing multimedia language labs. Classroom activities with MMM are not mentioned in the syllabus. Existing software and hardware need to update. In addition to this, well trained teachers and lab attendants are not provided in the lab. Language lab classes are only two hours per week. The number of lab classes should be increased to about twelve hours per week. In addition to this, majority of students and teachers are not satisfied with the existing number of computers in their Language Lab and teachers and students do not have access to e-books on ESL/EFL with technology. They also reported that the multimedia lab is usually equipped with internet connectivity. But majority of them are not satisfied with current facilities of internet connectivity in the lab. So the authorities of the institutions should take it into their consideration.

The use of information communication technology (ICT) was emphasised in the National policy on educational framework in 1986 and was modified in 1992. The modified version also underscored using educational technology to promote the quality of teaching and learning process. This was also included in the XIIth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) to improve the quality of the higher education system in India, and was advocated by the University Grant Commission (UGC).

But in between, the Planning Commission of India which used to draft the five year plans had been dissolved and its place the NITI Aayog or National Institution for Transforming India has taken the responsibility. So, NITI Aayog may take some time to put everything in place in the new setup of UGC, before leading forward from where the objective of National Mission on the use of ICT policy (2012) in higher education had left it.

The researcher hopes that the “Digital India” initiatives by the Hon’ble Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi will be able to facilitate the integration of multimedia technology with traditional teaching into all classrooms in general and in the language classroom in particular. All Universities and colleges, at least the Universities of National Importance and Colleges of Excellence, after the visit of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) will train their teachers and staff and

restore multimedia language labs and organise soft skill activities for students and teachers whenever possible, even when the existing syllabus does not requires it.

THESIS STRUCTURE

Introduction: This is the introductory part of the thesis which specifies the problems, basic understanding of the term multimedia materials, and objectives of the study, research questions, hypotheses of the study, definition of the key terms and thesis structure.

Chapter 1. This chapter is entitled “Literature Review-I: Theoretical background” of the study. It deals with the basic concepts regarding multimedia materials such as, meaning, definitions, major components and types of multimedia materials. It also discusses historical background of multimedia materials , social software and free and open content for language learning such as web 2.0, social networking sites and mobile learning.

Chapter 2. This chapter titled “Literature Review-II: Application of Multimedia Materials in Teaching and Learning at Universities”. It deals with the National Policy on Education (1986) , its vision, mission and policy goal and steps taken by the government of India to use ICT. Moreover, it also gives a brief description of private institutes and companies which are providing ICT infrastructure for study. Further, this chapter highlights the application MMM for learning and teaching of different language skills and the justification for using multimedia technology in the educational set up.

Chapter 3. The title of this chapter is “Literature Review-III: Psycholinguistic and Sociocultural Perspectives on Multimedia Learning”. It discusses Mayer’s multimedia learning theory and principles of multimedia technology for second language acquisition. With the help of multimedia materials which use words, pictures and videos the learner is provided with meaningful “input” and facilities for interaction and collaboration which facilitate meaningful “output”. Moreover, the chapter has also explored different studies on second language acquisition with multimedia materials and advocated a model of cognitive processing in second language acquisition which is centred on interaction model and cognitive theory of multimedia learning (CTML).

Chapter 4. This chapter mainly deals with the methodology of the empirical study. It describes the context of the study, participants, data collection instruments, data collection process, data analysis techniques and demographic analysis of participants. The methods used for the study is also justified.

Chapter 5. This chapter deals with the analysis of results from responses received from the MMM user and Non-MMM user students on the questionnaire on their practices and opinions regarding the use of MMM. In addition to this, comparison of mean scores of practices and opinions of MMM users and Non-MMM user students are also presented.

Chapter 6. Similarly, this chapter deals with the analysis of results from responses received from the MMM user and Non-MMM user teachers on the questionnaire on practices and opinions regarding use of MMM. In addition to this, comparison of mean scores of practices and opinions of MMM users and Non-MMM user teachers presented.

Chapter 7. This chapter gives a description of the current status of multimedia materials in the departments and institutions of AMU based on quantitative data received from teachers and students. It describes the context of study, participants, data collection instrument, procedure and results. The analysis of results is shown in tabular and bar graph form with proper explanation along in words with key findings.

Conclusion: This section presents the summary of key findings of students and teachers responses. Findings related to research questions and hypotheses are revisited. In addition to this, it highlights the general implications of the study for teaching language with MMM, provides some suggestions and acknowledges the limitations of the study.