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Fostering legal language skills of rural law students through multimedia: An experimental study

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Abstract--It is said that education is the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another. India, once a land of high learning is now on its way struggling to impart quality education to all its countrymen. While the standard of education in cities is competing with international standards, the education in rural areas remains restricted to blackboard and books. Although the teachers make considerable use of blackboard, charts, models etc., they lack in the usage of technology with which they can enhance the learning process as well as acquisition process of a language. Teachers in general made little use of computer facilities such as the World Wide Web and e-mail. The usage of video materials and foreign films is popular to an extent among them. Teacher's level of education and teaching experience too accounts for some of the differences in the frequency with which teachers used technology. It is clear that foreign language teachers need to improve their knowledge of how to integrate technology with other activities in classroom instruction. This need could be met by including 'Technology in Classroom' in the courses for pre-service and in-service teachers. This paper focuses on some of the ways of using technology in rural areas effectively. It also aims to

apply the Activity Based Language Teaching method in the environment of learning through multimedia.

Keywords---activity-based language teaching, multimedia education, rural law students, language acquisition.

Introduction

The rural law students have knowledge over the subject but they could not express through writing or speaking in the foreign language, since they lack in communication skills. They struggle and search for words to communicate because both the teachers and students lack in the usage of technology. Multimedia media helps to provide a better education to the rural law students.

Significance of the Study

Multimedia is content that uses a combination of different content forms such as text, audio, images, animations, video and interactive content. Multimedia learning has come to play a central role in improving communication skill of the rural law students. Multimedia learning materials act as a medium for information and communication to the masses and predicted to retain its significance and strength. In particular, its reach and efficacy as an educational medium is finding increasing relevance in the wake of information explosion and multiplication of choices available to a student in recent times.

Why do they need e-resources?

Television is used for entertainment purpose and practically does not have any intensive educational effect. Some channels telecast qualitative educational programme for the students. There are many creative advertisements that promote the imagination, creative thought process and crisp language. The innovative slogans of the advertisements induce the ground-breaking thoughts of the students to write and to speak. The computer is used for both educational and entertainment and its user necessarily need to exercise logical-symbolic, algorithmic thinking and communicate with the machine in a formal language. Chat sessions are ready to lend a hand to improve their writing skill. Videos from social network sites endow with creative and moral thoughts to speak.

Learning Difficulties of Rural Law Students

The rural law students are facing learning difficulties in the rural law classroom especially in expressing themselves. Some of them are discussed below:

- They feel shy to speak in front of the class because of their poor communication and they withdraw themselves.
- They are in need of motivation from the teachers.
- They feel bored with the conventional teaching.
- Though they have innovative thoughts, they are not able to express in writing.

Some suggestions for the rural law teachers to perform better by using electronic resources:

- Teach with outlines, slides, statistical charts and tables, images, music, and even video clips.
- Make the students watch the creative advertisements on television and to speak on their own.
- Formulate them to participate in electronic discussion groups to improve their writing.
- Craft them to perform more independent exercises in publishing and to present other materials for their peers.

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

- To find out the effectiveness of multimedia learning materials in developing the communication skill of the rural law learners.
- To improve and test their writing skill through questionnaire.
- To compare the efficiency of multimedia learning materials in teaching with that of traditional method of teaching in enhancing their communication skill.
- To find out the difference between the performances of the learners in the pre-test and the post test.

Sample of the Study

The first year rural law college students were chosen for the study. The sample of the study consisted of twenty five students of rural law college students at various districts. The sample included both boys and girls. The rural law teachers use web as a teaching aid to teach the subject but not to improve the communication skills of students. Both the teacher and the students are not properly utilizing electronic media to teach and learn communication skills. The rural law students are from the poor background. Most of the students will be the first graduates in their family. They do not have exposure of using technology and media for developing communication skill.

Limitations of the Study

The study has the following limitations:

- The size of the sample is only twenty five students of rural law students.
- The study was conducted with rural law college boys and girls from various districts.
- Only four activities were conducted to enhance the speaking skill of the learners and also to find the difference between their performances in pre-test and post-test.

Tools Used

The following tools were used for the study:

- Multimedia Learning materials (MLM) such images, text, audio, animations and videos were collected to develop communication skill of the learners.
- A questionnaire is used to test their level of writing.

Methodology

To design the activities for developing communication skills of rural law students, the Multimedia Learning Materials such as video, images, audios, adds, text etc. based on their syllabus and curriculum were collected. Pre-test was conducted to test their performance level with reference to their communication skills. Activities were implemented as a pathway to achieve the higher level performance in post-test.

Activity-1

Aim : To improve speaking skill
 E-media : Television
 E-resources : Silent Videos based on their syllabus
 Process : The students are asked to watch the videos and to speak for three minutes on their own. They are asked to give a conclusion
 Effect : They are interested in watching videos and come forward to speak.

Activity-2

Aim : To improve writing skill
 E-media : Television
 E-resources : Newspaper articles with pictures
 Process : The students are asked to observe the pictures and to frame the story on their own within five minutes
 Effect : They are fascinated in observing the pictures and able to write the story.

Activity-3

Aim : To improve speaking skill
 E-media : Computer (web)
 E-resources : Current issues and flash news
 Process : The students are asked to watch the video and to speak the story on their own within five minutes. They are asked to give a title for their speech.
 Effect : They find difficult to discern first but after watching the video for the second time they are able to guess and speak.

Activity-4

Aim : To improve writing skill
 E-media : Computer (web)
 E-resources : Chat session through social networking sites
 Process : The students are given five questions. They are asked to guess and write any answer. They have to frame a story based on their five answers.

Effect : Though they could not write the story with structure, they have capacity to frame a story.

Result

Based on the feedback of the learners, it is concluded that the rural law learners are more interested in learning through multimedia than the traditional classroom method of teaching. It is also observed that the creativity of the learners is improved.

Hypothesis

There is a significant difference between the performance of the rural law learners in the entry test and the exit test with respect to their communication skill.

Sample	Level	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	Calculated 't' value	Df	Significance
Rural law Students	Entry	25	2.75	0.36	-3.66	-45.34	25	.000*
	Exit	25	6.42	0.70				

Performance of the rural law learners in the Entry and the Exit Test

*Significant at 0.05 level.

The table indicates that the calculated 't' value is -45.34. The associated p value is .000 and it is significant at 0.05 level. The mean value is increased from 2.75 out of 10 to 6.42 and the mean difference value is -3.66. The higher mean value in the exit test shows that the performance level of the rural law learners with regard to their communication skill is higher in the exit test when compared to the entry test. Thus it could be inferred that the multimedia helps the rural law learners in improving the communication skill.

Summation

Using multimedia in the rural law classroom increases the exposure of both the teachers and the students. It arouses curiosity among the students and vanishes their shyness. Their quality of writing is improved through creative advertisements, innovative videos and chat sessions. They come forward to speak because of their interest and motivation from the teachers. As it increases the involvement of the students, the learning process becomes easier and successful. Hence the rural law students acquire communication skills through learning process by using electronic media in the rural law classrooms.

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