

M-Learning: Promoting Language Assessment through Video Recording

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ABSTRACT

M-Learning (mobile learning) is an important mean of self-learning. This paper points out that it is necessary to combine traditional guidance teaching and learning assessment, as M-learning can improve and enrich traditional assessment content. To implement personalized education, this paper further puts forward the magnitude of establishing the learning-growth evaluation system through M-learning, as the learning-growth evaluation helps the language instructor to analyse the mobile learning assessment outcome. The learning-growth evaluation should be designed around the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain. Through the assessment of learning-growth, the educators obtain students' learning credits through data analysis, which unveil their learning preferences and unobserved areas, from where personalized learning can be piloted to. The research design for this study is a descriptive survey using convenience sampling. 40 Semester One students from Diploma in Digital Technology of Politeknik Besut Terengganu were chosen. They were divided into 10 groups of 4 respectively and instructed to work on a role-playing project using mobile technologies for 3 weeks. There is no specific online video applications was selected as a platform for the study. Students are free to choose any free available video editing applications from the browser. The data were analysed using the percentage mean. The finding reported that M-learning produced positive impacts to both students and language instructors. Moreover, based on these analysis data, future education resources can be restructured.

Keywords: Mobile Learning, Blended Learning, Language Assessment, Video Recording, Learning Growth Evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

M-Learning has become the in-thing recently due to the rise of "mobile internet". Since this era of scholastic transformation, educational institutions are determined to digitize education, e-learning, distance learning and mobile learning which permits the use of technology that grants knowledge anytime and anywhere (Bukharaev and Altaher, 2017). Mobile learning is an area that will certainly continue to grow, both in and outside the classroom. This is due to the accessibility and promptness of information shared within the respected groups simultaneously. Mobile learning allows us to extend the scope of education beyond the physical confines of a classroom. A person can access quality content from home or office, communicate with a large community of learners and teachers, and work online. The value of mobile learning is that it allows instructors, students, and common people to communicate, collaborate and develop new ideas using sound digital resources.

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M-learning essentially derived from blended learning which uses portable devices such as mobile phones and portable digital assistants (PDAs). Wikipedia has come up with one practical and relevant definition of the term mobile learning, "*learning that happens when the learner takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies*". The definition of M-learning according to Baran (2014) in Pedro et al. (2018) highlighted constructive elements such as "mobility (Sharples et al., 2009), access (Parsons and Ryu, 2006), immediacy (Kynaslahti, 2003), situativity (Cheon, Lee, Crooks, and Song, 2012), ubiquity (Kukulka-Hulme et al., 2009), convenience (Kynaslahti, 2003), and contextuality (Kearney, Schuck, Burden, and Aubusson, 2012)". These different stresses and weights reflect both the expected and unexpected impacts of the introduction of digital technologies in the teaching and learning process.

Mobile technologies comprise of some or all of these devices: mobile phones, smartphones, PDAs, netbooks/notebooks/laptops, tablet PCs, mp3 players, eBook readers, etc. Mobile devices have the power to create effective collaboration between groups of people. Learners can learn through discussion forums, blogs, social sites where ideas and information can be shared with great ease. As technology is becoming mainstream, the learning efficacy will increase, and the training cost will be reduced.

Mobile learning focuses on the use of available technology with wireless communications to deliver information outside of the classroom. Technological advancement of cellular phones and the application that sustain, has increased the ownership by young people and considerable cost to equip the learning institutions with computers, consent to use the cellular phones to school and provide training of technological tools as necessary, practical and feasible (Bukharaev and Altaher, 2017). New technology has enhanced our learning capacity through smart mobile phones. Mobile phones have completely dominated our lives from communication and entertainment to socializing and learning. Smartphones have been widely used to access YouTube videos, surf the web, their email, video calls, etc.

Learning through interactive apps is increasingly gaining acceptance as an effective teaching and learning tool within the education and training community because of its simplicity, cost-effectiveness, and mainly because most people prefer playing over learning. Video is a powerful tool for language assessments. Through the implementation of digital video recordings using mobile gadgets, the instructor can witness many aspects of students' learning growth as well as get a full view of their cognitive, psychomotor and affective development. The creation of video for assessment has been practised by the researcher since 2009 when the researcher who is a language instructor noticed that the students show deep interests and more comfortable when the assessment is done outside the classroom and in contrast, they become "freezing" when they need to present "live repertoire" for classroom presentation assessment. The students feel "insecure" when their classmates are giving attention to their presentation session in the classroom. This insecurity feelings derived from lack of confidence to use the target language freely, mother tongue interference and pronunciation problem.

Since then, the language instructor changes the style of assessing the students' presentation. Instead of applying the conventional way of doing live presentation individually or by a group to come in front and present their speech/roleplay, the students are required to prepare a short digital video (DV) on a specified topic/situation given. They will be given about 3 weeks to plan, revise and record the video before download the final recording into YouTube platform. The students just need to submit the group members' details (name, students' number, synopsis of the video and roles of each member) and the YouTube link to the language instructor before the due date. Previously, the recording was submitted through CD to the instructor but later the approach was changed. The submission of digital video recording through a YouTube link is very feasible as it is accessible, quick and cost-saving for the students. The instructor has received very positive feedback from the students regarding the new approach of this speaking assessment.

2. OBJECTIVES

The benefit of student-generated digital video (DV) assessment has been promoted by various education researchers such as Schuck and Kearney (2004) and Shewbridge and Berge (2004). These constructionist learning tasks (Harel and Papert, 1991) can improve a wide range of learning outcomes from the expansion of conventional and new literacy skills, to affective benefits. They can boost a rich, authentic learning proficiency, fostering student autonomy and ownership, significant student roles and interactions, especially when students are allowed to confer and commemorate their products with the pertinent audience (Kearney and Schuck, 2006).

Knowing the benefits of creating student-generated video from previous research, the instructor planned to apply the same approach for her students. The survey has been carried out with four main objectives;

- a. to boost students' motivation in dealing with speaking assessment
- b. to enhance students' confidence in using English
- c. to cultivate teamwork, creativity, higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) among students
- d. to improve students' editing skills using video apps

3. METHODS

A few researchers have developed helpful frameworks for DV. Theodosakis (2001) promoted 5 useful stages for video-making in the classroom: development, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. However, Hoban (2009) suggested a 4-stage learning design emphasizing a specific genre of DV assignments: learner-generated slow-motion animations (or 'slowmations'). The stages included planning, storyboarding, construction and reconstruction. This paper introduces a 3-stages process in creating the video. The language instructor will brief the students about the process and output from this assignment. The rubric will be explained thoroughly to make sure they understand the learning outcomes from this assessment, how they will be assessed, what specific criteria that they need to focus on and grading for this video assessment.

The students need to follow 3 main stages in creating the video set by the language instructor. The stages are to be followed by all groups of students to ensure the quality and appropriateness of the plot/storyline chosen. The process is divided into three stages as follows:

a) Planning, drafting and revising

Students are supposed to prepare a digital video based on the topics/subtopics suggested in their syllabus. The students are assigned to work into groups where they can choose their preferred team member. They are given about two days only to brainstorm their specific topic/situation before consultation session with respective language lecturer. Mind maps and other organizers were used as a planning tool to brainstorm ideas and for the storyboard. At the initial development of ideas and storyboarding stages, teacher scaffolding and modelling are important. A wide degree of choice enhanced student ownership of their projects; including choice of content, roles and if appropriate, movie genre. During consultation hour, each group needs to present their ideas and explains the rationale also provide the suggestion of props or location. Once the instructor is satisfied with the ideas, they can proceed to the next stage, which is scriptwriting.

b) Scriptwriting, revising and script editing

This stage normally takes a bit longer time as the students need to prepare the scripts or arrangements of plots accordingly to the scene. All scripts will be reviewed through peer assessment. The choice of student peers as the target audience was a major source of student motivation in this study and encouraged the use of humour and appropriate language in their final production. The script must be sent together with the final video recording as the instructor's reference.

c) Video shooting and video editing

The students are given about 1 week to shoot their video task based upon instructor's approval of the script. Students need to be accountable for their final storyboard and should be prepared for 're-story boarding': editing and re-editing their plan before filming. The possibility of later editing of digital stories as part of long-term professional learning portfolio development. More opportunities for students to review and change their work as necessary after the teacher facilitated the class discussions and peer feedback. They can ask other students to be supporting actor or actresses if possible but marks are only given to the group members. All group members must play a role in acting.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Ohler (2006), many other advantages are reported in recent literature, ranging from the development of academic skills such as critical thinking, report writing and research skills; to digital, oral and written literacies use of appropriate instruments such as assessment rubrics has been recommended. This survey has divided the results/impacts of using DV for language assessments into three categories: students, language instructors and institution.

a) Students

Based on data from a quick survey done by the instructor, 89% stated that doing presentation assessment through video-making is very interesting and motivating. They love acting very much and felt less boring instead of traditional oral presentation. They also found their relationship with their classmates was getting closer upon completing the task. 98% of the students agreed that planning stages was very crucial of all stages as it will anchor them for the next stages. 78% presented that the stages were quite taxing which need them to redo and revise before they get the instructor's approval. Somehow they found the processes were very helpful as the instructor gave them specific comments on do's and don'ts related to their specific situation.

The immediate feedback and individual responses on a one-to-one basis received from the instructor and peers to each student when they reviewed their films, as well as the capacity to later edit their errors, helped students and instructors felt calmer and at ease with this open-ended approach to learning saves more time compared to written feedback.

The autonomous style of learning supported by these open-ended tasks required a significant degree of flexibility from the instructor as students created their learning pathways at their own pace. Indirectly, students' soft skills were also improved.

This video-making assessment is much recommended for oral presentation skills as it can also be used to see how thorough a student understood a concept, how they captured and shared their ideas as well as how they were handling problems occurs during the video-making process.

The extemporaneous consequence of this video-making assessment was a persistent practice where the recording process took several times because the students wanted them to look and sound great on camera which further enhances learning through repetition and revision.

The implementation of video-making assessment opened up a new way of evaluating students with different strengths as it accommodates different learning styles. The instructor noticed that some did better with written communication (scriptwriting) while others were good at verbal communication.

The instructor also noticed that the students were more empowered when they were presenting themselves. When their face was attached to the masterpiece, the instructor could detect that they were not just a name on the test sheet, so they became more dedicated to the assessment tasks.

b) Language instructor

Based on the language instructor's observation, students' motivation was improved compared to the conventional practice of normal classroom oral presentation. According to Lewis (2009), video-based assessment allowed the instructors to get and provide individual responses of each student. Faster grading could be done as the feedback was given simultaneously to the respective students when the video was played. They would get more, relevant, timely and richer feedback compared to written feedback

The students' work portrayed good teamwork has been set up to create video materials. It proved that the students have gone through steps and learn the language aspects indirectly which gave them less stress condition. Indeed, most of the successful lessons observed from this survey involved the instructor displaying a high degree of flexibility in the classroom to encourage student-initiatives and self-direction.

c) Impact on the course/institution

The creation of a digital video movie using mobile gadgets has helped a lot in time management of both instructor and students. Due to time constraints and packed schedule, the assessment can be done at students' pace and specific time. The submission of students' work through YouTube link was really helpful as its accessibility at no specific time or place. Hence, the students will give their best commitment to produce a good piece of work to be downloaded from YouTube. The short video uploaded also can be used for later improvements of both instructors' classroom instruction and for students' analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

Mobile learning has many educational advantages that facilitate the learning process, cheap, obtainable, accessible and quick speed of access anywhere and anytime. Through the mobile phone, the instructor can provide valuable educational experiences and learning materials that meet the needs of each student and circumstances. Growing ownership by the students, make the introduction of mobile education constructs a new form of a distance education system which is more desirable, viable and feasible.

Even this new approach of classroom oral presentation has brought positive changes to the students, it also has some drawbacks. The lecturer is unable to detect students' weaknesses as they are allowed to re-shoot the scenes as many time as they can within the time frame. Therefore, the lecturer must find ways to detect students' weakness as a room for improvement and self-development.

Instructors and students also need to be conscious of the intellectual property issues that arise if digital stories include copyrighted images, music, video or text (ELI website, 2007). Emphasis may be shifted from a descriptive survey to a more in-depth study because such studies will focus on a particular specific attribute as the independent variables instead of the medium itself. Such studies should also examine students' capacity in relation to the use of any medium for feedback in peer assessment.

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