



Rethinking Tertiary Speaking Skill Development through Edutainment in a Technology-Driven Age

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Abstract

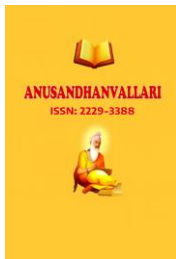
Higher education language learning methods have been drastically altered by the increasing use of digital technologies. This study investigates how the use of edutainment in a technologically advanced age can enhance the development of speaking skills among postsecondary students. The study explores how interactive digital tools, game-based learning, and multimedia platforms can provide students with relevant and interesting opportunities to practice oral communication, going beyond traditional classroom methods. It makes the case that edutainment encourages confidence, spontaneity, and active engagement in speaking assignments in addition to lowering students' fear. The study emphasizes how incorporating fun into education helps close the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical communication, based on student reactions and classroom observations. The results imply that students are more inclined to experiment with language and openly express their thoughts when they are in a laid-back yet intentional learning setting. The study comes to the conclusion that the typical language classroom may be transformed into a dynamic setting that fosters communicative competence and gets students ready for interactions in the real world by carefully incorporating edutainment tactics.

Keywords: Edutainment, Speaking Skills, Tertiary Level, Digital Learning, Communication, Language Teaching, Student Engagement

Introduction

Speaking abilities have become more important in higher education in recent years, especially in light of the world's growing interconnectedness and reliance on technology. Students at the postsecondary level are increasingly expected to successfully convey ideas in social, professional, and academic contexts rather than only gain theoretical information. Despite this increasing demand, many students still have difficulty communicating orally, frequently as a result of their lack of exposure, insecurity, and nervousness about speaking in a second language. Traditional classroom practices, which tend to emphasize rote learning and written examinations, frequently fail to address these challenges in a meaningful way.

The advent of digital technologies has made it possible to learn languages in innovative ways and to go beyond traditional pedagogies. In this regard, edutainment a method that combines education and entertainment has started to garner interest as a practical way to improve speaking abilities. Edutainment produces an engaging and productive learning environment by combining components like interactive media, storytelling, games, and digital platforms. As noted by Jeremy Harmer, meaningful communication in the classroom depends largely on student engagement and the opportunity to practice language in authentic contexts (Harmer 123).



Furthermore, as students are now fully engaged in digital worlds, incorporating technology into language instruction is in line with modern learning preferences. Learners can practice spoken English in a variety of customizable ways through platforms including video-sharing websites, language study apps, and online discussion boards. According to Jack C. Richards, effective language teaching must adapt to learners' needs and contexts, emphasizing interaction and real-life communication (Richards 45). Edutainment, in this sense, offers a bridge between structured learning and spontaneous expression.

However, it is impossible to ignore the affective aspect of language acquisition. When asked to speak in English, many pupils feel apprehensive and afraid, which frequently impedes their development. Edutainment helps to lessen this worry and motivates students to engage more fully by offering fun and stress-free activities. H. Douglas Brown highlights the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment where learners feel comfortable experimenting with language (Brown 67). Therefore, by investigating how edutainment, bolstered by digital tools, may convert the language classroom into a dynamic and inclusive place, this project aims to reinvent speaking skill development at the university level. It seeks to investigate how well these methods work as well as how they could change students' perspectives about speaking.

Methodology

The current study uses a qualitative methodology to investigate how edutainment affects postsecondary students' speaking abilities. Undergraduate students with an English language background participated in the study, which was carried out in a collegiate context. In order to ensure a wide representation of learner experiences, individuals with varying levels of speaking skill were chosen using a purposive sampling technique.

A number of classroom interventions were used throughout the course of the several-week trial. The goal of these interventions was to incorporate edutainment-based techniques into everyday speaking exercises. The researcher used interactive exercises including role-plays, digital storytelling, group discussions based on video clips, and language games enabled by mobile applications in place of just typical lecture techniques. These exercises were thoughtfully designed to promote impromptu speech while preserving a safe and encouraging atmosphere.

The main methods used to gather data were informal feedback, student participation, and classroom observation. To record shifts in student participation, self-assurance, and general success on speaking assignments, the researcher kept thorough field notes. Students' brief reflection answers were also gathered in order to learn how they felt about the edutainment-based strategy. These responses offered insightful information about how students felt about the transition from traditional teaching techniques to more participatory, technology-assisted ways.

Similar speaking exercises were carried out both before and after the implementation of edutainment techniques to guarantee consistency. This made it possible for the researcher to spot improvement trends and pinpoint particular areas where pupils showed discernible growth. Fluency, clarity of expression, desire to contribute, and conversational sustainability were all given special consideration.

The study also took into account how digital technologies might help with learning. Students were able to connect with language in a contextualized way because to the utilization of platforms that permitted audio-visual interaction. The incorporation of these technologies was viewed as an essential component of the learning process rather than as a stand-alone element. Both the experienced and observable aspects of learning were intended to be captured by the methodology. The study attempts to provide a grounded understanding of how edutainment can impact speaking ability development at the tertiary level by concentrating on actual classroom practices and student responses.



Results and Findings

The study's conclusions demonstrate a definite and positive change in students' speaking skills following the use of edutainment-based teaching methods. The increase in student participation was one of the most noticeable developments. Students who had previously stayed mute or unwilling started to participate more voluntarily in speaking exercises, particularly when the tasks included engaging and interactive components. Digital media, brief video instructions, and game-based activities seemed to foster a more laid-back and welcoming classroom environment where students could express themselves without always worrying about making mistakes. This observation resonates with the idea that engaging learning environments can significantly influence learner involvement (Dörnyei 78).

The discernible increase in students' self-confidence was another significant breakthrough. When the focus switched from grammatical accuracy to meaningful communication, several participants reported feeling less nervous during speaking exercises. They were encouraged to experiment with language as a result of this shift in emphasis, which gradually improved their coherence and fluency. Storytelling and role-playing exercises were especially successful because they gave students a regulated but adaptable environment in which to arrange their ideas and express them more clearly. Such findings align with the view that communicative competence develops more effectively in interactive and low-pressure settings (Thornbury 56).

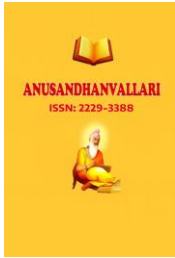
Additionally, the study indicates that edutainment improves language usage and retention. Students were able to relate new words and expressions to actual circumstances since the exercises were grounded in context and experience. They were able to use language more naturally in interactions and learn more meaningfully as a result. Additionally, keeping students interested was greatly aided by the incorporation of technology. By adding variety to classroom activities and improving comprehension, audio-visual components made learning more engaging and relatable. As observed by Mayer, multimedia learning environments can deepen understanding by combining visual and verbal inputs (Mayer 102).

The results indicate that edutainment positively influences speaking skill development by increasing engagement, reducing anxiety, and encouraging active participation in the learning process.

Discussion

The results of this study highlight the important impact that edutainment can play in changing the development of speaking abilities at the postsecondary level. The change in classroom dynamics is one of the most noteworthy results. Edutainment-based approaches enable students to actively participate in their own learning, in contrast to traditional methods that frequently present them as passive listeners. In addition to increasing engagement, this change transforms the teacher's function from merely imparting knowledge to that of a facilitator who directs interaction. A learner-centered approach like this is indicative of broader shifts in modern language instruction.

One important thing that comes out of the conversation is that students are less anxious. Students' motivation to communicate can be hampered by their reluctance and worry of receiving a poor grade when speaking in a second language. Edutainment contributes to the creation of a less scary and more encouraging environment by combining aspects of play, creativity, and digital involvement. Even if they make mistakes, kids feel more at ease playing with language in such environments. This observation supports the argument that emotional factors play a crucial role in language acquisition, particularly in developing speaking skills (Dörnyei 92).



Careful consideration should also be given to how technology supports edutainment. Access to a multitude of resources that might enhance education and offer real-world communication situations is made possible by digital tools. However, how these technologies are used has a big impact on how effective they are. Technology must be carefully used into the classroom to encourage engagement and meaningful language use; it does not automatically boost learning outcomes. As Mayer suggests, the success of multimedia learning lies in its purposeful design rather than mere technological presence (Mayer 118).

The study also highlights certain real-world issues. Larger-scale edutainment-based strategy implementation might need more time, institutional support, and training. To create engaging and instructive activities, teachers must possess both pedagogical inventiveness and technology proficiency. Even with these limitations, edutainment's overall effects are still very favorable.

Essentially, edutainment offers a framework that is adaptive and flexible enough to meet the needs of modern learners. By putting communication, engagement, and connection first, it addresses many of the limitations associated with traditional teaching methods and opens new pathways for effective speaking skill development (Thornbury 89).

Pedagogical Implications

The report makes a number of useful recommendations for tertiary English language instruction. First, teachers ought to think about making edutainment-based activities a regular part of their lesson plans. These exercises can be used to supplement conventional techniques rather than completely replace them, resulting in a more well-rounded approach to language learning.

Second, specific instructional goals should direct the incorporation of digital instruments. Instead of encouraging passive consumption, educators should choose materials that foster engagement and meaningful discussion. Teachers can acquire the skills necessary to use these tools efficiently with the aid of training programs and seminars.



Establishing encouraging learning settings that promote experimentation and innovation is crucial, and institutions should understand this. They can assist students in gaining the competence and self-assurance necessary to communicate successfully in a global setting by promoting a culture of involvement and teamwork.

Conclusion

The study concludes by showing that, in a technologically advanced age, edutainment presents a viable strategy for improving speaking abilities among postsecondary students. It addresses both the cognitive and emotive aspects of language learning by fusing instructional goals with interesting and interactive techniques. The results reveal that students react favorably to these methods, exhibiting more engagement, self-assurance, and fluency. The potential advantages of edutainment cannot be disregarded, notwithstanding ongoing implementation and scalability issues. It offers a method to rethink the language classroom as a vibrant, welcoming environment where students may meaningfully improve their communication skills. Adopting cutting-edge, student-centered strategies like edutainment will be crucial as higher education develops to equip students to handle the challenges of the contemporary world.

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