

Using Computer Assisted Language Learning for Improving Learners Linguistic Competence

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History</p> <p>Received: January 24, 2021</p> <p>Accepted: April 07, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords : Computer Assisted Language Learning; Learners' Linguistics Competence</p> <p>DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4670422</p>	<p><i>Developing Linguistic competence has always been a problem for second language learners and especially for English learners. Linguistic competence includes lexical, phonological and syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of Language as a system. Learners are not given enough knowledge about how to use the language appropriately and even if they do learn to use it appropriately they are unable to decide when, where and how to use the knowledge. Many language teachers have tried improving learner's communicative competence in language classrooms by creating situations, or through role plays but the problem remains the same because the real life like situations can never be created in a language classroom. On the other hand, Computer Assisted Language Learning materials use authentic as well as real life situations to improve students Linguistics competence through making learners interact with native English speakers, by listening to authentic dialogue and then responding to it, by reading authentic material close to social life and then responding to it either orally or in the written form etc. It not helps students to use language correctly but also appropriately because language learned through CALL is unconscious.</i></p> <p><i>Based upon data collected through questionnaires, observation sheet and interviews; current research has found that most of the students were satisfied with learning language through CALL instead of the traditional language classroom. Not only they enjoyed learning a language but improved their language skills and especially listening and speaking skills.</i></p>

Introduction

In this evolving world of learning, as teachers we need something different to drive our students to success. The idea that learning can take place in classroom merely has changed. Now learning can happen anywhere, at any time. Thanks to advances in online technologies, learning has become more flexible, convenient and accessible to students than before (Tinti-Kane, 2014). The significant role that computers play in English language teaching and learning is best understood in terms of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) (Ifioma, 2010).

Communicative language competence can be considered as comprising several components: Linguistic, Sociolinguistic and Pragmatic. Each of these components is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge and skills and know-how (Azlisham et al., 2021). Linguistics Competence in particular means improving learner's Linguistic Competence through the use of computers and Internet which is commonly known as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Linguistic competence usually means knowledge and ability to use language including well-structured sentences to convey messages (Fauziyana et al., 2021). Using well-structured and well conveyed language has always been a problem for second language learners and especially for English learners in Pakistan. One of the basic reasons is that they are unable to interpret the sentence in the target language properly which is most of the time misleading (Rosnee et al., 2021). On the other hand Computer Assisted Language Learning materials use authentic as well as real life situations to improve students Linguistic competence through making learners interact with native English speakers, by listening to authentic dialogue and then responding to it, by reading authentic material close to social life and then responding to it either orally or in the written form etc. (Europe, 2001)

1. Literature Review

2.1 Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

CALL involves learning that is enhanced by using computer programs. It is becoming popular in language classes as the use of computers and related technological gadgets is increasing. Computers have taken their place as a natural part of the language learning process (Warschauer M., 1999). CALL offers thousands of ways to learn a language at a comfortable and more convenient pace such as online activities, games, texts, films, songs, online dictionaries etc. In addition to this it also facilitates students in improving all four language

skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. It is also motivating and exciting for the students because it gives a kind of rest from traditional language learning classes. The concept of CALL can go a long way towards the four critical skills in language learning; speaking, listening, writing and reading (Tiwari, Khandelwal, & Roy, 2008).

The most important type of CALL which is Integrative CALL has succeeded in acquiring a fundamental role in education process and extended itself in the application of teaching and learning modern languages (Norazmi, 2020). One of the major components of Integrative CALL is the use of multimedia. It has made language classes lively and close to reality by offering authentic materials, texts, images, videos and animation etc. Multimedia technology is especially valuable for language teaching because it offers students immediate access to images and native speakers (Norazmi et al., 2019). Within this context, video, the internet, and other computer technologies appear to be an excellent medium to convey, authentic, contemporary information in a lively, communicative fashion, in the target language. (Guerra & Olkhovych-Novosadyuk, 2014)

In other words, integrative CALL shifts towards the approach that combines the various language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and technology into the language learning process (Norazmi et al., 2020). Through integrative CALL, learners interact with the computers and ultimately with other human beings via computers. As a result the interaction and communication develops globally (Zaid et al., 2020). Technologically there has been development in the computer networking, which allows the computer to be used as a vehicle for an interactive human communication. (Guerra & Olkhovych-Novosadyuk, 2014)

An important dimension of CALL is to promote and develop communicative competence among language learners by focusing the interactional or communicative aspects of a language (Warschauer M., 1996). Communicative competence is not only the inherent grammatical competence (knowledge) but the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations. (Hymes, 1997)

It focuses on the communication patterns “actually produced by learners through the use of software or other forms of electronic materials” (Haider & Chowdhry, 2012). In recent decades, importance of development of communicative competence among language learners has strongly been emphasized in ELT circles around the world to produce efficient communicators (Kim & Hall, 2002).

2.2. Need for the Computers Assisted Language Learning classrooms

The researcher got inspiration of this work through the use of online websites and web tools in CALL and other language learning classes (Zaid et al., 2021). Using online applications, websites and web tools are becoming very common in many European countries but in Pakistan it is still not been introduced in many areas except a couple of Universities, schools and some institutions. Still there are very few Universities including National University of Modern Languages that use the name “CALL” for computer based language classes or classes that use multimedia or LCD’s in language classes. The researcher has been teaching CALL for the last 5-6 years from 2009 till date and has faced many difficulties while teaching this subject not just with the availability of the technology and internet but with the technology illiterate learners as well. Still in the present times there are only 2 out of 30 students who use computers for learning purposes. Most of them don’t have an access to individual computer or a personal computer. Even though they have androids and smart phones but rarely they use them for language learning. They chat on whatsapp in their national language or mother tongue instead of the target language, posts pictures on face book instead of using it for reading and writing purposes. Similarly the language teachers in Pakistan are reluctant to use technology in the language classrooms. Even if they are provided with the internet and wifi connection, they feel it the most difficult task of finding the material on websites and using them in the classroom. Even harder for the language teachers is to evaluate the online activities completed by the learners. Unfortunately the language teachers find it easy to use a single book in the classroom instead of going through a headache of designing online activities and then implementing them in the classroom. Mostly in language classrooms students are supposed to gain their knowledge of English largely from books but language is something that cannot be learned through books only because it is a process that needs practice and use.

The problem with English language teaching and learning is that the requirements for English language are not fully met because the teachers have less command on computational skills and its use in English language classroom. Not just the teachers but the students are also not aware of the benefits of using computers and gadgets for learning language. Computers have made classrooms interactive and students can easily communicate with the learners around the world at anytime and anywhere. In addition, multimedia provides the students with the material other than the textbooks. As it is said computers provide the learners with real life materials of the target language that connects the learner with the culture of that particular language (Wiriyachitra, 2001). Learners can become active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients since they control their own learning in a technology-enhanced learning environment. (Brown, 2006)

Computer acts as a tutor because it helps in assessing the learner's reply, recording it, pointing out mistakes and giving explanations. In this way, they claim the learner is guided to find the correct answer. By

reading a text or by listening to the speakers of the target language and trying to reply to the answer following them helps students to learn how to communicate not just accurately but appropriately. (Kenning & Kenning, 1990)

2.3. Advantages of CALL

Motivation and Interest: In Traditional language learning classrooms, students can lose the interest and motivation level. CALL integrated with multimedia and online websites and webtools can provide student ways to learn English language with more interest. (Ravichandran, 2000)

Adaptable learning environment: Language learning should be flexible and one should be able to learn and gain knowledge anywhere and anytime, according to the need and convenience of the person, which is found in CALL classrooms. (Kilickaya, 2009)

Student centered learning: Computer assisted language learning encourages participants to take active roles in communication and it also allows participants to have control over their learning (Kessler & Bikowski, 2010).

Critical thinking style: After reading a text or listening to a video on online activities that is followed by questions. These comprehension questions develop student's critical thinking style.

Experiential learning: Instead of sitting passively in the classroom, students experience their own learning by actively participating in their own learning. Learners not only rely on theory in CALL classroom but also practice what they learn in the class. As said earlier they are responsible for their own learning.

Enhanced student achievement: Kiliçkaya registered CALL as giving immediate feedback, allowing students at their own pace, and causing less frustration among students. (Kilickaya, 2009)

Authentic material for study: The material for studying a language online and on websites is usually authentic and close to reality. Students learn about the target language's society by watching the movies, listening to the audio recording and readings novels that show the culture that represent the culture of that language.

Greater interaction: Not just through webchats and chat rooms but students interact with other people and language learners from all over the world by just joining Linked In, facebook, twitter, instagram, soundcloud, voicethread, blog etc.

Individualization: Students control their own learning in CALL classroom by practicing language skills on the websites and web tools once being taught by the teacher. They can carry out CALL activities anywhere they are if they have a personal computer and a wifi connection.

Independence from a single source of information: Instead of studying from the book all the time which makes classrooms boring, the students have variety of different sources to search from and gather information i.e texts, dictionaries, online newspapers, magazines, videos, websites for all language skills etc.

Global understanding: By using different websites, social media networks, by gathering information on the search engines and by watching movies of the English speaking societies, the learners start understanding the world and try to interact with the people from around the world. Resultantly they achieve global understanding.

2.4. Learning Language Skills in CALL classroom

Reading Skills: In language learning classroom, more emphasis is placed on receptive skills such as listening and reading because good reading habits provide students with great exposure of language and websites play an important role in the development of reading skills. Similarly, by watching the videos and listening to the native speakers interacting with other speakers, learners can get an exposure to the target society and its cultures and traditions. These different websites and web tools provide students ample authentic material that can help them to get awareness about the target language and ultimately develop language skills. This in return is helpful in improving communicative competence of a language.

Writing Skills: Internet gives a large amount of opportunities for students to practice their writing skills. The word processing program is also very useful and meaningful in improving writing skills. It helps learners to practice free writing and they can easily check and examine their spellings and grammatical mistakes. Word-processing programs transform the computer into a sophisticated and flexible writing aid that can improve learners' writing skills and their attitude towards writing. The main principle of word-processing programs is based on the ability to manipulate text freely. By writing text into the memory of a computer, the writer can play round with his text until entirely satisfied. Online applications and websites provide opportunities for writing by providing various interesting topics to the students. Online blogging is also beneficial for students to get involved in writing. Software like "The International Writing Exchange" offers learners to write and give specific guidelines on how to write, post, and give feedback to peers' writings from all over the world (Vilmi, 1993)

Vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and reading tests have an obvious relevance to the sub-skills that are needed for writing (Duber, 2000). Emailing and chatting is another way of improving writing skills. By sending and receiving e-mails, learners can improve their writing skills. In most of the Universities and few schools' students are assigned tasks by their teachers to write e-mails to their peers to make them familiar with the act of writing. Students use websites hotmail, yahoo, Gmail etc.

Chatting with native speakers of the language also improves writing skills and also provides opportunity for the learners to compare their style of writing with that of natives. Chat, according to Netlingo.com, is "a form of

interactive online communication that enables users to have real-time conversation with other people who are also online". Facebook messenger, Twitter, yahoo messenger etc are the widely used websites/social media networks for chatting now a days.

Speaking Skills: In English language classroom, more emphasis is also given to the speaking skills. At present oral communication in target language is more important than any other skill. Students are supposed to communicate with each other and with their teacher in target language and moreover they are supposed to use correct pronunciation and accent. There are many CD ROM programs like "Longman English Works" (Neil, 1994) which help the learners to improve their listening and speaking skills. Students can also record their voices and can put them on internet to get immediate feedback from others. They can also speak to a person living at a distance through online conferencing tools such as skype, tokbox etc. Other websites and web tools such as voicethread.com, soundcloud.com, google hangout, facebook messenger are very good sources for speaking to other learners in target language that helps in improving speaking skills.

Listening Skills: Many online applications provide videos, audio clips having dialogues, conversation, speeches, music and much more listening material. Students can listen to it repeatedly to improve their listening comprehension and the most interesting thing is that students never get tired of listening to them. Tape recorders were the main source in the development of listening skills couple of years ago but with the passage of time and advancement of technology, computers, LCD's, LED's and multimedia etc have taken their place and are very common in language classes. Through the online webinars, students can also listen to the speeches and communication between the native English speaking people without any difficulty.

2.5. Communicative Competence: Communicative competence is a combination of two words which can be interpreted as "competence to communicate" (Bagaric & Djigunovic, 2007). Now if we talk about competence, it has remained a highly controversial subject in the field of general and applied linguistics. Chomsky differentiates competence and performance in his book, "Aspects of the theory of syntax" by the fact that the first one is the monolingual speaker listener's knowledge of the language and performance is the actual use of language in real situations (Chomsky, 1965). Savignon (1972) opposed the idea of Chomsky regarding the concept of Performance and Competence (Savignon, 1972). He was more inclined to the concept of Hymes (1972, pp. 269-293), who defined communicative competence as not just related to the inherent grammatical competence but also as an ability to exercise grammatical competence in abundant of communicative situations. Hymes observes that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He believes that knowing a language is more than knowing the rules. So according to him, a language user/learner needs to use the language not only correctly but also appropriately (Hymes, 1972). Although Communicative competence has been a part of Language Teaching for two decades and a lot of work has been done on it but unfortunately has not been a part of English Language classes in Pakistani schools, colleges or even universities. The classroom practices have been shifted from the traditional approach which focused on the acquisition of linguistic knowledge such as vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax to the facilitation of the learner's communicative competence. (Kim & Hall, 2002)

Communicative competence can be broadly defined as to what a speaker needs to know in order to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community. It involves knowing what to say to whom, when and how to say it appropriately in certain situation. It also involves the social and cultural knowledge, the factor enabling the user to use and interpret the linguistic forms. (Saville-Troike, 2006)

2.6. Types of Communicative Competence - CEFR

CEFR stands for Common European Framework for Languages Learning, Teaching and Assessment. It provides us a common source of elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what the language learners should do to use language for communication and what knowledge and skill they have to develop so as to act effectively. It helps to overcome the barriers among language teaching professionals teaching modern languages at different levels. In addition it also defines 'communicative competence' and also gives us the types of communicative competence. (Europe, 2001)

So according to CEFR, Communicative competences are those which empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means.

It outlines three types of Communicative Competence, i.e. Linguistic Competence, Socio-linguistic Competence, Pragmatic Competence.

Linguistic Competence: Linguistic competence includes lexical, phonological and syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of Language as a system. This component not only relates to the range and quality of knowledge (i.e the phonetic use in a language and the extent of the use of vocabulary), but also to the cognitive organization and the way the knowledge is used and the speaker uses it in the appropriate context and to its accessibility. This Linguistic knowledge varies from person to person and also depends on the person as well e.g a person who is multilingual will have the inherent knowledge of all the languages in his mind that will cause difficulty in learning a new language and becoming competent in the linguistic knowledge. (Europe, 2001)

“Linguistic competence’ is not a static concept; rather linguistic competence of actual human beings is dynamic”.According to him, linguistics competence not only develops in the native speakers but can also develop in the second language learners not just in monolinguals but also plurilinguals because of the variety of knowledge and experience of different languages they are exposed to. This can be supported by the fact that second language is acquired by the learner if he lives in the native language speaking community. (Lehmann, 2007)

Language is speaking, the activity of speaking, a reality much wider than a language. A language in its totality is found in speaking but speaking in its entirety is not found in a language. If the activity of speaking is really adopted as the starting point in linguistics then the following points need to be understood.

a) Theoretically speaking the speakers don’t have the knowledge of the difference between la langue that is linguistic knowledge and la parole that is performance of the knowledge. They understand the difference only when they speak or when they evaluate speaking.

b) According to Chomsky Competence and Performance cannot be compared to la langue and la parole because according to him competence is creative and la langue is static. (Castillo, 20016)

2.8. Statement of the problem

In recent few decades, the language learning and teaching focus has undergone dynamic changes. One of the major reasons for such revolutions is to produce efficient global communicators as World is shrinking into a global village. Many language teachers in Pakistan have started using computers and internet in their classroom for the sake of improving learners’ language skills and some are even using it just to make class interesting and motivating for them. But it is very rare that teachers use computers and online activities for the purpose of improving language or Linguistic competence. They all prefer traditional classroom practice over CALL as a result the classroom becomes autonomous and boring but the traditional language classrooms have failed badly in improving Linguistic competence in the learners because the authentic and real life like situations and contexts cannot be created in a classroom. One of the recent trends is the use of technology in language classrooms to improve communicative competence. The proponents and users of CALL recommend it as an authentic and useful source to improve students’ communicative competence through making learners interact with native English speakers, by listening to authentic dialogue and then responding to it, by reading authentic material close to social life and then responding to it either orally or in the written form etc.

The present research and presentation will prove that CALL helps in learning target language which is both interesting and long lasting.

2.8 Research questions

1. Whether or not CALL program is effective in developing communicative competence among language learners at NUML?
2. What is the level of linguistics competence of learners after attending CALL program at NUML?

2.10. Significance of the study

Many language teachers all over the world recommend using computer and internet in their class for the sake of improving their learner’s’ language skills or to make classroom environment interesting and motivating for the students. CALL environment helps students to come across authentic reading materials like newspapers, novels, short stories and listening materials that gives an insight to the native society and hence helps them to comprehend the context and guides them to speak in any particular context or situation. Unfortunately, few institutions in Pakistan have so far made use of this latest technological based language learning approach (CALL) including HEC Language Teaching Reform Center (Commision, 2004) and Haripur University etc. The present study will identify that using CALL in language classrooms not only develops language learners’ all four language skills including vocabulary, grammar and communication skills but also improves their communicative competence. This study will also prove to be useful because researches on Evaluative study of Computer Assisted Language Learning classroom have never been conducted in any Institute or University in Pakistan before and especially with idea of developing Communicative Competence.

In future this research will help the CALL teachers to be more focused and use those websites and activities that not only improve language skills but also make students proficient and confident in using the target language and help them to improve communicative competence. This will provide the learners a natural environment to learn a language, listen to the English people and even talk to them through chat rooms in the target language and as result the language learning will be long lasting. Overall, the study is valuable for people in connection with language learning programs whether as teachers, course designers, evaluators, administrators or even as students.

3. Research Methodology

According to L.R Gay, “a research methodology comprises of the overall strategy followed in collecting and analyzing data(Gay & Mills, 2008).”It is a science that tells how the research is to be carried out. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained(Rajasekar, Philominathan, & Chinnathambi,

2013). This study has both qualitative and quantitative research designs and the data collected has been analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Evaluative research: This research also follows an evaluative research using evaluative tools such as questionnaires, interview and observation sheet to collect data. An evaluative research focuses a program in order to assess its effectiveness for different reasons. The present research aims to evaluate CALL program's effectiveness with respect to development of communicative competence among language learners at NUML.

Test-Based questionnaires: Test based questionnaires are those that have tests at the end of the lesson in the form of questions. So it can be said that a test is conducted at the end of a lesson plan, having questions in the written form. The questions can be multiple choice questions, closed ended or open ended depending on the task. In this research since there are three areas of communicative competence, so all the three areas contained separate open and closed ended questions.

Interviews: There are two types of interviews, structured and unstructured. For this research unstructured interviews were used.

Observation sheet: Through observation much more objective information is gathered easily.

1. For the said purpose, open ended Test Based questionnaire was used with the CALL students of MA ELT in order to test the level of their communicative competence. The student's questionnaire covered one of the three important components of communicative competence;

Linguistics competence

2. Observation sheet was made in order to find out how teachers focus Linguistic competence during different activities conducted inside the CALL classroom

3. CALL teachers were interviewed to find out how better the students improve their communicative competence by practicing language through use of computer and internet and how they learn language skills.

Finally, the collected data will be analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively to get a clear picture

Population and Sample: The population of this research is language students of National University of Modern Languages. Sample of this research includes students of English Language course (under the CALL program) at National University of Modern Languages, H-9 Islamabad. 50 students, 25 from each class were selected from ELT 3rd semester at NUML. Census sampling was made because all students from ELT 3rd semester were selected as a sample.

Theoretical Framework: This research is theoretically based on the communicative competence model given by CEFR (Common European Forum for Reference) designed in 2001 which was put together by the Council of Europe. The model was initially intended for assessment, as well as for learning and teaching languages.

According to this model, communicative competence includes following three components (Europe, 2001):

1. Langu
age or linguistic competence: knowledge of language and the ability to use language elements to use well-structured sentences and messages

2. Sociol
inguistic competence: knowledge and ability to use appropriate language skills in a social context

3. Prag
matic competence: knowledge of the functional uses of the language sources (carrying out language functions, speech acts) using scenarios and predetermined scripts of interactional exchanges. (Europe, 2001)

Competences can be viewed as toolboxes from which the language learners draw the resources to carry out activities but which are modified and added to by the

A competence is a set of areas of knowledge, or aptitudes and skills and of attitudes and existential competences (savoir-être). The proportion of knowledge, skill and savoir être will, of course, vary from one competence to another. (CEFR)

According to ECML's 2nd medium term program Communicative language competence has **a number of component parts**: it includes linguistic, socio-linguistic and pragmatic competences. Each of these made up of knowledge, aptitudes and skills.

Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence comprises the knowledge and skills related to lexis, phonology and syntax and other features of language systems, considered independently of the sociolinguistic impact of variations in use and of the pragmatic functions of the utterances produced. (CEFR 5.2.1, p. 109) and (CEFR 2.1.2).

It concerns not only the range and quality of knowledge (for example, the range and precision of lexical knowledge) but also involves cognitive organization and the way this knowledge is stored in memory (for example, the question of how a lexical item fits into the networks of associations the speaker has available) and the accessibility (for example, how an item can be recalled, activated and its availability for use).

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collection is the process of gathering required information for each selected unit. Some of the tools used for data collection are questionnaires, interviews, observation, electronic data reporting and use of

administrative data. (Gay & Mills, 2008). The objectives of this research were to evaluate the CALL program at NUML and to find out the effectiveness of CALL program in order to develop Linguistic competence in the language learners. Apart from this the study also explored:

- a) To identify the factors that motivate teachers to use CALL technique in their language classrooms to perk up communicative competence of the learners
- b) To assess the level of linguistic competence of language learners.

The data was collected through test-based questionnaires, observation sheet and interviews. The researcher has taken the data using test-based questionnaires from the students of MA ELT 3rd semester (morning and evening) in NUML and also observed their CALL classes. The total number of students were 50; 25 in each class.

The researcher observed eight classes for both morning and evening session which makes a total of 16 classes, to collect relevant data for the study. At the end of the observation students were given the test-based questionnaires in order to make the results more authentic and reliable. The third tool that was used to collect data was interview. For this purpose, 5 CALL teachers were also interviewed to validate the results and to confirm that Computer Assisted Language Learning helps in improving Linguistic competence.

The test based questionnaire consists of four parts. The first part consists of 6 questions related to general CALL. The second part is concerned with Linguistic competence and consists of 7 open and closed ended questions.

The observation sheet was used to observe that:

- a) The teacher's instructions are clear enough for the students to understand the complicated websites and webtools and how to carry out the activities related with them.
- b) All the activities in the websites and webtools covered one of the three areas of communicative competence; linguistic competence

Interviews consisted of 10 questions asked from all the five teachers. The questions are related to CALL and how it helps in developing communicative and particularly linguistic competence of the students.

4.1 Findings of Observation sheet.

The results of observation sheet had been analyzed according to the qualitative and quantitative paradigm. The analysis of observation sheet is given below:

Linguistic Competence

1. **Clear introduction of the websites was given:** In all classes, researcher had observed that whether the instructions given to the students were clear or not and the results revealed that in all the classes the instruction given were pretty much clear. Overall the students' attitude was positive and they were satisfied while practicing through online applications.

2. **The appropriate use of the websites and links for Linguistic Competence:** It was important to whether the websites and links used by the teacher included the activities related to Linguistic competence or not. All the students were relaxed because they knew about CALL activities and have been practicing different activities throughout the semester. They were excited because different websites have different activities and they were anxiously waiting for the new activities. The starting activities were related to grammatical categories and sentence structure. In the start the students felt a little bored but when the activities were combined with some songs, they got interested and started doing activities quickly. The rest of the activities included exercises related to letters; punctuations, etc and they were all either linked with the videos or images which kept the students motivated till the end.

3. **The website covers tasks and reading passages that focused on grammar, sentence structure, and use of words:** It was observed by the researcher that students were reading the passages and texts carefully and answering the questions, fill blanks and comprehension questions at the end of the passages. Their answers were 90% correct that was a satisfactory indication to show that they have read the text carefully. They attempted all the questions related to grammar and made correct grammatical sentences. The reading passages also consisted of images that made the stories and passages interesting. Out of eight classes, in two classes they were less attentive and mindful towards the reading texts and it was due to the long length and difficulty of the texts. On the whole their behavior was positive.

4. **In the end the students were asked to speak on different topics using appropriate grammar, sentence structure and tense:** After observing the involvement of students towards reading practices, researcher had also observed their writing practices and it was revealed through results that students were more comfortable and satisfied while speaking and recording their answers on soundcloud.com and on the sound recorder. It was noted that they more conscious and alert while speaking because unlike in writing practice where the grammatical and lexical mistakes are automatically and immediately highlighted by the computers, there was no one to correct them while speaking. Another reason was that they had to use correct grammatically correct sentences. In one out of eight classes, researcher observed that the students felt happy because they were able to speak with correct sentences that made them happy. Overall the results disclosed that students were satisfied and involved in the activities.

A. General observation

1. The websites encouraged the students to learn language independently.

100% results had been noticed by the researcher because students were independent of the classroom. They got rid of rote memorization and spoon feeding rather they became constructors of the knowledge. In all the classes it was observed that students were independently grasping the knowledge and ideas and teacher was not supposed to teach them but they themselves were working for the improvement of language skills.

2. Students are able to organize ideas, information and experiences independently.

Organization of ideas, information and experiences is very important in language learning in order to discard confusion and complexity. Researcher observed that at the end of each class teacher asked questions and took students feedback that showed that students were capable enough to arrange the ideas, information and experiences they had gained while working on language skills through online applications and websites, in a systematic way. They linked each lesson with the previous one without any help from the teacher.

3. Students were less frightened, scared and hesitant than that of the traditional classroom situation.

In traditional classrooms, many students feel frightened of the teacher and become less confident. They avoid asking questions and participate less in the discussion and feel shy and become passive recipient. In CALL classrooms it was observed that students were less frightened because they were not directly facing the teacher but computers. They were relaxed while working with online applications because they were freely moving backward or forward according to their comprehension level. The results were 100% positive because in all the classes students remained confident and comfortable.

4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Responses.

Test-based questionnaire was also used to collect data from 25 students in order to make the results more genuine and reliable. The intention was to know about their point of views, perceptions and opinions about the improvement linguistic competence. The questionnaire contains 15 questions in total divided into four areas namely, General CALL, and Linguistic competence. Clear instructions were given to the students on how to attempt the questions. Quantitative paradigm is used to analyze the questionnaire and each question is analyzed separately through pie charts. The questions and the analysis is given below:

Q1. Do you think CALL classroom is more motivating and interesting than traditional classroom?

The question was asked to know about whether students knew about the difference between the traditional language classroom and CALL classroom. 100% Results had been obtained in this case and it revealed that all 25 students were familiar between the difference both types of classes and that the students were more motivated in CALL classroom than the traditional language classroom.

Q.2. Do you use computer at home?

The question was asked to know that whether students have the facility of using computers at home in order to practice CALL outside the language classroom for practicing language skills. It is clearly shown in the figure that 16 students used computers at home while 5 students did not and 4 used computers sometime.

Q.3. What do you often do when you use computer?

The question was asked in order to know for what purposes they used computers. Results showed more interest towards improving listening skills through watching a movie and use of facebook. Some students also showed their interest towards the online reading of newspapers and books. The findings revealed that on social media network was more popular than reading online and watching movies.

Q.4. In your opinion is language learning more flexible and easy via computers and internet?

The question was asked to know about whether students have experienced or tried to improve language skills by their own or not. Results disclosed that many students have practiced or are in a habit of practicing language skills if they have a computer and internet connection at home or in the personal gadgets and mobiles. Findings showed that maximum students agree that learning a language through computers and internet is more easy and flexible and they can practice language skills anytime and anywhere if they have an access to computer and internet.

Q.5. Do you agree that learners can learn a language in a relaxed and stress free environment through CALL as it allows them to practice language skills at their convenient time?

The purpose to ask this question is to know that whether the students felt relaxed in front of the computer or were stressed by sitting there working on the websites for hours. Results showed that majority of the students felt relaxed because of the less fear of being scolded by the teacher. A couple of the students felt stressed but it was because of sitting in front of the computer for hours. Few of the students were of the view that to some extent they felt relaxed.

Q.6. Do you think through CALL you can come across different authentic materials that can improve your language skills?

This question was asked to know the students' perception about the computer assisted language learning that whether the material used in CALL classroom helped in exams or not. Researcher found that maximum students were of the view that language learning through online applications can make the learners able to learn language and presented them with authentic material not just in the form of texts but aural and visual form that

included audio and video and different images. Results exposed that majority agreed with the statement that online websites contained the authentic material.

Q.7. Learning a language through CALL is usually acquired because the learners can come across a real society and its cultural norms through novels, dramas and movies etc. Do you agree?

The question was asked to know about students' opinion regarding the material present on the websites and other sources such as dictionaries, novels articles etc used for the improvement of language skills. Online application provides ample opportunities and material that can increase language enrichment of students. According to the results, it was unveiled that majority of the students that the material used by the language learners in CALL classroom can help them learn a language unconsciously and ultimately help them to acquire language. Since along with reading, there is always animation in CALL activities, students are unaware of the fact when they start using the language properly and accurately.

Q.8. Do you think by practicing the reading exercises that include not only comprehension questions but also grammatical activities; can help you learn to use correct sentences?

Students were asked this question to know their views about the most useful and easily accessible tool that can help them in learning a language learning. Results revealed that students showed large support towards learning English language through software and internet, the online dictionaries, the encyclopedias and reading exercises and texts that help in using correct sentences.

Q.9. In your opinion listening to the native speakers speak; can help you to reproduce the sentences in the appropriate situation?

Online applications websites help the students to interact with the native speakers and talk to them about their experiences and interests. Not only websites but some social media networks such as skype, facebook, google hangout and twitter etc are a way to communicate with the language speakers all over the world and the native speakers as well. Not only by interacting with the native speakers but also watching movies and listening to the actors speaking can help them use sentences appropriately. Majority of the students gave positive response.

Q.10. Do you think talking to a native speaker in online chat rooms can help you understand the cultural and traditional use of phrases in a given situation?

Students can learn language well if learning is motivating and inspiring for them. Language is something that cannot be learned through books and students get bored and become less motivated. The result show that most of the students agreed that by talking to the native speakers can help them to understand the use of cultural traditional phrases.

Linguistic Competence

Q1. Do you think by practicing language through CALL websites has enabled you to learn the following?

a. Spelling alphabets: The question was asked to know about their learning related to language components such as letters, words and their spellings. Learning spellings through websites is also interesting and motivating since the websites have different game activities and flashcards that keep them interested while learning spellings. Results showed that most of the students agreed that they had improved they had improved their spellings by using websites.

b. Letters, numbers, and Pronouncing English sounds: The students were presented with websites that dealt with the words and their pronunciation and also with letters to be used in the spellings. The students enjoyed thoroughly while learning the words and their spellings and pronunciation and even kept on pronouncing the words themselves. They were also shown a video related to phonetics which motivated them to go further. Most of the students agreed that they have learned letters, numbers and pronunciation.

c. Understanding main words and functional words: Students had a complete understanding of the difference between the content words and the functional words. They were asked to the read a text and find out the nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives and make sentences using the functional words. The students understood what was meant by the functional words and made sentences easily. Similarly the students were asked to write down some content words in the paragraph and again they were able to do that too. The result show that most of the students knew about the difference between content and functional words. So it revealed that vocabulary, spellings and grammar are improved well through the use of the websites.

d. Understanding the rules of noun phrases: Through this question, researcher wanted to know students' opinion that whether textbooks and online websites having text passages and along with the activities are more beneficial for the improvement of the grammatical rules or not. The results disclosed that 20 out of 25 students said yes and the rest of the students either marked no or to some extent. Researcher noticed more favor and interest towards the online websites and their activities as compared to the novels and texts available on google. Through practicing writing skills, students improve the grammatical structures and the use of noun phrases. During the observation researcher had observed that the students used MS Word and MS PowerPoint for free writing and for practicing the use of noun phrase and other grammatical categories. Results disclosed that most of the students agreed that they were able to describe objects and were able to construct a grammatically correct sentence. It revealed that the use of MS word and PowerPoint is beneficial in the building and growing of writing skills

e. Understanding the rules of word and sentence formation or structural skills: The question was asked to know that whether the students felt any positive effect on their writing skills after learning grammar and sentence structure through the websites. Results revealed that 21 students were satisfied with the use of the websites and found it beneficial for the improvement grammar, sentence structure. On the other hand, one student disagreed with this view and found it less advantageous and 3 of the students improved and less in grammar and sentence structure.

f. Constructing sentence types and sentence forms: During the observation session, researcher had also observed the use of different writing websites along with the phonetic and grammatical websites. The websites provided the students with the list of vocabulary soon after they complete reading text or passage. They had to use those vocabulary items to write sentences. Since there were different types of words, the students made sentences which covered all types of sentences that are usually taught in grammar. The most of the students were able to make sentences with some minor mistakes.

Q 2. Write down two different ways of greeting people.

Students were given this question to know whether they are able to greet others using polite words and sentences or not. Most of the students provided with the answers that had polite words and sentences.

Q 3. Imagine yourself in a situation in which you are going to give information to another student about CALL.

Students were able to talk about CALL along with the use of internet, websites, webtools and the convenience of using CALL outside the classroom

Q 4. Write down five questions that come to your mind about learning a language online.

All the students came up with interesting questions about learning language and all four skills online. Majority of the questions were about speaking skills and about communicating with others and native speakers.

Q 5. Explain the theme in the first paragraph of the reading passage in activity 1?

All the students were able to explain the theme in the first reading passage in the first activity. They tried using noun phrases, and all experimented with different types of sentences.

Q.6. How did the person in the listening activity take leave while going away?

This question was also beautifully answered by the students. The answers varied but all of them agreed on the use of polite language and sentences.

Q.7. Summarize and conclude the story that you have read in the reading passage in activity 2.

The students used correct grammar and the use of the content and functional words was appropriate too. They used noun phrases when they wanted to describe something or some object.

4.3 Findings on Interview

The researcher interviewed five CALL teachers at National University of Modern Languages, H-9 Islamabad. Interview contained 8 questions, all related to the use of CALL in the language classroom, learning language skills, pronunciation, communication and interaction with language learners globally and improving speaking skills etc that can help in improving Linguistic Competence. The interview questions will be analyzed descriptively one by one.

Q 1. In your opinion can CALL help in learning four language skills through the use of websites and web tools?

Although every teacher did not use web tools, but they were using websites for teaching listening skills, reading skills and writing skills. 3 out of 5 teachers were trying their best to make sure that students speak on skype and using different apps on mobile with their friends and native speakers of English language. Overall the teachers agreed on the using websites and web tools for teaching and improving four language skills.

Q 2. Does CALL use authentic material for language learning in the classroom?

No one had any doubt on this that whether CALL uses authentic material in the classroom or not. They were all of the view that whatever material they come across whether listening to an audio or watching a video or reading a text, the material is authentic and represents the society for which it is made or written.

Q 3. Do you think by using websites for grammar and phonetics, and by practicing on them, the students can learn grammatical rules and pronunciation?

Usually teaching grammar and phonetics is very boring and most of the time having same kind of exercises makes it monotonous. As a result there is no motivation for the students to learn grammar or even pronunciation. 2 teachers said that integrating usual class lecture with the websites that offer very interesting exercises and pronunciation exercises can make classroom very interesting and motivating. The other teachers also agreed on using websites for phonetics because sometimes it has songs or poems which remove the boredom of the class. For grammar, they gave websites exercises as homework but practice is still there.

Q 4. In your opinion watching movies and reading stories/texts online can help the students understand the culture of the target society?

All the teachers were of the opinion that watching movies can influence vocabulary and listening skills in an unconscious manner and unconscious learning is always long lasting. Some teachers did mention that reading a story or novel while sitting in front of the computer for hours is a bit tiring but they also agreed that at least one

sits straight as compared to lying in the bed and then studying which is actually harmful for the eyes. Everyone agreed that reading a novel or watching a movie in the target language helps in learning the culture of the society but in an unconscious way.

Q 5. Do you think online reading exercises when integrated with listening or writing exercises can develop critical thinking?

All the teachers had different views about it. 3 of the teachers said that it depends on the reading passage. If the text contains a lot of literary figures of speech and the use of proverbs and phrases, it instigates the students to think and to find out the meaning of the phrases and proverbs and why they are used. 2 other teachers said that when reading texts are integrated with the listening audio or video clips, the underlying meaning becomes easy to understand.

Q 6. Can online chat rooms, twitter and other social media networks help in communicating with native speakers and language learners from all over the world?

It takes time to convince the students that social media network should be used for the learning a language apart from using it just for chatting to discuss family or personal issues while chatting. Teachers are of the opinion that if the students start uploading statuses in English language only, even that can help in improving their language and vocabulary. No doubt one can improve speaking skills only by speaking in the foreign language so all the teachers agree that communicating on social media and chat rooms in the target language can help in improving the language as well.

Q 7. How MALL (mobile assisted language learning) helps in learning a language?

The new trend is using emails, facebook, twitter and instagram on smart phones and androids. Besides these, the mobile apps are really helpful in improving language. 2 of the teachers used whatsapp for speaking skills in classroom. Similarly one another teacher played a game on it for improving vocabulary. Similarly viber is a good way of communicating with the native speakers through speech. Instagram on the hand is concerned with uploading photos and then commenting on it. It's a good way of using it for improving vocabulary and writing skills.

Q 8. Do you think whatsapp and viber can help learners improve speaking skills apart from skype and google hangout?

All the teachers agreed on the use of skype and google hangout for improving speaking skills but they also said that because of the network issues in Pakistan, these two platforms are becoming less popular and it needs a special setting and environment arrangement to talk to someone through these mediums. But as far as the apps are concerned, there's no need of a special place or environment rather one can talk then and there without any voice or network problem.

5. Summary of the findings

It was observed after a detailed data collection with help of three tools i.e. questionnaires, observation sheet and interviews that most of the students were satisfied with learning language through CALL instead of the traditional language classroom. Not only they enjoyed learning a language but improved their language skills and especially listening and speaking skills. Through CALL they got an opportunity to exploit their skills directly and interact and communicate with the native speakers which they couldn't do in the traditional classrooms. While speaking on a given topic on voicethread and interacting with others on social media network, it was noted that the students spoke according to the situation and their speech was also polite.

Thus it can be concluded that using technology in language classroom helps in learning not just all four language skills, but also helps in learning grammatical rules, pronunciation and the culture of the target society that ultimately helps in developing and improving communicating competence of the learners. It is also observed that since learning through CALL is mostly unconscious, the development of communicative competence is also unconscious. All four language skills integrate to develop the communicative competence of the learners but the outcome is shown through speaking skills of the learners. Furthermore, not only the ability to speak proves the development of the communicative competence but the way the speakers speak. The content they use and the knowledge about the people around the world all show and demonstrate the development in the communicative competence of the learners.

As a result of reviewing the use of CALL websites and webtools for improving communicative competence in language classrooms, it is found that;

1. Learners could understand the instructions in the websites and web tools after a week of practice.
2. Listening and speaking skills were very interesting and motivating for the students. It was also noted that when integrating listening and speaking skills with reading and writing skills, the task became more lively and energetic till the end.
3. Grammar activities on different websites made the learners **competent linguistically**. The activities were a little boring in the start but when integrated with songs and listening to the rules of grammar through an audio clip, made it interesting for the students.

4. Phonics was neither too boring nor very interesting but a bit difficult to understand. It was important for the teacher to first teach them about the sounds before giving them phonetic exercises. Practicing phonics was another step in the improvement of linguistic competence.

5.1.Recommendations

1. Computer assisted language learning should be incorporated in all language classrooms.
2. CALL should be introduced at the early stages of learning a language (First semester) instead of being introduced in the 3rd semester of MA ELT at NUML and should continue for two more semesters and even at the school and college levels.
3. CALL workshops should be conducted for both language learners and teachers.
4. As it has been observed through CALL classes that the learners feel comfortable while speaking in front of the computers in chat rooms, so more computers and computer laboratories should be introduced in language classrooms.
5. Websites and tools for learning a language should be introduced in language classes to make the learners familiar with them from the beginning.
6. The other recommendation is that institutes must focus on teachers' training for the sake of computer assisted language teaching (CALT). Computer assisted language teaching (CALT) is very successful not only in teaching English but in all subjects as it provides teachers to practice their own language skills before starting teaching CALL.

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