Relatedness of Learners' Attitude and Raised Proficiency: A Study with Special Reference with To Uttrakhand Technical Students

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Abstract: *CALL has been a widely accepted as a language learning approach. The exploration about its impact and efficacy is ever since it came into its existence. Most of the studies on CALL are related to various research areas of CALL, such as measuring the effectiveness of different methods of instruction, comparison of the achievement of CALL and non CALL users, effects of various forms of computer delivered instruction as compared with the effects of traditional instruction, learners' variability and developed programmed learning by using CALL application. Although the major researches were from attitudinal studies yet they were confined to measure the extent and degree of attitude of teachers and learners towards it. To study the relatedness of attitude and raised proficiency level is a unique dimension to the CALL research areas. The study aims to bring out the fact that is there any relatedness between one's attitude towards CALL and benefit received through it. This study is a part of large scale study carried out to measure the impact of CALL in terms of benefit earned and improved learning experience. This is two tier study on one level the students attitude toward CALL was taken and further the attitude were matched with their benefits earned through it in a due course of time. It was both a qualitative and quantitative study.*
Keywords: *CALL, Intrinsic Motivation, and Learners Attitude.*

I. Introduction

Computer Aided/Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is a relatively new and rapidly evolving academic field of computer delivered instruction. It explores the role of information and communication technologies in language learning and teaching, CALL activities exploit improved technology to produce highly interactive learning environments, providing effective support for the acquisition of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The concept of using computers in language teaching had started way back in 1960 in western countries. This trend began with the establishment of language laboratories during the 1960s, which was initially introduced in the form of cassette players and headphones at educational institutions. The use of this kind of lab grew rapidly in the late 1960s and 1970s, but very soon its enthrallment amongst all, was lost. Later, 'the digital language labs' were introduced. The use of computer as an aid of teaching is plenty but the extent to which it is used does vary for different subjects. Till date the use of computers in education is divided into different categories like using computer for instruction, materials and evaluation etc. It is conventionally described as a means of 'presenting, reinforcing and testing' particular language items. The learner is first given instructions with a rule and some examples, and then answers a series of questions which test her/his knowledge of the rule and the computer gives appropriate feedback and awards a mark, which may be stored for later inspection by the teacher.

Ever since the above division became apparent, the use of computers in language learning emerged as a distinct field of study named as Computer Assisted Language Learning. It is a term used by teachers and students to describe the use of computers in the process of language learning. (Hardisty & Windeatt:1989)

Literature Review: The research in the field of CALL has started ever since the time CALL came into its existence but it did not focus much on how do learners feel about it. There has been a significant amount of research that explores the role of computers in the learning and teaching process and its impact in the classroom (Chapelle, 2001; Dhaif, 1989; Galavis, 1998; Gruich, 2002; Hubbard, 1996; Kenning & Kenning, 1983; Levy, 1997; Muir-Herzig, 2003; Pennington, 1996; Schofield, 1995). Most CALL empirical studies with different perspectives of SLA focus on the effectiveness of the medium itself, particularly in comparison with conventional teaching tools . In short, CALL is seen as a treatment given to the learner, and the effect of the treatment on learning is measured later on.

Not all research gave favorable response but some of them also projected certain resistance to using computer-based learning which is usually attributed to the technology phobia. Bloom (1985) affirms that student resistance to using computers in learning is related to computer anxiety or computer phobia. However, this study was conducted more than twenty years ago. Since that period, CALL has been maturing and computers have been popular and used by students all over the world. According to Bernt, Bugbee, and Alan (1990), as the computer becomes part of one's everyday life, potential users may base their attitude toward the

computer and the advantages it affords in a particular setting rather than on their reactions to their fears and anxiety of the computers. Bernt et al. (1990) conclude that benefits of computer applications play a leading role in affecting one's attitude toward using computers. One of the best ways to evaluate CALL is through the investigation of students and teachers opinion, perception, belief and attitude. However the research towards this angle (Perception Attitude and Motivation) were not initiated by this time.

Most studies have concentrated on the efficacy of CALL, based their findings on case, qualitative and research-based studies. Furstenberg (1997) argues that CALL is a tool which enhances learner-learner interaction. In the same line, Warschauer (1997) thinks that CALL helps learners use language in authentic situations. The teacher, therefore, should involve learners in well-prepared computer-based activities, and use well-established methods and techniques. Kelm (1998) also points out that CALL helps learners use language in authentic situations, promotes communication among learners, provides them with feedback about their errors, and allows socialization and communication between them.

Regarding classroom CALL applications, some motivational studies were able to observe supportive outcomes that show the effectiveness of CALL (Beauvois, 1995; Warschauer, 1996; García & Arias, 2000; Appel & Gilabert, 2002; Chang, 2005; Jarrell & Freiermuth, 2005.). However, whether or not the results of these studies are applicable for self-study language learning is still not fully known.

CALL has been reported to have a positive effect on learners performance and attitude. Ayres (2002) states that CALL is relevant to students needs as it provides them with useful information. According to his findings, CALL should be used more frequently in different language courses. This can be attributed to the fact that CALL environment is a stress-free atmosphere and more relaxed than the classroom (Murphy, 1997; Roed, 2003). Furthermore, more interaction between learners occurs in computer-based learning because students depend on themselves.

Because of its reported positive effect on learning language skills, the use of technology as a medium has increased phenomenally in the last two decades (Greenfield, 2003). Computer-mediated language learning helps students develop their both productive and receptive skills.

Methodology: The main aim behind holding this study was to check whether the opinion expressed in the first study corroborates with the result of the second study or not. In this study the only tool used is a semi-structured interview. The interview questions were structured. The interview here in this research was not only used as a source of information but also as a post-test held at the end of the various courses for language learning. A sample checklist was applied as part of proficiency check where the language ability/proficiency parameters were; Fluency, Comprehension, Pronunciation, Vocabulary and Structure, each on the scale of five. The Study-II had independent variables like Age, Gender, Education Medium, Place, Liking and skill preferred. For the feasibility of conducting smooth interview and to measure their proficiency level and to also match it with their prior proficiency level the students were selected from only one of the institutes of Uttarakhand technical university. The study conducted with an aim to solve the other two research problems which can be stated as:

Q. Does using computer as a teaching tool and students' positive attitude towards it improve the student's ESL competency more than when using no technical aids and having negative attitude towards it.

Data Analysis: In the semi- structured interview with 100 students from a homogeneous group it was asked that if they like using CALL there were 62% who were positive and reflected a positive attitude about the use of CALL, where as 15% of students who were not positive about CALL. 23% of the total strength were neutral about it which mean they were not able to express themselves.

Table: 4.28 Cross Tabulation of Students' Attitude towards CALL programs					
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	1	62	61.4	61.4	61.4
No	2	15	14.9	14.9	76.2
Can't Say	3	23	22.8	22.8	99.0
		1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

By observing the above table the students have different attitude for using CALL 61% of the total students say that they like using CALL 14 % students say they don't like using CALL and 22 % of the total students say they cannot say about it
So the maximum population says that the like using CALL. To measure it efficacy of the CALL further tests were performed.

Table:4.29 Descriptive Statistics of Students Attitude with regard to Proficiency Achieved:

Response	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Yes	62	3.193548	.4707409	.0597842	3.074003	3.313094
No	15	3.240000	.2292846	.0592010	3.113026	3.366974
Can't Say	23	3.313043	.5809900	.1211448	3.061805	3.564282
4	1	3.400000	.	.	.	.
Total	101	3.229703	.4685178	.0466193	3.137212	3.322194

This table displays descriptive statistics for each group and for the entire data set. N indicates the size of each group which is(n=62, n==15, n=23) for the different groups . The effects of unequal variances will be reduced if the group sizes have been approximately equal. Mean shows the average values. Mean score of the first group which says they like using CALL is $\mu= 3.1$ where as the groups' mean score is $\mu=3.2$ and $\mu=3.31$ which differs significantly. One-Way ANOVA compared these sample estimates to determine if the population means differ. The standard deviation indicates the amount of variability of the scores in each group and sd here for each group is .47, .22 .58 respectively first second and third group. These values should be similar to each other for ANOVA to be appropriate. The 95% confidence interval for the mean indicates the upper and lower bounds which contain the true value of the population mean 95% of the time. After determining the above facts a one way ANOVA between subjects was conducted to compare the effect of having positive attitude on proficiency in Yes, No and Can't say conditions.

Table 4.30 Analysis of between Different Attitudes and Proficiency Achieved					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.879	1	.879	4.130	.045
Within Groups	21.072	99	.213		
Total	21.951	100			

It can be seen through the table that the proficiency achieved differed significantly among three groups. F (1=99) =.879. Language proficiency achieved better by the students who liked using CALL. This table is from an experiment that investigated whether over all attitude towards CALL in three conditions i.e Yes, No and can't say has a relative impact on attainting language proficiency   Because there is only one independent variable, this analysis is referred to as a one-way analysis of variance.

In one-way ANOVA, the total variation is partitioned into two components. Between Groups represents variation of the group means around the overall mean. Within Groups represents variation of the individual scores around their respective group means. Sig indicates the significance level of the F-test. Small significance values (<.05) indicate group differences. In this table, the significance level is lower than .05. So there is significant association of liking and the proficiency attained by an individual.

II.   Result

"There was a significant effect of amount of Liking on proficiency at the p<.05 level for the three conditions [F (1, 99) = 4.130, p = 0.045]." The null hypothesis was rejected that there is an insignificant relationship of attitude with proficiency level achieved by the students and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus it is confirmed by the ANOVA that the liking is a significant factor in case of Proficiency level achieved by students. So this can be calculated that if a student likes such class would certainly be benefited positively by these classes.

The answer to the research question was answered through statistical significance that students attitude plays a vital role to help achieve proficiency in language learning.

So the finding of the above data analysis helped me to establish an opinion of the role of attitude in learning is remarkable. If the attitude of a person is positive it helps them learn better and to improve overall learning experience.

III.   Conclusions

The study explored significant relatedness between the learners' attitude towards CALL and the benefit earned though it. Thus it can be concluded if a learner is positive towards the use of CALL will certainly reflect better learning in comparison to them who are negative towards the use of CALL.Since attitude is directly related to one's motivation and hence leads to better learning. The positive attitude of person intrinsically motivates a person and results in better out come.

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