

EXPLORING ESL STUDENTS' USE OF MULTIMEDIA IN AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the utilization of multimedia in English-speaking classrooms among lower secondary students in Malaysia, specifically focusing on form one students, exploring its efficacy and potential constraints. Amidst a global context where English proficiency is increasingly indispensable, traditional teaching methodologies have shown limitations, particularly in non-native English-speaking regions like Malaysia. The investigation adopts a qualitative approach, incorporating semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to offer a comprehensive insight into the interactions between students, teachers, and multimedia tools in learning English speaking skills. The findings reveal that multimedia platforms such as podcasts, speech recognition software, and Prezi significantly enhance student engagement and speaking proficiency. These tools, when used as both teaching and learning aids in speaking lessons, facilitate active group discussions, spontaneous speaking, and independent responses, thereby fostering a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Students reported increased confidence and fluency in English, attributing these improvements to the diverse and immersive experiences afforded by multimedia learning. However, the study also highlights several challenges associated with integrating multimedia in educational settings, including access, technical limitations, and the digital divide. These obstacles underscore the need for targeted strategies to ensure equitable access to multimedia resources and enhance digital literacy among educators and learners. Conclusively, multimedia represents a potent tool for enhancing English-speaking skills among Malaysian lower secondary students, offering pathways to more engaging and effective language learning experiences. Nevertheless, realizing its full potential necessitates a concerted effort to overcome existing barriers, calling for policy interventions, infrastructure development, and pedagogical innovation to support multimedia integration in language education. This study contributes to the broader discourse on educational technology, advocating for a nuanced approach that leverages the benefits of multimedia while addressing the challenges of digital integration in learning environments.

Keywords: *Multimedia Learning, ESL Education, English Speaking Skills, Educational Technology, Language Teaching Methods*

INTRODUCTION

In a world increasingly dominated by the English language, mastering English-speaking skills is crucial for educational and professional success. This importance is especially true in countries like Malaysia, where English plays a significant role at primary, secondary and tertiary educational system levels. The importance of English in Malaysia, a nation with a historical connection to English as a lingua franca due to its colonial past, is further emphasized in the Malaysian National Curriculum. This curriculum

mandates a comprehensive engagement with the English language, focusing on the four key skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, primarily on producing fluent and proficient English-speaking students (Giri, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2017). Despite these efforts, challenges persist in the effective teaching and learning of English-speaking skills. Traditional methods, focusing on textbook-based instruction and a heavy emphasis on grammar and memorization, have not sufficed in meeting the demands of a globalized world that values fluency, spontaneity, and the ability to communicate effectively in English (Kashinathan & Aziz, 2021; Zakaria & Shah, 2019). This disconnect between educational goals and outcomes is further exacerbated by the reported low levels of English proficiency among Malaysian students, affecting their employability and contributing to a larger crisis in the education system's ability to prepare students for the realities of the 21st century (Su-Hie et al., 2017).

The advent of the 21st century brought a pedagogical shift, recognizing the limitations of traditional approaches and the need for more dynamic, interactive, and student-centered learning experiences. The Malaysian Ministry of Education has initiated reforms to integrate the 4C1V elements (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, values, and ethics) into the classroom in response, encouraging the use of 21st-century learning styles across subjects, including English Language teaching. This shift is challenging as teachers and students navigate the complexities of incorporating new methodologies into the teaching and learning process. The focus on speaking skills requires reevaluating pedagogical strategies to overcome pronunciation, fluency, and the lack of communicative competence issues among students, which have been identified as significant barriers to effective English language learning in Malaysia (Rajadurai, 2006). The persistent struggle with these foundational aspects of language learning highlights a critical gap in the educational approach to teaching English speaking skills, underscoring the need for innovative solutions that can cater to the diverse needs of learners in a rapidly changing world.

In this context, multimedia emerges as a potentially transformative tool in the English-speaking classroom, offering multiple resources that can address the multifaceted challenges of teaching and learning speaking skills. Multimedia is an application that uses multiple foundations, e.g., text, graphics, images, sound/audio, animation, and video (Pavithra et al., 2018). The integration of multimedia in language education, supported by cognitive learning theories, provides a rich and varied learning environment that can engage students in ways traditional methods cannot (Kirschner et al., 2017). By utilizing multimedia resources, teachers can offer students opportunities to authentically and meaningfully engage with the language, enhancing their listening, pronunciation, and fluency skills through exposure to numerous linguistic inputs and interactive practices. Furthermore, the shift to online learning, necessitated by the global pandemic, has underscored the importance of digital literacy and multimedia as essential components of contemporary education, presenting challenges and opportunities for language learning (Hasan & Khan, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). The exploration of multimedia's affordances in the English-speaking classroom in Malaysia becomes a critical area of investigation. This study aims to delve into how multimedia is used by lower secondary students in English-speaking classrooms and to identify the benefits and limitations of such use. This study's research objectives are as follows:

1. To explore the use of multimedia among lower secondary students in an English-speaking classroom.
2. To investigate the affordances and the limitations of using multimedia in an English-speaking classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Related Theories

In language education, particularly in the dynamic context of teaching English as a second language, the selection and application of pedagogical theories play a pivotal role in shaping instructional strategies and learning outcomes. Among these, the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) offers a robust framework for understanding how learners process information through dual channels—the visual and the auditory—suggesting that learners achieve better comprehension and retention when

instructional materials engage both modalities. Per Mayer (2001), this theory posits that the human mind operates most efficiently when it process verbal and visual information simultaneously, leading to deeper learning and understanding. The CTML is supported by the dual coding theory, which highlights the distinct but interconnected cognitive pathways for processing verbal and visual stimuli, and the concept of cognitive load, which stresses the importance of managing the amount of information processed by the learner to prevent overload. These theoretical underpinnings emphasize the importance of designing educational content that is both engaging and cognitively manageable, ensuring that multimedia resources are utilized in a way that optimizes learning without overwhelming the learner (Ensor et al., 2019; Huh et al., 2019).

Complementing the CTML, the Socio-Constructivist Theory, grounded in the work of Vygotsky (1978), offers a perspective on learning that highlights the social and interactive dimensions of the educational process. This theory asserts that learning is inherently a social activity shaped by interactions within the learning environment, including peers, instructors, and the broader cultural context. It emphasizes the role of language in constructing knowledge and the importance of collaborative learning activities that enable students to build on their existing knowledge through engagement with others. The Socio-Constructivist Theory posits that learning occurs most effectively when students are actively involved in meaning-making and negotiating understanding through dialogue and collaboration. This approach is particularly relevant in language learning contexts, where communication skills are developed through interaction and social use of language is integral to mastery (Ali & Segaran, 2013).

Integrating the principles of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning with those of the Socio-Constructivist Theory provides a comprehensive framework for designing English language learning experiences that are both intellectually stimulating and socially engaging. Educators can reduce cognitive load and enhance comprehension by leveraging multimedia resources to visually and auditorily present content engagingly (Mayer, 2001). Concurrently, adopting a socio-constructivist approach to language learning, where students actively engage in communicative practices within a collaborative learning environment, promotes the development of practical language skills through real-world applications. This integration of multimedia resources with interactive, social learning experiences aligns with current pedagogical best practices, aiming to equip learners with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the English language effectively. Therefore, the combination of these theories not only underscores the multifaceted nature of language learning but also provides a rich theoretical basis for exploring the use of multimedia in the English-speaking classroom, promising to address the dual goals of cognitive engagement and communicative competence (Mayer, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978).

Exploring Pronunciation and Fluency in ESL Education in Malaysia

Past studies have reported that these speaking skills aspects are neglected the most in ESL classrooms, resulting in low speaking ability in Malaysia. Apart from that, Almaqrn and Alshabeb (2017) reported that pronunciation is vital in communicating a good second language (L2) and learners should not overlook it. People typically judge a speaker's ability of language proficiency by their pronunciation in terms of fluency. Making a good first impression is crucial in this regard, especially in the professional sector. Hence, importance should be given to students' pronunciation and fluency in speaking skills.

This is because pronouncing words clearly is essential for effective communication since it indicates whether we can express our intended meaning (Seidlhofer, 2001; Shak et al., 2016). It is important to focus on pronunciation to enhance lower secondary students' English-speaking skills. Gilakjani (2011) and Shak et al. (2016) asserted that good pronunciation would allow students to participate in discussions especially in class and interact with other students. Since the majority of Malaysian students speak their mother tongues, they must master proper pronunciation in English classes based on stress, rhythm, and intonation, as it is quite impossible to make pronunciation, intonation and stress perfect by only theoretical knowledge because the achievement of a desired standard needs several practices (Nordin & Yunus, 2020). Therefore, one of the focuses in study is pronunciation, specifically the three aspects mentioned above in English speaking classrooms.

Past researchers claim that one of the reasons lower secondary students' speaking skills is low is due to their fluency. Fluency is one of the primary criteria of verbal communicative skill (Shahini & Shahamirian, 2017). In addition, fluency in speaking skills is regarded as an important aspect in the development of language learning since it demonstrates the speaker's communication skills (Gorsuch, 2011; Pham, 2018). The researcher further claims that the ability to speak fluently is frequently used to assess a student's progress in learning a foreign language.

Multimedia Integration in ESL Classrooms: Enhancing English Speaking Skills

Integrating multimedia into the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom represents a pivotal shift in teaching methodologies, reflecting an adaptation to the digital era and the demands of Industry 4.0. This era, characterized by the convergence of digital, biological, and physical innovations, necessitates educational practices that impart knowledge and prepare students for a future dominated by digital communication and global interconnectedness (Hussin, 2018). The transition towards Education 4.0 underscores a pedagogical evolution, where technology-based tools and resources are employed to cater to the learning preferences of digital natives, namely Generation Z and Generation Alpha. These individuals, having grown up amidst rapid technological advancements, demonstrate a clear preference for digital and multimedia learning environments, thereby challenging traditional educational paradigms (Cilliers, 2020).

Gunuç and Babacan (2018) claim that multimedia enhances class effectiveness by enhancing student curiosity, fostering class productivity, and providing academic satisfaction. As a result, there are more attractive, vibrant, and lively English classes (Gunuç & Babacan, 2018). Multimedia provides numerous implicit knowledge in images, sound, and animation. In traditional learning, by listening in a very passive role, learners receive information. In addition, students perform mechanical and repetitive exercises formulated specifically for them. Compared to multimedia education, which is vibrant and presenting knowledge practically and vividly, conventional learning is not conducive to fostering students' learning interests (Wazeema & Kareema, 2017).

Multimedia is significant in the classroom in exploring and expanding student knowledge of English culture. Multimedia in learning offers students more opportunities than in conventional learning, where sources of information are minimal, and textbooks cannot compete with real-life language materials that attract students' interest (Fani et al., 2020). Multimedia offers sufficient information; students are unconsciously familiar with linguistic factors such as their customs and culture. This develops their hearing skills and enables students to share information where they communicate, encouraging one another to learn the language better and faster (Syahputra & Hidayati, 2019).

Increasing student's communicative competence is a significant advantage of using multimedia-accompanied English teaching (Fani et al., 2020). Traditional education does not use students' innate potential to grasp linguistic form, context, and purpose, causing difficulties in improving communicative competence (Syahputra & Hidayati, 2019). The advantages of multimedia learning are better than conventional learning in that it is more engaging and seeks to combine teaching and learning. Multimedia helps students' thought process and feelings, making courses more fun and meaningful. With PowerPoint, one is motivated and encouraged to learn the target language (Amin et al., 2018).

Incorporating technical interactivity provides an ideal environment, enabling students to engage in class discussions and debates while creating more space for contact among students and between teachers and students. Multimedia technology improves learners' constructive outlook and positively influences their communication skills in language learning (Halwani, 2017). Language classrooms integrating multimedia technologies optimize instructional material and allow better use of learning time.

In addition, since communication in large classrooms is challenging to practice, the interactive program's introduction eventuates face-to-face education. Multimedia technology has no limits and offers a more practical English language teaching environment. It promotes student engagement, efficiently uses class time, and provides students with more information (Young & West, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The qualitative research approach is chosen for its strength in understanding phenomena from the participants' perspectives, making it well-suited to explore the experiences of lower secondary students using multimedia in ESL classrooms. This approach allows for an in-depth investigation into the students' and teachers' interactions with multimedia tools and their perceptions of their impact on learning English speaking skills. The study's design is guided by the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, providing a comprehensive view of multimedia use in real-world educational settings. This research design facilitates the exploration of complex educational phenomena within their natural context, providing rich insights into the effective integration of multimedia in language learning.

Selection of Participants

The study's participants include five lower secondary students and one English language teacher from a government school in Klang, Malaysia. The students are selected based on their exposure to multimedia tools in learning English speaking skills, while the teacher is chosen for their expertise in incorporating multimedia into teaching. Purposive sampling ensures participants have relevant experiences with multimedia in ESL education, contributing valuable insights into the study. The selected participants reflect diverse experiences with multimedia tools, providing a broad perspective on their use in enhancing English speaking skills. This selection process ensures that the study captures the nuanced ways multimedia is integrated into ESL classrooms and its impact on learning outcomes.

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The study employs two primary data collection methods: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Semi-structured interviews with students and the teacher offer deep insights into their experiences with multimedia in learning and teaching English speaking skills. The interview guide is adapted to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and the effectiveness of multimedia tools in improving speaking skills. Classroom observations provide a live context to witness the integration of multimedia in teaching practices and its reception by students. Observations are recorded through detailed field notes focusing on the interaction between students and multimedia tools, as well as the strategies employed by the teacher to facilitate multimedia-based learning. These complementary methods allow for a holistic understanding of multimedia's role in ESL education, capturing the participants' subjective experiences and the observable dynamics in the classroom.

Data from interviews and observations are analyzed qualitatively to identify themes related to the use of multimedia in ESL-speaking classrooms and the affordances and limitations of these tools. The analysis process involves: (1) familiarizing with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) constructing a coherent narrative. This inductive approach allows for the emergence of patterns and themes directly from the data, ensuring that the findings are grounded in the participants' experiences. The analysis aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how multimedia tools support or hinder the learning of English-speaking skills in a secondary school context, drawing on the perspectives of both students and teachers. Research questions and data collection methods concerning the research matrix of the study are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. *Research Matrix*

Research Question	Technique of Data Collection	Method of Data Analysis
1. How do lower secondary school students use multimedia in an English-speaking classroom?	Classroom Observations	Qualitative Data Analysis

2. What are the affordances and limitations of using multimedia in an English-speaking classroom?	Semi-structured Interviews	Qualitative Data Analysis
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FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Emerging Themes for Research Question One

In exploring how lower secondary school students utilize multimedia in English-speaking classrooms, the research unveiled a rich tapestry of pedagogical strategies and student engagements across three distinct multimedia platforms: Podcasts, Speech Recognition Software, and Prezi. These tools were employed in lessons focused on topics such as the spread of Aedes mosquitoes, the mosquito life cycle, and people and culture, offering diverse learning experiences and opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills in English. The findings from classroom observations and participant reflections reveal a nuanced understanding of multimedia's role in facilitating English language learning among lower secondary students. This exploration identified several key themes (Figure 1) that underscore the dynamic and interactive nature of multimedia-based learning, reflecting both its pedagogical value and the student's active engagement in the language acquisition process.

Theme 1: Active Group Discussion

Active group discussions, as highlighted in the observations, stand as a testament to the vibrant classroom dynamics fostered by multimedia tools. The spontaneity and eagerness exhibited by students during these discussions underscore a departure from traditional passive learning to a more interactive, student-centered approach. This transformation is significantly attributed to the pedagogical shift towards multimedia employment, promoting verbal interaction among students and catalyzing their active participation. As observed, *after listening to the podcast, during the group discussion, students were constantly discussing and sharing their points to each other. The class was not quiet at all. Students used their time to prepare for the presentation (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*. The literature on active engagement (Hirshfield & Koretsky, 2018; Liu, 2001; O'Connor et al., 2017; Remedios et al., 2008) underlines the importance of verbal contributions in group discussions, suggesting that such interactions are pivotal for deeper learning and understanding.

Theme 2: Frequent Interactions with Teachers

The observed increase in student-teacher interactions within multimedia-enriched indicated a learning environment where students feel more encouraged to seek clarification, feedback, and engage in meaningful conversations with their educators. This can be seen *when the teacher was walking around, students did speak to teacher in order to make sure the points they wrote was good enough to present. Some of the students from a few groups asked questions related to the topic as well (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*.

This theme aligns with research suggesting that positive student-teacher relationships are foundational to students' academic and social success (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Hagenauer & Vole, 2014; Rudasill & Rimm-Kaufman, 2009). Multimedia tools, by facilitating more dynamic classroom interactions, strengthen these relationships, enhancing the educational experience for students.

Theme 3: Speaking Spontaneously

The capacity for spontaneous speech, fostered through the use of multimedia, is critical for language acquisition. It reflects a level of comfort and proficiency in the target language that surpasses the mere ability to reproduce memorized phrases. One excerpt from the observation *shows most students who presented in front of the computer lab was able to speak spontaneously. They knew the main points and was able to explain it in their own words (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*. This theme resonates with the pedagogical emphasis on creating authentic, communicative contexts within the classroom, enabling students to apply their language skills in real-time conversations (Becker & Roos, 2016; Hughes, 2013). Such environments encourage learners to navigate through language with agility, fostering greater linguistic fluency and confidence.

Theme 4: Independent Responses

Multimedia tools have also been instrumental in cultivating students' ability to formulate and express independent responses. This aspect of learning is crucial for developing critical thinking and analytical skills, as it encourages students to engage with content on a deeper level, analyze information, and articulate their thoughts coherently. From the observation of this study, it was found that *students didn't need anyone's help to explain their thoughts or ideas. They were able to respond clearly using simple words that others can understand (Prezi Observation, Lesson 3, Karisma Class, 25.01.2023)*. The encouragement of independent responses within multimedia-enhanced lessons points towards a pedagogical shift favoring student autonomy, aligning with educational objectives prioritizing self-directed learning (Dhivya et al., 2023; Srivani & Hariharasudan, 2023).

Theme 5: Speaking Fluently

Fluency in speaking is a fundamental goal of language education, and its prominence within the observed multimedia-integrated classrooms highlights the efficacy of these tools in enhancing linguistic proficiency. During the classroom observation, *students were able to say the words and sentences without any difficulty (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*. This theme underscores the multimedia ability to provide diverse, contextualized language experiences, facilitating more natural and fluid language use among students. The emphasis on fluency aligns with the broader educational goal of preparing students to communicate in English across various domains and contexts effectively (Ghimire, 2022; Tleuzhanova et al., 2021).

Theme 6: Correct Intonation

The focus on correct intonation reflects the nuanced aspects of language learning that multimedia tools can address. Intonation is pivotal for effective communication, influencing meaning and emotion in spoken language. It was seen that *students knew how to say the words correctly. Most of the words said had correct rise and fall voice (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*. The observed improvements in students' intonation through multimedia usage highlight the potential of these tools to provide auditory models and practice opportunities that traditional teaching methods may lack, thereby enhancing students' overall pronunciation skills (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Lindale, 2023).

Theme 7: Right Rhythm

Rhythm, like intonation, is fundamental to the prosodic aspects of language that contribute to natural and comprehensible speech. The ability to speak with the right rhythm indicate a deeper linguistic competence and comfort with the language. In this study, during observation *students did not make mistakes when it comes to pronouncing with the right rhythm and were able to correct their mistakes using SpeechNotes (Speech Recognition Observation, Lesson 2, Karisma Class, 24.01.2023)*. The observed emphasis on rhythm within multimedia-enhanced classrooms supports students' pronunciation skills and their listening comprehension, as rhythm plays a crucial role in processing and understanding spoken language (Kawase et al., 2023; McAuley et al., 2020).

Theme 8: Correct Stress Patterns

Correct stress patterns are essential for clarity and intelligibility in speech. *Students knew which syllable to stress on and used the correct stress patterns (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023)*. The observation showed that multimedia tools aid in teaching correct stress patterns, suggesting these tools' capacity to address detailed aspects of pronunciation that significantly impact students' spoken English proficiency. This theme highlights the role of technology in refining students' phonological awareness and pronunciation, which are critical for effective communication (Dhivya et al., 2023; Wiranda et al., 2023).

Theme 9: Correct Pronunciation

The emphasis on correct pronunciation within the classroom observations points to the comprehensive approach of multimedia tools in language teaching, addressing both the macro and micro aspects of language learning. *During the observation, it was noticed that the pronunciation of the words they spoke is correct. Most of them used simple language and some used a few sophisticated vocabularies (Speech Recognition Observation, Lesson 2, Karisma Class, 24.01.2023)*. Pronunciation is a fundamental

component of language competency, affecting both comprehensibility and intelligibility. Using multimedia tools to enhance pronunciation reflects the broader educational imperative to equip students with the skills necessary for effective oral communication in English (Asratie et al., 2023; Quaid, 2018).

Theme 10: Active Use of Multimedia Tools

Students’ active use of multimedia tools underscores the interactive nature of modern language learning environments. *During the observation, students were focused in doing their work and finished their task earlier. They enjoyed listening to the Podcast and even took some of the points and words from the audio. They were also listening carefully as to what other students have to say (Podcast Observation, Lesson 1, Karisma Class, 23.01.2023).* This theme highlights how multimedia serves as a pedagogical tool and a medium through which students can actively engage with content, collaborate with peers, and develop a deeper connection with the language learning process. The enthusiasm and engagement observed suggest that multimedia tools can significantly enhance motivation and interest in language learning (Kumar et al., 2021; Peter, 2023).

In conclusion, this journal highlights the transformative role of multimedia tools in enhancing English language learning among lower secondary school students. Multimedia integration creates a dynamic and engaging classroom environment by fostering active group discussions, encouraging frequent teacher interactions, and promoting spontaneous and independent responses. The observed improvements in speaking fluency, correct intonation, rhythm, stress patterns, and pronunciation underscore the effectiveness of these tools in developing linguistic proficiency. Overall, the findings suggest that thoughtfully implemented multimedia strategies enrich the language learning experience and motivate students to actively engage with the content, ultimately leading to more effective language acquisition.

Figure 1. *Emerging Themes from Classroom Observations*

Classroom Observation	Emerging Themes
Podcast	Active Group Discussion
Speech Recognition Software	Frequent Interaction with Teachers
Prezi	Speaking Spontaneously
	Independent Responses
	Speaking Fluently
	Correct Intonation
	Right Rhythm
	Correct Stress Patterns
	Correct Pronunciation
	Active Use of Multimedia Tools

Emerging Themes for Research Question Two

Theme 1: Affordances of Using Multimedia Tools in English-Speaking Classroom

In general, the participants liked their English classes at school. Aiden, for instance, stated that one of his favourite classes in school is English language and that he often scores an A on his English exams. He believes that multimedia technologies offer several advantages that enhance his language learning. Aiden noted, "Using podcasts, speech recognition software, and Prezi really influences my learning experience in the classroom." He added that when these tools are used, "it’s entertaining to learn speaking skills" (Aiden, Line 40).

Additionally, the participants also described their experiences in learning English Language speaking skills as meaningful and fun. They found it easy to understand the topic and teacher-focused language skills in the classroom. The participants used the knowledge they learned and relate it to what they had learned before. This has made it easy for them to comprehend the topic (Aiden, Line 60). This has made the participants enjoy the teaching-learning process. They mentioned that they were not lost nor felt

bored during the lesson. They were having fun learning throughout the lesson, making it memorable and not easy to forget (Bob, Line 125; Cathy, Line 32; Elisha, Line 151).

Furthermore, the participants mentioned that another affordance of using the three tools in English-speaking classrooms was assistance in learning. The multimedia used in the classroom has aided them to learn English speaking skills. They mentioned that multimedia tools helped them learn challenging topics (Aiden, Line 43; Elisha, Line 24). The participants explained that it was easier to understand the topic and save time. When asked how else multimedia tools assisted them, most participants narrated that the multimedia tools are user-friendly. They further stated that this assisted their learning because the materials used in a traditional classroom were insufficient for them to understand the topic learned (Bob, Line 254; Cathy, Line 78; Don, Line 219; Elisha, Line 91).

Moreover, the participants added that the teacher always gives lessons in a regular classroom. Therefore, they cannot interrupt her or ask her questions in between since doing so may make her feel frustrated or irritated, which would disrupt her lecture. In contrast, the participants can inquire about information or even learn it from the tools when multimedia technologies were employed or in a computer lab (Aiden, Line 61; Elisha, Line 113). During the interview sessions, the participants mentioned that these tools helped them to prepare for exams and oral tests (Aiden, Line 253; Bob, Line 140; Elisha, Line 30).

Being lower secondary school students, the participants believed that one of the benefits of using multimedia tools in their English-speaking classroom is gaining knowledge. During the interview, the participants mentioned that they could learn new words, expanding their vocabularies (Don, Line 401). Most importantly, they learned new information and facts using these tools which is very beneficial for them in time to come (Aiden, Line 86; Bob, Line 144; Don, Line 112; Elisha, Line 115).

One of the main things that participants stressed during the interview was motivation to learn. They were motivated to learn English speaking skills when the multimedia tools were used in the classroom (Aiden, Line 118). Apart from that, the participants also mentioned that they were feeling extra excited to learn. They mentioned that usually it bored them to study, but when these tools were used, they were excited to know more about it (Aiden, Line 128; Bob, Line 84; Cathy, Line 149; Don, Line 137; Elisha, Line 33).

Another affordance of using multimedia tools, especially in English-speaking classrooms, is to have confidence in speaking. The participants mentioned that they hardly speak in the classroom because they were afraid of saying the wrong things or words but using multimedia tools has helped them to speak in public and among their classmates confidently (Aiden, Line 185). They claimed that they no longer felt afraid or anxious in the classroom because of the assistance they received from the multimedia tools. As a result, they could improve and polish their speaking abilities thanks to multimedia tools (Aiden, Line 195; Don, Line 79). Additionally, the participants felt reassured to speak in the classroom when they knew they spoke correctly and using proper English. Since they were able to practise the words during group discussion and learn certain words from the multimedia tools, they were also able to speak during the presentation (Aiden, Line 280; Bob, Line 85; Cathy, Line 413; Don, Line 74; Elisha, Line 35).

During the interview session, interaction in the classroom was another affordance of using multimedia in English-speaking classrooms. The participants had the opportunity to communicate with the teacher more during the teaching-learning process. They could immediately ask questions and receive answers from the teacher and this was very different for them compared to being in a traditional classroom. They were able to understand what the teacher was saying and the reasoning that the teacher gave was clear (Aiden, Line 185; Bob, Line 305; Cathy, Line 358; Don, Line 210; Elisha, Line 42).

During the activity and discussion, students were all required to exchange ideas and thoughts (Aiden, Line 216; Bob, Line 85). The active discussion between students and classmates and communication with teachers have made participants believe that when multimedia tools are used in the classroom,

there is active verbal communication among students and teachers (Aiden, Line 260; Bob, Line 300). Verbal communication abilities allow students to share knowledge about a subject with others. Some participants stated that they typically were reluctant to speak or present in front of their peers and the teacher in a classroom. However, with the use of multimedia tools in English-speaking classrooms, they were not only able to present the subject matter clearly and on their own but also with effective use of the English language (Aiden, Line 290; Bob, Line 186; Cathy, Line 97; Don, Line 88).

Another benefit of using multimedia tools in English-speaking classrooms is the learning approach. Students can focus in class and not get distracted when the teacher is teaching and also during the activity sessions. Even though the multimedia tools were there, they did not shift participants' attention to other things (Aiden, Line 130). Some participants explained that they were able to learn independently. They had the opportunity to ask questions during the lesson and research the topic in the classroom (Aiden, Line 67; Don, Line 139; Elisha, Line 142).

As a result, the participants believed that they were able to see some improvement in speaking competency. Some students claimed they could improve their speaking skills by gaining knowledge and brushing up skills (Aiden, Line 84). Furthermore, they can improve their fluency and pronunciation when they listen to the audio that the teacher plays in the classroom. The participants also described that they were able to use correct stress, intonation and rhythm (Aiden, Line 270). Most importantly, the participants were able to talk without stopping and also think of words that they were about to say spontaneously, hence they were more fluent when they spoke (Aiden, Line 278; Bob, Line 242; Cathy, Line 48; Don, Line 199; Elisha, Line 40).

Conclusively, the participants claimed that they experienced many affordances of using multimedia tools, particularly Podcast, Speech Recognition Software, and Prezi in an English-speaking classroom, including learning experiences, assistance in learning, knowledge gain, motivation to learn, confidence in speaking, interaction in class, learning approach, learning environment, and improvement in thinking skills and speaking competency.

Theme 2: Limitations of Using Multimedia Tools in English-Speaking Classrooms

As described above, the participants believed that multimedia tools have many benefits in English-speaking classrooms. Meanwhile, during the interview, they mentioned a few limitations of using these tools in the classroom and school. Most of the informants explained that there was insufficient technology in the school. There were limited multimedia tools and technology at times, and the teacher in school sometimes used the same technology, such as recordings and audio, due to this problem (Aiden, Line 261; Bob, Line 262; Don, Line 67).

Additionally, the participants also mentioned that there was a shortage of tools in the classroom. Even though there is a computer lab, the teacher in school only uses a phone and speaker during the lesson (Aiden, Line 99). Not to mention another limitation that students experienced in the English-speaking classroom was a network problem (Elisha, Line 121). The participants said that sometimes there would be internet issues such as slow connection (Aiden, Line 350; Bob, Line 281; Cathy, Line 329; Elisha, Line 123), although, during the three lessons using multimedia tools, this problem did not occur and disrupt the activities.

In conclusion, the limitations of using multimedia tools in English-speaking classrooms that students experienced include insufficient technology, network problems, lack of maintenance, and unfamiliarity with using multimedia tools.

Figure 2. *Emerging Themes for Affordances and Limitations of Using Multimedia Tools*

Category	Emerging Themes	Narrated By
Affordances	Independent & Personalized Learning	Aiden; Bob; Don; Elisha

	Improve Speaking Skills	Aiden; Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
	Build Confidence	Aiden; Don
	Engage with Teachers and Peers	Aiden; Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
	Reduce Speaking Anxiety	Aiden; Elisha
	Spontaneous Learning Process	Aiden; Elisha
	Better Learning Outcomes	Aiden; Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
	Enhance Critical Thinking Skills	Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
Limitations	Slow Internet Connection	Aiden; Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
	Limited Access to Learning Resources	Aiden; Bob; Cathy; Don; Elisha
	Technical Issues	Bob; Cathy; Elisha
	Unfamiliarity with Multimedia Tools	Don; Elisha

CONCLUSION

The exploration of multimedia use in English-speaking classrooms among lower secondary students in Malaysia unveils a multifaceted narrative of technological integration in education. This study, rooted in qualitative methodologies, has underscored the transformative potential of multimedia tools in fostering more engaging, interactive, and personalized learning environments. A dynamic picture has emerged through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, showcasing how podcasts, speech recognition software, and Prezi can significantly enhance English speaking skills. These multimedia platforms have facilitated active group discussions, fostered frequent interactions with teachers, encouraged spontaneous speaking, elicited independent responses, and promoted speaking fluency among students. The active engagement with multimedia tools has not only catered to diverse learning preferences but has also bridged the gap between traditional pedagogies and the digital competencies required in the 21st century. The findings from this study highlight the critical role of multimedia in complementing and extending traditional instructional methods, offering a rich tapestry of linguistic inputs and interactive practices that cater to the diverse needs of learners.

However, multimedia integration in the language learning process is not devoid of challenges. As revealed through the insights of participants Aiden, Bob, Cathy, Don, and Elisha, several limitations accompany multimedia tools usage, including slow internet connections, limited access to learning resources, technical issues, and a lack of familiarity with multimedia platforms. These challenges underscore the importance of ensuring equitable access to technological resources and providing adequate training and support for students and educators to fully leverage the potential of multimedia in education. The study's exploration into the affordances and limitations of using multimedia tools in English-speaking classrooms illuminates the need for a balanced approach that harnesses the benefits of digital technologies while addressing the infrastructural and educational disparities that may hinder their effective implementation. This study encountered several limitations, primarily its focus on a single secondary school, School A, in Klang, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, time constraints during the school year impacted data collection and analysis, requiring a faster pace that may have affected the depth of the research.

Summarily, this investigation into the use of multimedia in English-speaking classrooms among lower secondary students in Malaysia contributes to the ongoing discourse on educational technology and

language learning. It reaffirms the importance of integrating multimedia resources into language education to enhance engagement, improve speaking skills, and facilitate a more interactive and personalized learning experience. However, it also calls for a concerted effort among educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to address the challenges inherent in technology integration. By fostering an environment that supports digital literacy, provides equitable access to technological resources, and adopts innovative pedagogical strategies, the educational landscape can evolve to meet the demands of the digital age, thereby preparing students to excel academically and thrive in a globally interconnected world.

RECOMMENDATION

The findings from this study suggest several key recommendations for enhancing the teaching and learning of English through multimedia tools.

1. **Diverse Multimedia Integration:** Educators should incorporate a variety of multimedia resources, such as podcasts, speech recognition software, and Prezi in their English language instruction. This approach should not be limited to specific types of multimedia, as diverse tools can cater to different learning preferences and improve students' speaking skills.
2. **Attention to Student Needs:** Teachers and policymakers should leverage the insights gained from the interview analyses to better understand the affordances and limitations students experience while learning English. This understanding can inform the development of targeted instructional strategies that address these unique needs.
3. **Adoption of Constructivist Principles:** Future educational practices should draw upon constructivist theories, as outlined by Vygotsky and others, to create a more engaging and meaningful learning environment. This approach will encourage active participation and collaboration among students.
4. **Contextual Application in Malaysian Classrooms:** The study's findings should be adapted for practical use within Malaysian school settings, ensuring that multimedia strategies align with local educational contexts and student needs.

By addressing these recommendations, future research can contribute significantly to enhance multimedia-based English language education.

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