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STUDENT PERCEPTION IN USING MADLIPZ IN AN ENGLISH ORAL COMMUNICATION CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY IN UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH, MALAYSIA

Anna Lynn Abu Bakar[1*], Wan Hurani Osman[2], Sabariah Abd. Rahim[3], Nor Dawirah Rahman[4]

[1] Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
  Email: annalynn@ums.edu.my
[2] Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
  Email: wanosman@ums.edu.my
[3] Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
  Email: sab@ums.edu.my
[4] Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
  Email: dawirah@ums.edu.my
[*] Corresponding Author

Article Info:

Abstract:

The English language is seen as an important medium of communication between people especially in higher institutions in Malaysia and also in the working world. Thus, a lot of effort has been put in to producing students who are competent in communicating effectively in a different social and professional context. One of the ways in enhancing students' proficiency in English is by using Madlipz. Madlipz is an application that could be downloaded to the handphone. The application allows students to dub their voices and create their own dialogue or monologue based on the video clips that they chose. With regards to this, this study looks into the use of MadLipz in enhancing students' proficiency in English. Students who took Oral Communication in English were involved in this study. A mix-method approach has been applied to collect data for the purpose of the study. The findings of this study revealed that not only has MadLipz improved students' pronunciation in English, but the application has also improved students' self-esteem and confidence level to speak English.

Keywords:

Willingness to Communicate, Madlipz, Oral Communication

Introduction

English is widely known as a lingua franca or 'world language' and is widely spoken and written by people across the globe, officially and personally. According to the Thirusanku and Melor Md. Yunus (2012) English is an official language in 52 countries and has a wider distribution compared to other spoken languages. Where English is spoken as a second language, English is seen as an important and usually the official language but not the main language of the countries. Example for countries where English is spoken as a second language are India, the Philippines, Nigeria and Malaysia. These countries are ex-colonies of the United Kingdom or the United States.

With regards to Malaysia, the English language has been given the status of a second official language next to Bahasa Melayu which is the official language of the country. However, this is argued by Wahi, O'Neill & Chapman (2011) that English language may not essentially be the second language for Malaysian students as it could be the first, second, foreign or 'alien'. This is determined by the locality of where the students live. Students from urban area for example have a wider exposure to the language compared to those who are staying in the rural area. They have a wider contact to the English language and may come from homes where English is used, that leads to their competency in communicating in English (Gobel, Thang, Sidhu, Oon, and Chan,2013). On the other hand, students who live in rural areas, are most likely be using their mother tongue as medium of communication in the houseful. Compared to the students in the urban area, they have minimal or no contact to English outside of school and they are not in the environment where they are able to practice the language learnt in school.

Due to these restrains that students face, it is noted that, despite learning English for six years at elementary schools and five years in secondary school, Malaysian students' English oral competency level has always been an obstacle in securing success at university level as well as in job opportunities. It was also reported that one the contributing factors why school leavers and graduates are unable to secure a good job is because of their poor command in English (Spawa & Fauziah Hassan, 2013). This report is supported by a survey conducted by the Malaysian Government on Malaysian graduates of local universities where it was found that two out of three main reasons for the 60,000 Malaysian graduates failed to be employed are related to their proficiency in the English language. First, the graduates have poor English Language proficiency and second, they have poor oral communication skills in English (Malaysia Today, 2016) which is influenced by their inter group communication in the classroom. This is further supported by Liu, (2005) and Peng (2012) in their study that students' reluctance to engage in activities involving authentic oral communication in L2 has been a major concern in both English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) context.

Looking into the globalization era, speaking is considered as one of the language skills required for international communication (Anon, Ho & Melor, 2020) The English language is seen as an important medium of communication between people especially in higher institutions in Malaysia and also in the working world. Thus, a lot of effort has been put in to producing students who are competent in communicating effectively in different social and professional context. This can be seen when the Ministry of Education has made a lot of changes in making sure that the syllabus is aligned with the CEFR (Common European Framework for Reference Languages) requirements. As technology seems to be promising in enhancing students' learning as well as motivate them in learning, technology is seen to be integrated more in the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The aim of this study is to:
a) To discover students' perception in using Madlipz App in the classroom
b) To find out the effectiveness of the usage of the application among students in the English classroom

The research questions of this study are as follows,
a) What are students' perceptions towards the use of Madlipz in the English language classroom?
b) How effective is the use of Madlipz in the English language classroom?

Madlipz is a mobile app application which allows you to make voice over parodies and share with everyone. With regards to this, the study was conducted to look into the use of MadLipz in enhancing students' oral proficiency in English.

Literature Review

Speaking is one of the language skills that is important apart from reading listening writing skills and is highlighted as an international language used globally around the world (Tabita, 2013). Teaching speaking is not an easy skill to teach (Harmer,1991). One of the aims of teaching is to promote efficient communication to enable students to use the language as fluently as possible and apply the target language in their daily communication be it inside or outside the classroom (Khadijah,2017). Among the goals in teaching speaking is to develop fluency and the ability to communicate ideas effectively and confidently of the target language.

Thus, appropriate teaching method in the 21st century used by English language instructors should be geared to achieving this goal by encouraging and motivating students in learning speaking skills. The integration of technology in the teaching and learning process could assist English language instructors in engaging students' learning and participation in the classroom. Utilizing technology in language teaching has been gaining grounds nowadays especially in this globalization era not only in primary schools but also in secondary and higher learning institutions (Muhammad Kurniawan, Dewi Atikah, Sitti Nurfaidah, 2020). Ferreira et. al (2015) also stated that the use of mobile devices such as laptops, handphones and tables has grown widely in classroom teaching which has brough about a remarkable entry of technology in English teaching that caters the digital natives' interest and engage them in learning. Shyamlee (2012) shares the same view as she stated that the emergence and

development of technology and the application of it in teaching results to a favorable teaching tools in aiding the teaching and learning in the new era. This is a supported by a study conducted by Moreno and Vermeulen (2015) which revealed that the use of mobile apps made the students respond positively and more motivated in their language learning.

One of the mobile applications that could be used in the ESL classroom to help students in enhancing their speaking skills is by using Madlipz. Madlipz is a mobile application that could be downloaded to your handphone and enables users to dub their voices or do a voice over on video clips of their liking. This application allows the users to choose from a variety of video clips and doing a voice over using their own script creation based on their own creativity (Muhammad Kurniawan Rachman et. al, 2020). This feature could be utilized by English language instructors to be integrated in their teaching and learning to enhance students' performance in their oral proficiency in English.

Methodology
This study employed a multi method approached. Multi-methods research is when two or more sources of data or research methods are used to investigate the research question(s). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, it employs a multi method design which offers a possible solution for answering complex social research questions (Greene, 2015).

A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data for the purpose of the study. A semi- structured interview was also applied in the data collection. The participants that were involved were students who took Oral Communication in English were involved in this study and responded to the questionnaire that was distributed to them via google form. A descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data gathered from the questionnaire given. There were 10 questions in the questionnaire that the students were required to answer. 4 questions were about the participants' background, and the last 6 questions asked about students' perception in using the application in an English classroom.

The participants are undergraduate students who took Oral Communication in English in Sem 2 2020/21. In the course the English language instructor introduced the Madlipz application to the students in order to enhance their oral communication skills. In the course the participants were required to choose a video clip from the application and do a spontaneous voice over in English based on the clips that they have chosen. They were asked to complete the task as individuals and with a partner.

Results and Discussion
In order to answer the research questions of this study, the instrument used was a self-administered questionnaire. The data of the interview was analyzed using descriptive analysis. The result of the findings resulted into 3 main area which the benefits of Madlipz, the disadvantages of Madlipz and the suggestions for improvement on using Madlipz in the classroom.

Table 1. Gender

Gender
165 responses

- Female
- Male

28.5%

71.5%
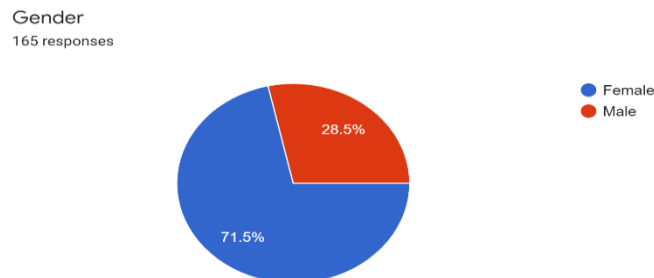
The demographic profile of the participants is as presented above. Table 1 shows 71.5% of the participants are female while 28.5% are male.
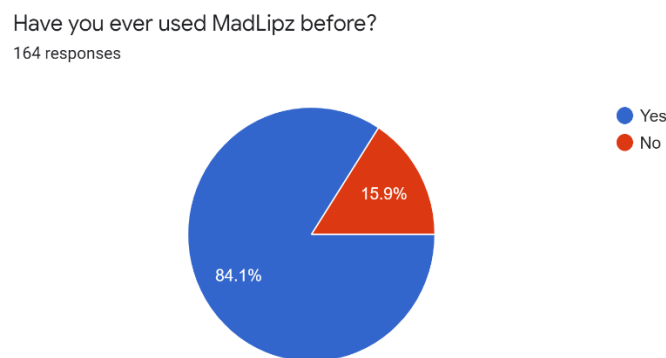
Table 2. Madlipz Usage

Have you ever used MadLipz before?
164 responses

- Yes
- No

15.9%

84.1%

Table 2 above presents the usage of Madlipz. Out of the 165 students who participants to the questionnaire, 84.1 % of the participants claimed that the have used the application before while 15.9% of the participants have not. This finding could probably mean that most of the participants are more exposed to the application compared to those who have not used Madlipz.
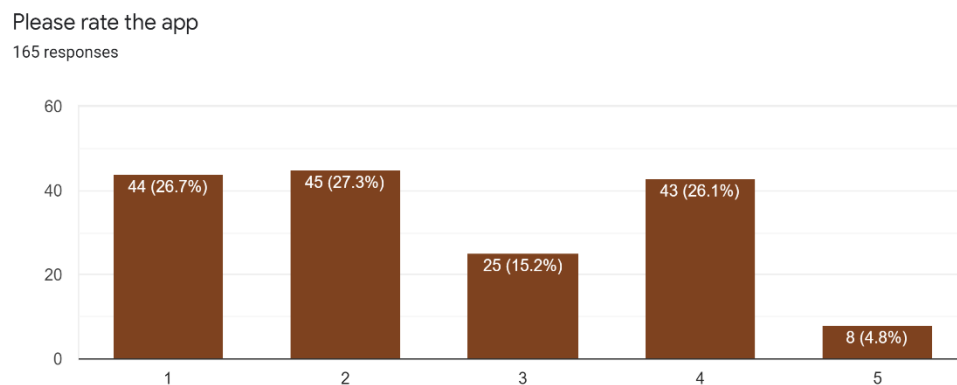
Table 3. Rating of Madlipz

Please rate the app
165 responses

	1	2	3	4	5
	44 (26.7%)	45 (27.3%)	25 (15.2%)	43 (26.1%)	8 (4.8%)

Table 4 above shows that 54% of the participants find that the Madlipz application helpful. It is interesting to note that 30.9 % of the participants find that the application not helpful to their learning of English with regards to oral communication.

Benefits of Madlipz

The qualitative data that was collected from the semi structured interview revealed 3 thematic areas on the benefits of Madlipz application which are fun, user friendly and educational that made them like using the application in the classroom.

Table 4. Benefits of Madlipz : Fun

Fun	
Participants	Remarks
2	"I find the application fun"
5	"It's fun and enjoyable to use"
10	"It's fun and makes me laugh nonstop"
9	"Fun, enjoyable and great app"
8	"It has funny content"
4	"Its fun because we can use our own dialogue"

Fun

Table 4 above shows one of the elements that made the participants like using Madlipz is fun. The video clips are funny, interesting and entertaining. Apart from that there are a variety of video clips that the participants could choose from to make a voice over. Most of the participants unanimously agreed that the application is fun and enjoyable. Apart from that, the application also gives a sense of humour to the user.

Table 5. Benefits of Madlipz : User Friendly

User Friendly	
Participants	Remarks
8	"The application is user friendly"
6	"It's amazing and easy to use"
9	"It's easy to use"
1	"It is easy to use, anybody could do it"
2	"The application is easy to use and edit"
4	"Madlipz is easy and interesting application"

User Friendly

Table 5 above shows another element that was mentioned by the participants that made them like using the application in class is that the application is user friendly. This is because the participants find the application easy to use in terms of recording and editing their voice by changing it to sound different from their original voice.

Table 6. Benefits of Madlipz : Educational

Educational	
Participants	Remarks
6	"Based on the video we choose; we can use simple word or can make conversation ourselves"
5	"The app can help me improve my English; it can help me rearrange my speaking sentences"
2	"I can learn how to give reaction towards the video"
8	"It allows me to think more creatively"
4	"It helps to be more creative"
3	"It gives me a lot of ideas and teach me how to speak English"

Educational

The third main element as shown in table 6 reveals another benefit of Madlipz is that is is educational. The application allows the participants to practice their pronunciation. Apart from that it helps them reduce their shyness and builds up their confidence as it gives them the opportunity to use the target language. The participants unanimously agreed that Madlipz helps to improve their English and to think more creative.

Downside of Madlipz

Another short question that was asked was for the participants to share their dislike in using the application in the classroom. The result of the data showed that there are some downsides of the application that puts off the participants in using the application. There are three main downsides of the application which are it uses a lot of data, duration of video clips, and advertisement.

Table 8. Downside of Madlipz: Uses a lot of data

Uses a lot of data	
Participants	Remarks
1	"The application uses a lot of data"
5	"You need highspeed internet to use it"
8	"Needs more data to use the application"
6	"The application uses internet data"
4	"Takes a lot of data and crashes at some point"
3	"The app needs access to internet"

Uses A Lot of Data

Table 7 displays one of the downsides of Madlipz which is it uses a lot of data. Most of the participants expressed that the application uses a lot of data and it needs access to the internet in order to use. This could be a problem for some participant as not everyone has Wifi at home and they would require to buy data to gain internet access.

Table 9. Downside of Madlipz: Duration of video clips

Duration of video clips	
Participants	Remarks
1	"The duration of the video is too short"
5	"It has limited time for each video"
7	"Some of the duration clips are too short"
4	"Majority of the duration of the videos are too short"
9	"We can dub short video only"
3	"The videos are too short"

Duration of Video Clips

Other downsides of Madlipz that was highlighted was most of the video clips in the application was too short. From the table above it is highlighted by the participants that most of the video clips in the application is too short. The duration of the clips was between 5 to 15 seconds which may not be enough for the participants to create a complete sentence.

Table 10. Downside of Madlipz: Advertisement

Advertisement	
Participants	Remarks
8	"It contains a lot of advertisement"
3	"Too much ads"
7	"The app has too much ads"
2	"Too many ads when using the application"
1	"The app is slow coz of too many ads"
6	"There's too many ads that blocks me"

Advertisement

Table 10 above shows another downside of Madlipz which is having a lot of interruption of advertisement when using the application. Most of the participants agreed that the advertisement when using the application is frustrating. This could put off the participant from using the application in the classroom. Certain mobile applications have advertisement in order to use it for free. This could be one of the methods used by the person who created the application to get users to buy the application for a certain amount of fee to avoid the interruptions of advertisement that could be very annoying.

Suggestion on The Use of Madlipz

The findings of the interview revealed some suggestions to improve the implementation of Madlipz in an ESL classroom. The findings of the data with relation to the suggestion on the use of Madlipz could be categorized into 3 main areas which are 1) the technical aspect of the application itself, 2) the content of the application and 3) the implementation of Madlipz in the classroom.

Table 11. Suggestion: Technical Aspects of Madlipz

Technical	
Participants	Remarks
3	"Use the app off line so can save data"
8	"Put up more videos in the application"
4	"Increase the duration of the videos"
5	"Make a voice changer on the app. This will make many more users to try the app"
6	"Needs more content that is suitable for education"
1	"Provide a video with more monologue or dialogue with some recommended script"
2	"Add speech to text feature in the app"

Technical Aspects of Madlipz

From the findings as shown in table 11, majority of the participant suggested that there should be a speech-to-text feature with a voice command provided in the application. This feature could help users of Madlipz to pronounce the words correctly following the voice command of the application. Another element related to technicality would be to increase the duration of the video so that the users are able to say more thus enabling them to have the opportunity to practice the target language. The participants also suggested that the application could be used offline to save time and avoid lagging issues due to the instability of the internet. By having this feature, it could help the users to complete their task faster and have no issues in uploading their work on the respective platforms that they are required to by their English language instructors.

Table 12. Suggestion: Content of Madlipz

Content	
Participants	Remarks
9	"Can add the subtitles into the video clip so users can read the words"
6	"Add more educational videos for voice over for the purpose of learning"
4	"The app could have a sample script to do a monologue or dialogue for new users"
1	"Add a lot more of educational content"
8	"Have update video about facts and news that has a longer duration"
2	"Put more education about English that can help people to understand and learn more about oral communication"

Content of Madlipz

In terms of content as shown in table 12, the participants suggested that the application should add more educational videos to do voice over for the purpose of learning. The participants also suggested that subtitles should be provided in the videos for the users to be able to practice their pronunciation by mimicking the pronunciation provided in the video. Apart from that, the participants also suggested that a sample script to be available if the users would want to not only practice a dialogue but also have an idea in creating their own dialogue.

Table 13. Suggestion: Implementation of Madlipz in Classroom

Implementation	
Participants	Remarks
4	"This app should be used every week for students in order to increase their confidence level"
6	"Watch videos that use English and try to follow the way they speak"
7	"Apply a specific topic or theme when choosing the video, so students could create the dialogue or monologue based on the theme"
5	"To the task with a partner"
8	"Students present their video to the class and share their view and comments for improvement"
10	"Teacher should assign task for students from the app"

Implementation of Madlipz in The Classroom

Table 13 revealed that the participants would like that Madlipz be used in every class. They also suggested that the task to be done with a friend apart from just doing it individually. This is probably because it would make the task more interesting as well as enabling them to practice using the target language with their friends or classmates. The participants also suggested that the choice of videos from the application could be based on themes or topic of the lesson. This would give a sense of uniformity of the choice of videos by the users as well as making it easier for the English language instructors too evaluate the videos done by the students.

Conclusion

In general, it is hoped that by using Madlipz app in the English language classroom, students are able to improve their proficiency in the language apart from improving their self-confidence to speak spontaneously using the app. The application not only helps boost students speaking abilities but also fosters their creativity in coming up with interesting and meaningful dialogues. It is also hoped that English Language Instructors are able to use this app to assist them in their teaching of speaking in the English Language classroom not only during face to face lesson but also could apply it when conducting an online lesson with the students.

However, there are some downside of the application that English language instructors need to take account and find their way around it so that they could make full use of the application in their teaching. Apart from that students could also benefit more out of the application thus enhancing and improving their oral communication skills.

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