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## The Development of Web-Based Speaking Resource for ESL Learners

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### Abstract

The use of web-based technology in teaching language skills to English as Second Language (ESL) learners has generated interest among educators and instructional developers. However the use of web-based learning in teaching speaking skills within local secondary school Malaysian context is still at its early stage. Thus this is a conceptual paper on a study which aims to develop and evaluate a speaking resource known as the Let's Speak. The resource provides assistance towards secondary school students, especially in Malaysia sub-urban and rural areas who lack high interest to speak in English language. The resource will be developed using the ADDIE Model in order to determine students' needs, establish design, develop, implement and evaluate the resource. A questionnaire will be developed based on Davis' Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) research framework to measure: (i) usefulness; (ii) ease of use; (iii) ease of learning and (iv) the satisfaction level of secondary school students utilising the speaking resource. The research data will be collected from 250 secondary school students in East Coast of Malaysia. This data will then be analysed using descriptive analysis in determining the ESL learners, teachers and experts' response towards the resource in needs analysis stage.

*Keywords: web-based learning, TESL, speaking skills*

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### 1.0 Introduction

The use of web-based learning in teaching has been adopted in current second language classrooms due to the advantages of asynchronous and synchronous learning. Learners will be able to engage in meaningful interactions between learners, learners and instructor and learners and the web content (Woo, 2014) regardless of time and space (Park & Slater, 2014). This will encourage learning to continuously happen regardless the learners are in classroom or outside of formal teaching hours. The more practice that the learners get, the more fluent their language proficiency will be (Nor Dalila, 2016). The introduction of web-based learning in the teaching of English speaking skills is aimed to improve ESL learners' speaking skills. This is a conceptual paper of the development and evaluation of an ESL speaking resource for secondary learners in Terengganu.

### 2.0 Background of Study

ESL learners have been taught speaking skills in local classrooms through teacher-based activities and face-to-face interactions (Nor Dalila, 2016). The activities commonly carried-out in English classes include sentences and phrases drilling, fill-in-the-blanks exercise and role play (Appel et al., 2014). These activities focuses on a predetermined set of dialogue that the educator has prepared and the ESL learners are required to repetitively practise speaking using them. This is to ensure that the ESL learners will be able to master the set phrases and sentences, while enabling them to carry out real-life conversation based on the phrases learnt. However, due to big class size (30-40 learners) thus educators are facing challenges to provide individual feedback to the learners (Har, 2015). The teacher's feedback is important as it allows the ESL learners to determine their weaknesses and improve their speaking performance. Thus it is crucial for the teachers to be able to provide the ESL learners with sufficient opportunities to practise and receive feedback on their spoken exercises and practises.

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There have been numerous local studies reported on the use of web-based learning in among tertiary learners (Raihana, 2016; Tamil Selvan, 2016) and ESL reading and literature (Rashidah, 2013; Juhaida, 2015), however there is still room for development of English speaking resources dedicated for secondary school ESL learners. Hence this study tries to focus on the development and evaluation of Let's Speak resource which adapts ADDIE model and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in its instructional design.

### 3.0 Literature Review

Web-based learning is defined as the process of teaching and learning through World Wide Web or the Internet involving technology-integrated curriculum, computational devices and wireless network-learning (Alessi & Trollip 2001; Adeyemo et al. 2013). It includes e-learning tools such as computers, laptops, smartphones, the availability of broadband or Internet access and Wi-Fi networks (Liu et al. 2014). These advancement in technology has created a better opportunity for the ESL learners to allow themselves learn English speaking skills using web-based learning tools. Through the use of Internet, ESL learners are able to learn in a more flexible learning environment (Liu et al. 2014). This is made possible through the concept of ubiquitous learning whereby there is no time and location barrier, which allows learning to take place regardless of the location and period (Miangah & Nazerat 2012; Jaradat 2014).

Effective English speaking class ensures the ESL learners to practise the language (English) in situations which consists similar features to real life communication. Thus, adopting the purposeful language learning or 'learning language for a purpose' allows the educator to impart real-life communication. In order to achieve this, ESL teachers should provide a supportive environment or learning resource to encourage the use of real-life communication as much as possible and improve ESL learners' speaking proficiency. Unfortunately, there is lack of opportunities for the learners to practice English outside the classroom due to time limitation. Furthermore Liu (2009) stated that ESL learners in certain schools suffer from lack of appropriate English learning resources such as only focusing on textbooks and audio CDs. Therefore, there is a need to ensure ESL educators overcome this problem through the use of web-based learning and allows learners to maximize their learning. Web-based speaking resources and programs have shown a significant effect on ESL learners' speaking performance (Wang & Young, 2012; Wang & Young 2014). Wang & Young (2014) programmed an "intelligent computer assisted speaking language" (iCASL) system. iCASL integrated ASR (automatic-system-response) method and pedagogical corrective feedback. The positive results shown in terms of positive perception towards the iCASL resource, improved speaking performance, and self-paced learning among ESL learners proves a positive future in the use of web-based learning in speaking skills.

Technology Acceptance Model or TAM (Davis 1989) is a robust model and widely used in other web-based learning research (Juhaida 2015). It explains the use of technology, which is associated with the user's intention and the user's intention is associated to the user's attitude towards the program (Juhaida 2015). The two factors which are perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) determines users' acceptance towards the technology (Kallamarthodi & Vaithiyanathan 2011). Perceived Usefulness (PU) is based on users' belief in the program's capability to improve their work performance (Abu-Dalbouh 2013). Meanwhile, Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) is defined as the ability to use the program without needing much physical and mental effort (Abu-Dalbouh 2013). The users believe that the use of the web-based learning can improve their performance (PU) with much ease (PEU). Both PU and PEU have a significant effect on user's satisfaction toward the use of the program (Adedoja et al. 2013).



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## 4.0 Conceptual Framework

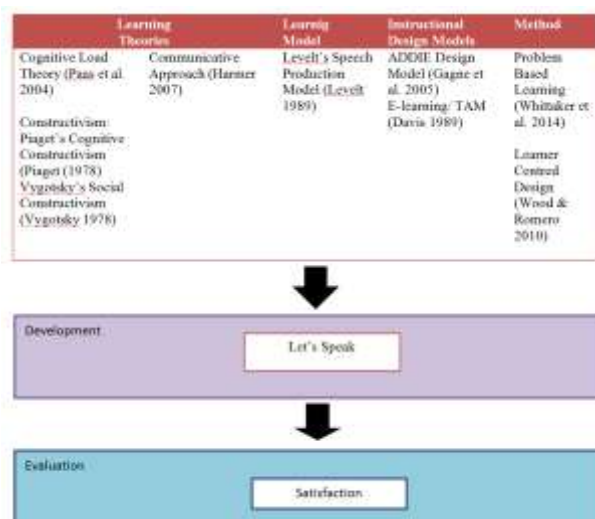


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework of the study

This research is based on several learning theories such as Communicative Approach (Harmer, 2007), Piaget’s Cognitive Constructivism (Piaget, 1978) and Vygotsky’s Social Constructivism (Sultan et al., 2011). It also includes Cognitive Load Theory (Pass et al., 2004) and Levelt’s Speech Production Model (Levelt, 1989) in the development stage of the ESL speaking resource. In presenting the input and creating the activities and exercises, the researcher adapts the problem based learning (Whittaker et al., 2014) and Learner Centred Design by Wood & Romero (2010). TAM and ADDIE Model will be the basis of the development and evaluation of the resource. It will take into consideration of two main factors which are the learners’ motivation factor and let’s speak factor, while the evaluation will based on the ESL learners’ satisfaction towards the Let’s Speak resource.

## 5.0 Research Questions

There are three main research questions for this research:

- RO1. To examine the ESL learners’ response towards the Let’s Speak resource.
- RO2. To examine the teachers’ response towards the Let’s Speak resource.
- RO3. To examine the experts’ response towards the Let’s Speak resource.

## 6.0 Methodology

The three main research questions will be analysed during the needs analysis phase in the ADDIE model. This research utilises a quantitative approach which is supported with qualitative data collection method. 30 mixed ability ESL learners from Kuala Terengganu Form 4 secondary schools will be chosen to participate in the needs analysis phase. These ESL learners have similar level of English proficiency and background as the respondents in the evaluation stage. 5 English teachers and 3 ICT experts will also be the respondents for this phase of the study. The ESL learners, teachers’ and experts will be given a survey questionnaire that will determine their opinion and attitude towards the use of web-based resource in the teaching of English speaking skills. Their response will be used to guide the development and evaluation of the Let’s Speak resource. The questionnaire will be supported with interview transcription for the ESL learners and teachers. Their responses will provide invaluable information on the way they perceive learning through web and the way the resource content should be structured.



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The survey questionnaire will be analysed using descriptive analysis while the interview will be transcribed and thematic analysis will be carried out to determine the recurring themes.

## 7.0 Conclusion

This conceptual paper has presented the background, theories and models underlying the study, research questions and methodology of the study. The main aim of this conceptual paper is to present the needs analysis stage of the development of the Let's Speak resource. It mainly adapts the ESL learners, teachers and expert's opinion on the use of web-based learning in developing the resource. It is hoped that through this research, suitable and successful learning resource can be developed to suit the ESL learners' needs. This research is only focused on the development and evaluation of the web-based learning resource for rural and sub-urban ESL learners in Terengganu area thus further study is needed to ascertain other populations' reception and satisfaction towards this type of web-based resource.

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