

INTEGRATED CLASSROOM-CHATBOT EXPERIENCE : AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION FOR ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Both in traditional and online English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, interactions between teachers and peers are indeed needed to practice the targeted language. However, in classes attended by a big number of mixed ability learners, these interactions can hardly as effective as is expected. Along with limited available time for studying more about the language in the classroom as Foreign Language Learning (FLL), learners rarely use the target language in their day-to-day life or interacting with a native speaker, and this lack completes its complexity. Therefore, the writer argues that integrating chatbot in the classroom as an alternative solution to cope with learners' lack of interactions using English in the classroom and real life. This paper is a position paper in which the writer presents her arguable opinion on why integrating chatbots in EFL learning can be an alternative solution.

Keywords: EFL, FLL, Integrated Classroom, Chatbot Experience

INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a Foreign Language in big classrooms with mixed ability learners tends to be ineffective. The ultimate goal of learning a foreign language is to able to use it as a medium for communication, as a tool for interacting with native speakers or others speaking the language. In this case, English has been the most frequently used language in the world as it is admitted as one of the international languages used worldwide. Nonetheless, EFL learners often do not have the luxury to learn from native speakers nor to interact with English-talking people outside their classroom. Teachers usually tried to surmount this by assigning their students to do tasks in pairs or in a group which is still impeded by insufficient time, lack of confidence, and unsatisfactory feedback (Fryer and Carpenter, 2006).

Chatbots are useful for both language learners and teachers. Language learners have their prerogative right to manage their own learning time and place. The bot can be functioned intensively and endlessly as per learners' necessity. These learners feel free from intimidating facial expression, remarks, or judgment that might come up from peer to peer practice for

making errors or even from the teacher. Teachers, on the other hand, are automatically assisted by the bots for limited direct teacher-learner interaction time, working on building learners' confidence and providing automatic different feedback for learners with diverse competence (Fryer and Carpenter, 2006; Haristiani, 2019; Pham, Pam, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Cao, 2018, and Kiely, 2019, Norton, 2020).

As chatbot usage for language learning arises, especially for English Language Learning, its integration to the classroom practice has been kept to a minimum or separated from the EFL classroom learning since the learners learn via chatbot such as Duolingo and Mondly in a level which is different from what has been set in syllabus created for them. Although those bots still support their learning, the goals of the EFL classroom are not quite similar for it may offer different vocabulary, grammatical or expression points. The bots are also created at such a level that every learner might not able to adjust it with their classroom learning. Moreover, those chatbots are created for global learners that put aside the diverse understanding of the culture embedded in the target language. Learners probably are capable of using the language, but the context itself is still vaguely comprehended. Integrating chatbot in EFL learning can be an alternative solution, by considering the right chatbot correlated with the syllabus offered in the classroom and or creating a chatbot that does not have to be significantly smart as long as it covers the goals planned in the curriculum.

METHOD

The paper is a position paper and built by literature reviews on the prior study regarding chatbot for language learning. Resources are varying, from journal, conference proceedings, websites, e-books, to any other related sources.

DISCUSSION

Providing Sufficient Learning Time and Place for Learning

Chatbot with its connate amenity offer language learners to practice English whether it is in specific such as grammar, vocabulary even idiomatic expression, or even as a speaking partner and writing tutor in general, enable these learners to do their activity in their chosen devices, time and place. The function of the chatbot has been extremely altered and influenced interaction in cyberspace whether it is reading to writing or listening to speaking. Many chatbots are built

for language learning and offer various ways of learning. In the future, the possibility of having a chatbot as an impeccable partner for learning a language is inevitable since this tool enables learners to learn in any place and at their own time and pace (Dale, 2016; Fryer, Coniam, Carpenter, & Lăpuşneanu, 2020).

EFL teaching is thriving in a diverse formulation, yet, putting its concerns on learning personalization which stimulating interest in digitalization. Internet of things has touched EFL and websites on learning English are easily accessed, even so, sorting out qualified sources from the internet consumes both learners and teacher's time and energy. Chatbot as a tool ameliorates the situation by providing the most related sources that learners and teachers are empowered by managing effective time in EFL learning since learners are given the convenience of having direct and appropriate sources to be used without wasting time in searching, sorting, and considering them.

Upscaling Learners' Self Confidence

Both learners, learning in formal institutions or autodidact possibly getting benefit from the chatbot. As a machine and tools, this chatbot may repeat the activity in repetition and this kind interaction of interaction when it involves human beings would be a problem for boredom, judgment, humiliation even judgment. The encumbrance gotten from being judged by a teacher or peers particularly for low competence learners is perchance annihilated that learners know for sure they will not get any negative response from the bot (Kiely, 2019). Goda, Yamada, Matsukawa, Hata, & Yasunami (2014) studied EFL learners involved in group discussion and observe the effect of having interaction with a chatbot before the discussion. The results show the increase in learners' participation in discussion and unfortunately, the use of a chatbot in such a short time on their research had not led to, substantial effects on affect terms cognition and behavior of learners are escalating. In conclusion, it escalates the number of learners' participation during the afterward discussion, nevertheless, it fails to show an upsurge in learners' critical this insufficiency, then, argue that it is due to insufficient time given to the learners as part of a participant in the longer-term and employing a chatbot for a longer-term feasibly contribute different effect on learners' critical thinking.

Learners incline to be at ease in interaction with a bot if it compares to their human peers or teacher (Syawar, 2017). This inclination leads to a comfortable feeling that enables chatbot

delivering to diminish the feeling of being ashamed in the virtual interaction milieu (Fryer & Nakao, 2009). Feeling ashamed in the learning process is not only shrinking learners' motivation in learning but also their self-confidence. Losing self-confidence initiates disruption in learning and it, therefore, should be prevented. A chatbot, astoundingly, creates a free-shame milieu for the learners no matter how low their competence or how many errors they have during the interaction. This positive atmosphere upscale learners' self-confidence for they are familiar with using a bot and naturally impacts their interaction with a real human. Kim (2016) also discovers that chatbots effectively boost learners' trust, confidence, enthusiasm, and curiosity in English. As they dispose of their apprehension and tension related to English, learning it will turn out to be entertaining.

Improving Specific Learning Points

Specific points of learning acquired by EFL learners are simply upgraded by utilizing a chatbot. Kim (2016, 2019) investigated whether or not using a chatbot improve EFL proficiency levels and grammar skills, and proved that involving a chatbot does assist these learners well and upgrade their competence level in speaking and grammar. She found that a chatbot motivated learners to initiate the interaction in English to a greater extent. Learners have the opportunity to go back and forth for learning grammar. They might choose to reiterate a grammatical point to their comprehension and leave other points as it has been mastered.

Providing Direct Feedback

The chatbot provides direct feedback to a learner that is way faster than teachers or peers might reply. Waiting time for these responses due to teacher limitation for handling more than a learner is sometimes what frustrates both learners and their teacher. This can be worst when the class is attended by a big number of learners in consort with their mixed ability in EFL. One learner needs dissimilar exact time to consult with the teacher for their variances in mastering EFL. (Kılıçkaya, 2020). Chatbots as conversational agents sustain the response whenever learners interact with them. On top of that, a very simple chatbot keeps on giving feedback aside from contributing the precise expected response for its limitation structure on expression or sentence programmed.

In specific learning points such as vocabulary, grammatical points, a chatbot enables to distribute accurate feedback, and it is more impressive than that of humans. The teacher might

slip off in examining learners' tasks, even less other learners for their competence, perhaps, far down the teacher. There is also a possibility that peers' feedback is misleading because of the gap of competence and lack of knowledge on EFL.

CONCLUSION

A chatbot can be one alternative solution to learn English in supporting both in EFL traditional and online classroom. Integrating chatbot in EFL means that making use of it inside and outside the classroom to enrich learning. Selecting the appropriate bots or creating them for specific EFL learning goals should be put into consideration since not one of the bots is created to all EFL learning goals. When the right bot is employed, the learners will get the benefit for this chatbot to contribute in providing sufficient time and place for learning, upscaling learners' confidence, improving specific learning points, providing direct feedback, and achieve more goals than they merely work with human as teacher or peers.

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