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Leveraging Cricket Videos for Enhancing English Speaking Skills: An Experimental Approach in a Rural Context

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of watching cricket post-match presentations specifically, winning captains' speeches from the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 and ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 on the speaking abilities of third-year B.Sc. Statistics students at Rajah Serfoji Government College, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India. Twenty students were randomly selected, but two students could not continue due to practical constraints. The experiment was conducted over five contact hours and followed three stages: pre-test, while-test, and post-test. Students were divided into control and experimental groups based on pre-test performance. The experimental group received scaffolding materials such as transcripts and glossaries, while the control group watched the videos without assistance. The results indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in speaking performance. The study highlights the effectiveness of cricket-based content in enhancing language skills. Limitations include a small sample size and the absence of female participants. Future research should expand the sample and include diverse video content.

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Introduction

Speaking proficiency is a crucial skill in second language (L2) acquisition, yet many learners struggle due to factors such as anxiety, fear, and lack of exposure to authentic spoken discourse. In the Indian educational context, particularly in rural settings, students often have limited opportunities to engage in spoken English practice. To address this gap, this study explores the use of cricket post-match presentations as an engaging and contextually relevant tool to improve students' speaking abilities. Given the popularity of cricket in India, it is hypothesized that students' interest in the sport will enhance their motivation and participation in the learning process. This study investigates the impact of watching cricket post-match presentations specifically, winning captains' speeches from the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 and ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 on the speaking skills of third-year B.Sc. Statistics students.

Literature Review

There are some review mentioned below, there are…
Authentic Materials in Language Learning, Gilmore (2007) emphasizes the significance of authentic materials in L2 learning, arguing that exposure to real-life spoken discourse enhances comprehension and speaking proficiency. Cricket post-match presentations, being natural and spontaneous, serve as an authentic language input for students. The Role of Motivation in Language for language acquisition, Dörnyei (2005) highlights the importance of motivation in language learning. When learners engage with content that aligns with their interests, such as

cricket, their willingness to participate and practice increases, leading to improved speaking skills. Scaffolding in L2 Learning, Vygotsky (1978) introduced the concept of scaffolding, which involves providing learners with structured support to help them develop language skills. In this study, scaffolding materials like transcripts and glossaries with Tamil meanings were used to assist students in understanding the video content and improving their spoken output. The Impact of Video-Based Learning, Mayer (2009) discusses the cognitive benefits of multimedia learning, suggesting that videos enhance retention and comprehension by combining visual and auditory input. The use of cricket videos provides a rich multimodal learning experience for students. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Speaking Skills, Ellis (2003) advocates for task-based language teaching as an effective approach to developing speaking skills. By engaging in meaningful tasks, such as analyzing and discussing cricket speeches, students improve their ability to express thoughts and ideas fluently.

This study builds upon these theoretical foundations to examine the effectiveness of using cricket post-match presentations as a pedagogical tool for enhancing L2 speaking proficiency.

Methodology

A total of 20 students who were studying in the third year of the B.Sc. Statistics program at Rajah Serfoji Government College, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India, were randomly selected for the experimental study. However, after the pre-test, two students were unable to continue the experiment due to practical constraints. The experiment was planned to be completed within five contact hours. A selected task, namely 'watching cricket post-match presentation—winning captain's speech (ICC Champions Trophy

2025 and ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024) videos,' was utilized for this experiment.

The participants were aged between 19 and 20 years and belonged to rural backgrounds, with most of their parents engaged in farming. Interestingly, all the students were highly interested in cricket, which was determined through general questions such as 'Do you like sports?' and 'Do you like playing/watching cricket?'.

The experiment followed three steps: pre-test, while-test, and post-test. In the first step, to assess the students' existing speaking abilities, they were asked to speak on self-chosen topics such as 'Internet,' 'Friendship,' 'First day at college,' 'School tour,' and 'Sports.' Initially, hesitation was observed among the students due to factors such as anxiety, fear, and shyness. However, after receiving motivation, they began speaking, and their performance was recorded using a Transcend MP3 recording device. During the experimental phase, the students were divided into two groups such as control and experimental group based on their pre-test performance. Two selected videos were downloaded from YouTube. Scaffolding materials, including transcripts and glossaries with Tamil meanings, were prepared by the researchers. The experimental group was provided with these scaffolding materials and guided assistance while watching the videos, whereas the control group received only the videos without any additional support.

The findings indicated that the students in the experimental group performed better than those in the control group. However, certain limitations were observed in the study. Only male students participated, and the sample size was limited. Additionally, only two selected videos were utilized, and the study was conducted within restricted contact hours. For future studies, it is recommended that female students be included in the research. A larger sample size should be considered, and a variety of videos should be incorporated to enhance accessibility and effectiveness.

Results and Discussion

The study aimed to analyze the impact of watching cricket post-match presentations on the speaking abilities of third-year B.Sc. Statistics students. The results were assessed through pre-test and post-test evaluations, comparing the performance of the experimental group (which received scaffolding materials and guidance) and the control group (which only watched the videos without assistance). The pre-test scores indicated that both groups had similar initial speaking proficiency levels. However, after the intervention, the experimental group showed significant improvement in various aspects of spoken English, including fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary usage. The control group also exhibited some progress but to a lesser extent.

Table 1

Group	Average pre –test score	Average post-test score
Experimental group	4.5	8.2
Control group	4.6	6.1

In the post-test, students' performance was carefully noted by the researcher. The control group students fumbled in their speech and stagnated during their responses. Most notably, they repeated the same words multiple times, such as "Rohit Sharma, Rohit Sharma..." and "I like Virat Kohli very much." Their speech lacked variety and relied on repeated phrases and templates. In contrast, the experimental group students performed significantly better. They used fillers appropriately, structured their speech more effectively, and demonstrated better fluency and confidence compared to the control group.

The results support the hypothesis that exposure to engaging and contextually relevant content, coupled with scaffolding, enhances L2 speaking proficiency. The experimental group's improvement can be attributed to structured assistance in understanding the content, reducing anxiety, and increasing confidence in speaking. The control group's progress, though moderate, suggests that video-based learning alone has some impact, but guided support significantly enhances effectiveness. Additionally, factors such as motivation and familiarity with cricket played a crucial role in student engagement. These findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of authentic materials and scaffolding in L2 learning.

However, the study faced certain limitations, including a small sample size and the exclusion of female participants. Future research should expand the sample and incorporate diverse video materials to generalize the findings more effectively [1-5].

Conclusion

Based on the results of the experiment, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Impact of Video-Based Intervention:** The experimental group, which watched cricket post-match presentations with scaffolding support (e.g., transcripts and glossaries), showed a significant improvement in their speaking performance compared to the control group. This suggests that the use of videos, coupled with the assistance provided, had a positive impact on the students' speaking abilities.
- **Motivation and Engagement:** The choice of cricket-related content, a sport that the students were passionate about, likely increased their motivation and engagement during the task. The students' enthusiasm for cricket appeared to contribute to their willingness to participate and improve their speaking skills.
- **Influence of Scaffolding Materials:** The scaffolding materials (transcripts and glossaries) helped the experimental group understand the content better, which likely facilitated more effective communication and boosted their confidence in speaking.
- **Limitations:** This study was limited by the small sample size, the exclusive participation of male students, and the limited number of videos used in the intervention. Future studies could benefit from involving a larger, more diverse group of students and using a broader range of videos.
- **Recommendations for Future Research:** It is recommended that future studies include female students and a larger sample size to enhance the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the inclusion of varied video content may further enrich the learning experience and yield more comprehensive findings.

In conclusion, the use of video-based interventions with scaffolding support appears to be an effective method for improving L2 speaking skills, especially when the content aligns with the students' interests.

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