STUDENTS PERCEPTION ON THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY AMONG SOUTH EASTERN UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES

MAM. Sameem

Department of English Language Teaching, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

Use of mobile computing devices and the social media in Higher education is one of the substantial topics during this era. There are huge number of researches on the role of Learning Management System (LMS) Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in ESL settings. In this recent years WhatsApp has become one of the most conspicuous networking site (SNS) while there are number of facebook groups actively involve in virtual teaching and learning English language among professionals and students. Researchers found that although CALL is much preferred by many adult learners, there are many factors hamper in CALL in developing countries like Sri Lanka such as lack of technology, connectivity, infrastructure families, non-availability of free materials, etc. Meanwhile some researchers found that many students use their devices for academic activities and the mobile devices are important to their academic success regardless their place. The main objective of this study is to explore the students' perceptions on the role of social media in English language learning and investigate the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka students' experiences in using WhatsApp application and facebook groups in learning English Language. 10 Focus group discussions and 40 semi-structured interviews (Qualitative method) were adhered in this research among undergraduates in two faculties namely; Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language and Faculty of Arts and Culture. This reach found that Social Media Assisted Language Learning (SMALL) is very much effective in learning English Language. This research also found that almost all the undergraduates prefer social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp in order to share language learning material regardless their boundaries and create a very strong networking among language learners. This reach also coined new terminology known as **"Social Media Assisted Language Learning**" (**SMALL**).

Keywords: Learning Management System, Computer Assisted Language Learning, Mobile Assisted Language Learning, Social Media Assisted Language Learning