

Perspective of ESL Undergraduates on Mobile Assisted Language Learning

N.A.L.D.R. Silva

*Department of English Language Teaching, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka,
Belihuloya, Sri Lanka*

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) - a topic of current interest - is a subset of the approach, Computer- Assisted Language Learning (CALL), deals with handheld mobile devices making the learning process more personalized, spontaneous and ubiquitous (Miangah and Nezarat). Various researches identified that mobile learning (m-learning) is capable of supporting more innovative constructivist, collaborative, learner-centered instruction in contrast to teacher-led classroom pedagogical situations. Having set an objective to investigate the end-users' perception of the use of MALL approach in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of its adoption and implementation in English Language learning, the population (twenty students) of the second year English as a Second Language (ESL) undergraduates of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka was selected. An open-ended questionnaire survey was conducted to obtain data and the data were analyzed qualitatively. The analysis confirmed that the majority of the respondents do have a positive attitude towards the use of the MALL approach for distance learning. The results of the study depict the abundance of advantages of using m-learning in tertiary education, such as easy and quick access and availability of plenty of resources, software, and apps. It was found to be supportive in developing almost all the four language skills including grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In view of the difficulties encountered when using m-learning approach, the data manifested the commonness of difficulties encountered by ESL learners in the categories of connection problems, financial issues, lack of high-tech sophisticated devices, accuracy, and reliability issues. Although the findings convince that the students still choose teacher-led classroom education, MALL would be more preferred if all its features are fully employed.

Keywords: English as a second language, Mobile- Assisted language learning