

Teachers' Perspective on Language Learning through Virtual Learning Environment in Distance Education

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The last decade witnessed a significant growth in Information Technology and Communication and it has influenced the language learning in various ways. By the 21st century, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) reshaped the language learning process. (Hardisty & Windeatt: 1989). Therefore, it can be seen how the human computer interaction has become a prominent place in language learning process. Previous research findings show that the activities done in a CALL classroom reduce the stress and it motivates the students to participate attentively and actively in language learning (Hee- Jung) and online learning environment has a significant effect on the academic improvement. (Hewagamage: 2012) With the rapid development of technology, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Learning Management Systems (LMS) were used in order to overcome geographical challenges and it has become a phenomenal phase in language learning. Although there is substantial amount of research on various types of CALL with regard to improving four skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking in English as a Second Language, but much of the research is conducted considering a single skill at a time. Thus this research focuses on both writing and speaking skills which can be identified as productive skills. This paper tries to investigate how the usage of Virtual Learning Environment affects the academic performance of language learners in distance education. Thus this study explores the effect of VLE in improving distance learners' writing and speaking skills in learning English language and whether teachers are satisfied with the academic performance of distance language learners. For this qualitative study, ten teachers will be interviewed from a government university which is situated in western province. This research mainly uses semi- structured interviews in order to collect data. The collected data is analyzed considering the teachers' perspective on the academic performance of distant language learners who learn English language through Virtual Learning Environment. The results of this research bring out that VLE plays a major role in improving writing skills whereas that significant effect cannot be seen in improving speaking skills.

Keywords: *Virtual Learning Environment, Computer Assisted Language Learning, English as a Second Language, Distance Education, Human Computer Interaction, Teachers' Perspective*

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