Moodle Based Language Teaching: Challenges and Solutions

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The mainstream scholars' studies and research on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) frequently line up a particular set of factors as impediments or limitations to CALL, among which the unavailability of resources and the lack of technical knowledge are predominant. Nevertheless, in cases where gaps in resources and technical knowledge are successfully filled, the obstacles are still felt existing in the sphere of CALL. This trait is distinctly noticed when it comes to "Moodle" based language teaching; regardless of continuous teacher training and facilitations, students show less enthusiasm in using Moodle as a tool of language learning. Hence, this research intends to pragmatically examine as to what encourages or discourages students using Moodle as a method of language learning. The first-year students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura who studied English as a compulsory subject, in 2015 and 2016 were the participants of this study. The methodology to this mission includes meticulous observations of the student activities on Moodle, login-behaviours and patterns, assessment data and student/teacher interviews alongside the classroom activities. The results have brought about several important findings. The research proposes that, Moodle being one effectual mode of enhancing English language as well as academic character and productiveness of students, what hinders the usage of Moodle is the absence of "need" and "dynamism" in Moodle-based activities, rather than "technical" or "resource-related" matters. In other words, rather than the mere availability of activities or material on Moodle on language learning, a properly maintained link between Moodle and class-work, and the interdependency of Moodle-work and class-work, tends to encourage the usage of Moodle by the students. The research suggests how the link between the classwork and Moodle-work should be maintained, and how to overcome practical issues that supervene in this endeavour.

Keywords: Moodle, Language Teaching, CALL