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Exploration of Language Learning Employing Social Media Through Call And Mall

Abstract

In a vast developing world, language became a dominant factor in human existence. With the development of technologies, human are well equipped with gadgets which eventually become the part and parcel of one's life. People from different states, countries and continents are put together in a platform called 'Social media'. Social media inculcates the creation, development and building of ideas, information and thoughts among wide range of people. In the area of language too it helps to develop one's competency and proficiency in language. Social media is basically accessed through technological gadgets mainly Computer and Mobile phones. This paper will focus on language learning using social media through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). The researcher conducted a survey with the help of questionnaire and the findings were analyzed. Based on the analysis, the merits along with demerits and scopes with regard to language learning using Social Medias mainly Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Snapchats and Youtube through CALL and MALL will be discussed in detail.

Keywords: English Language Learning, CALL, MALL, Social Media, Questionnaire, Survey, Language competency, Language proficiency, Classroom teaching, Learning Process, Psychological damage, Physical damage.

Introduction

At present around sixty percent of the world's population is multilingual. Bilingualism as well as multilingualism has turned into one of the norms in human life. English is the world's widely learnt and studied language among human race. English language has spread its wings all around the world and is ruling as a great dictator. Every human being in spite of age has to learn English in order to survive in the world.

On those days English was learnt through traditional method called Grammar Translation method where the learners learnt the foreign language and its grammar through the medium of their native language. Language learning methods got evolved in its own way. Starting from Grammar Translation Method it started to take forms such as Direct Method, The Oral Approach, Audiolingual Method, Communicative Language Learning, The Silent Method, Community Language Learning etc. The latest method of language learning is self-directed method employing social media through CALL and MALL.

Objectives of The Study

The core objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To explore learners' perspectives regarding language learning employing social media through CALL and MALL.
2. To analyze merits and demerits associated with language learning through social media.

3. To verify the scopes of social media with regard to language learning from the point of the learners.

Background of The Study

English language learning in India is mainly focused on classroom teaching. Right from the adoption of English Language in India, the language acquisition process took place only through the mode of classroom teaching where the language facilitators attempt to teach language and its usage to the learners. With the vast changing society, the mode of learning is also undergoing vast advancements. At present, methods of language learning are improvising and are facing humpty range of changes. It is slowly shifting from classroom learning to technical based learning using social media through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

Nowadays wide ranges of people are showing interest in using social media. Through social media learning communities are brought in a particular platform where they can freely discuss and share information regarding the subject of discussion.

Since the Indian learners' autonomy is based on classroom learning, it is necessary to analyze the learners' attitude towards language learning using social media through CALL and MALL. This study is conducted among different sets of people of different age groups. The reason behind choosing different sets of people of different age groups is that the researcher understood the fact that every human in spite of their age should learn English in order to survive in the world. In order to understand the learners' attitude towards such changes in the path of language learning, the researcher is carrying out the study to promote the merits, demerits and scopes of social media in the field of language learning.

Research Questions

The following questions are set to be as the focal point of the Study:

1. What are the views of learners in language learning using social media through CALL and MALL?
2. What are the merits, demerits and scopes of language learning using social media?
3. Are the learners interested in language learning using social media through CALL and MALL?
4. How much social media is influencing the lives of the learners?

Hypothesis

The researcher started to carry out the Study with the following set of hypothesis in mind:

1. Learners make the best use of social media in learning a language.
2. No matter how effectively social media works among learners, the one to one interactive classroom has its own popularity and preferred more than self study mode of learning which is done mostly by using social media.
3. In spite of being the most reliable source, social media has its own drawbacks in the area of language learning. Learners at some point of time find it difficult and challenging in practicing correct pronunciation and in developing language skills.
4. To some extent social media causes a few psychological and physical damages to the learners. It makes the learner addict to social media which may cause mental illness in a long run.

Review of Literatures

“Equipped educators at individual and institutional levels with appropriate designs for learning that can cope with and work well for new generations of learners who take the use of sophisticated technology for granted.” (Beethan & Sharpe, 2007)

Research Design

The study was conducted employing a questionnaire method. The researcher has collected the responses for the questionnaire from the learners through Whatsapp and Messenger. The researcher has used only these two social media and purposefully avoided Google Forms because the researcher is carrying out the study of particular lists of social media alone in which Google Forms is excluded. And the researcher wants to approach the learners through the particular social media upon which the study is entirely focused on.

The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions which included 9 questions demanding Yes or No response, 2 three-point user-type responses with Sometimes, Often and Never as responses, 3 descriptive type answering questions. The questionnaire collected data regarding learners' attitudes towards language learning using social media through CALL and MALL along with its merits, demerits and scopes. The questionnaire has been given to 100 people of different age groups. The distribution of the respondents is presented as follows: 6 people below the age of 18, 75 people of age between 18 and below 25, 10 people of age between 25 and below 40 and 9 people of age 40 and above respectively.

Discussion

The analysis based on the data collected is divided into three parts. At first the merits of language learning using Social media through CALL and MALL are discussed. Secondly its demerits and thirdly its scopes are discussed.

I) Merits of language learning using social media through CALL and MALL:

The study on the analysis of the merits depicts the following inferences. Majority of the learners claim that social media will play an effective role in language learning. Most of the learners acknowledge that it will help to enhance the language competency and proficiency. Many of them state that it tends to motivate and encourage the learners to learn language in a well manner. Many of the respondents state their habit of sharing English language oriented videos among their friends and peer groups.

Majority of learners are accessing social media through Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Almost all of the people in post modern era own mobile phones and most of them possess smart phones. Through MALL, learners can learn and study anywhere and anytime they want. It leads to the development of informal learning. Informal learning structured-less learning where teachers' role will be in absent mode. Formal learning includes teacher oriented learning where classroom and teacher play the significant roles.

MALL has its own advantages where the learners can themselves decide and select which applications and mobile apps to use for language learning purposes. Choice of selecting their own learning materials plays the most vital part of self-directed learning which will ultimately help the learners to develop critical thinking skills. It acts as a potential tool for learner autonomy. MALL seems to be a powerful tool and relatively cheap too.

Language learning using social media through MALL can promote public interaction and communicative skills to the next level. It enables the learners to interact in the target language effectively without the feel of embarrassment. But in case of classroom learning, one may face the feel of embarrassment while trying to interact in target language face to face. Language learning using social media will give space and time to the slow learners to learn the language effectively. It will boost up the confidence in them and will act as a guiding star to those who lack concentration power and attention.

The learners at the beginning stage can make best use of social media. They can carefully listen to each and every word pronounced along with its sentence formation in the videos posted in social media such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Sanpchats, Youtube, and Instagram. The news, videos, short films, movie clippings, album songs act as effective tools in language learning using social media. The rigorous practice of watching and listening to all these effective tools will boost up ones' language skills. Along with watching and listening, it is very important to practice it by pronouncing and speaking it out which will eventually help in developing one's language competency and proficiency.

CALL is quite different from MALL. MALL does not require the presence of a teacher but CALL requires the presence of well trained teachers who can help the learners if they face problems while operating the computer. Learning language through applications other than social media may require the active participation of the teacher besides the learners to deliver and guide them as per the instructions. But social media is free of teachers and is a self-directed method of learning.

Through Facebook, the language learners can enhance their language by reading posts, status and newsfeed which are posted in English. In YouTube, many people are uploading language oriented videos through which the learners can learn language in a more reliable manner. YouTube acts as a platform where the trainer and the learners can freely maintain a healthy communication. The learners can ask their questions and doubts in comment section. The videos can be shared among different groups of learners. For slow learners it is the best medium to learn the language in a comprehensible manner. The slow learner can pause the video at any time and re-listen the audio whenever they want. In case of note making, language learning through videos in social media helps the learners to note down the important points effectively in their notebook. They can rewind and forward the lecture videos whenever they want. This facility is absent in classroom learning.

In India, English always gets influenced by the person's native language. No matter how well versed a person's language is, he/she cannot utter the pronunciation the way the Americans and British do. In such cases, learning language using videos in social media will help to grasp the proper and exact pronunciations of words and sentences. The learners need not to travel to abroad to learn and speak English the way the native English speakers do. They can access the available videos uploaded by the American or British English language trainers anywhere they want through YouTube, Facebook, Instagram etc.

In Indian schools, students at the early stage are not introduced to phonetics which is a major drawback in effective language learning process. In such cases, the students themselves can access the phonetics lessons through videos in YouTube. The parents of the students especially of primary level should help the kids with accessing phonetics oriented videos through MALL or CALL so that the kids can learn to pronounce the words more effectively which will in turn help the kids to enhance language competency and proficiency.

II) Demerits of language learning using social media through CALL and MALL:

Even though language has so many merits, it has certain demerits too. In the learner autonomy of evidence-based learning, it would be impossible to track the performance of the learners on the basis of structured module, which most of the teachers use as a testing methodology. Self-assessment by the learners may sometimes mislead them. Self-assessment may get influenced through psychological factors which would restrict the learners from pointing out their own lack of abilities while learning a language.

Majority of learners in the survey state that language learning using social media through CALL and MALL would cause physical and psychological impact on the learners. Learning through CALL and MALL in a long run could cause headache, damages to the eyesight and sleepless night which may further damage the brain. It will make the learners

addict to the social media. It will lead to obsession. Psychologically it makes learners to dwell in confined space.

General problems which language learners faced in learning language using social media through CALL and MALL:

- Difficulty in making out the meaning of an unstructured sentence that is posted on the Social Medias.
- Doubts during learning process cannot be cleared easily. One has to browse a lot and sometimes the answers for the questions will not be available in any source.
- Deviations through chats, posts, movie clippings which pop up on the screen. In case of YouTube, deviations occur due to display of suggested videos of movies and other stuffs on the screen.
- Lack of complete knowledge from the learners' side.
- The availability of multiple meanings to a word may create ambiguity among the learners.
- Picking up of undiplomatic words and usages while learning through social media.
- Usage of abbreviated versions of words would mislead the language learners.

III) Further scopes in language learning using social media through CALL and MALL:

Since the Indian learners' autonomy is based on classroom learning, majority of learners state that language learning using social media would eventually fail to replace teacher centered learning. In a world where people use social media only as an entertaining factor, learners may easily get deviated from their motive of language learning. This would ultimately lead to the downfall of effective process of language learning which will eventually put an end to the usage of social media for language learning purposes.

Findings of The Research

Findings of the research on language learning using social media through CALL and MALL:

- Most of the learners prefer YouTube for language learning purposes.
- Although the learners are using social media, only a few are interacting with their friends in English.
- Majority of learners prefer Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).
- Usage of abbreviated versions of words would mislead the language learners.
- Most of the learners tend to state that due to the availability of multiple meanings to a word, it creates ambiguity among the learners.
- Deviations through chats, posts, movie clippings which pop up on the screen. In case of YouTube, deviations occur due to display of suggested videos of movies and other stuffs on the screen.
- Doubts during learning process can't be cleared easily. One has to browse a lot and sometimes the answers for the questions will not be available in any source.
- Learning through CALL and MALL in a long run could cause headache, damages to the eyesight and sleepless night which may further damage the brain. It will make the learners addict to the social media. It will lead to obsession. Psychologically it makes learners to dwell in confined space.
- Majority of the learners state that language learning using social media would eventually fail to replace teacher centered learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

With the vast developing and trending digital world, one might find it difficult to cope up with the technical methodologies employing social media as a tool to empower and enhance the competency and proficiency in language. It is evident that learners are not ready to employ self- directed methodology of learning over teacher-centered methodology of

learning. Their attitude towards language learning using social media through the medium of CALL and MALL fail to degrade classroom learning. Since most of the learners are driven by teacher centered learning, they refuse to switch to the trending and innovative methodology of using social media as a medium of language learning.

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APPENDIX

Note: All numbers in Table 1, chart 1 and 2 are presented in percentage

Table1: Questionnaire

S.N O	Question	Below 18		Below 25		Below 40		40 and Above	
		Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
01	Do you often converse in English?	83	17	85	15	70	30	56	44
02	Do you think social media will play an effective role in language learning?	100	0	88	12	90	10	78	22
03	Do you think language learning through social media will motivate and encourage the learning during their learning process?	100	0	84	16	80	20	89	11
04	Do you think language learning through social media will enhance the language competency and proficiency?	67	33	80	20	70	30	67	33
05	Do you share language learning oriented	83	17	65	35	80	20	67	33

	videos available in social media to your friends?								
06	If applications other than social medias related to language learning are suggested, will you make use of it?	67	33	75	25	100	0	67	33
07	Do you think social media will make a person addictive?	100	0	85	15	90	10	78	22
08	Do you think social media would replace the classroom teaching in upcoming days?	33	67	36	64	50	50	44	56
09	Would you prefer self study through social media over class room learning?	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100

Descriptive Questionnaire:

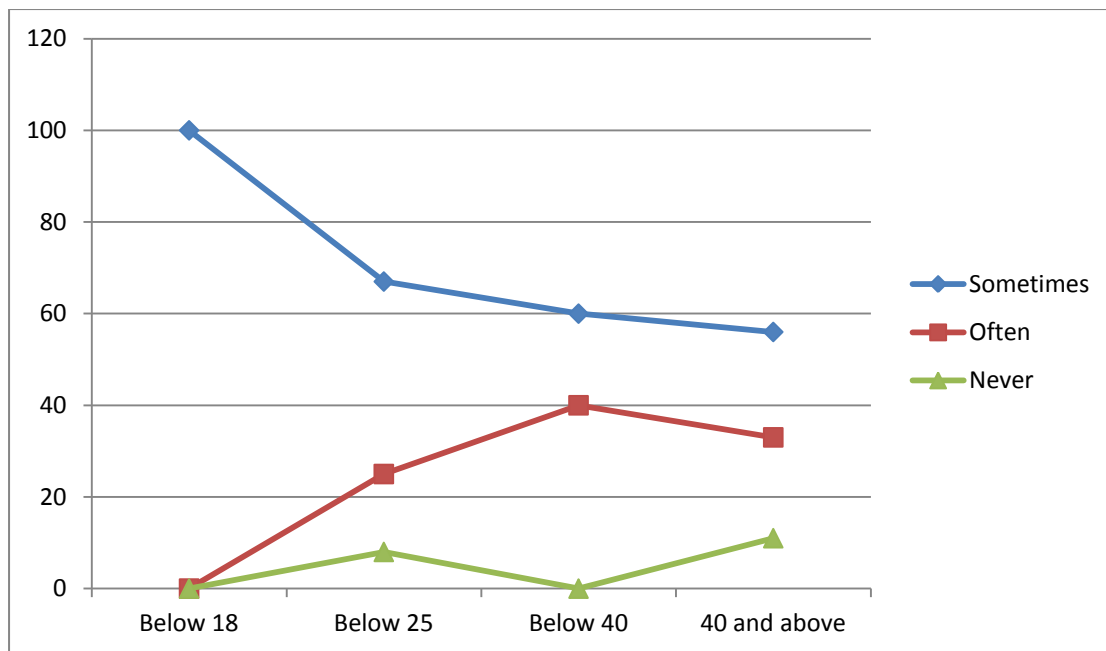
10) Would you like to learn language through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) or Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)?

11) What do you think the problems associated with language learning using social media?

12) Do you think learning through social media will cause psychological and physical damage to oneself? If yes, mention the causes.

13) How often do you use social media for language learning?

Chart 1



14) Do you find any difficulty while chatting formally in English like lack of vocabulary and anxiety?

Chart 2

