Smart Phones as Helpful MALL Device for EFL E-Classrooms in the Times of COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Virtual classrooms are now a new global normal due to COVID-19 pandemic. In such unprecedented times, technology has been proven to be a savior in almost every field of life; education is no exception to it. In such technology mediated world, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a sub-field of Applied Linguistics has emerged to aid the EFL pedagogy in E-classrooms. The recent pandemic forced the whole world to get into months long lock-down and along with all other affairs of life, education has also been put on virtual mode. The current study explored the role of smart phones as helpful MALL devices to save the efforts of learners and teachers for a hassle free virtual classroom. The present study has been established on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) prescribed by Davis (1989). The design of the study is qualitative as study is based on general observations and online responses collected by EFL teachers and learners from across Pakistan. Data was collected from 100 randomly selected EFL learners of undergraduate-level and 50 university teachers from different parts of Pakistan. For the data collection procedure, an open ended questionnaire was developed to record perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) of smart phones for E-classrooms. The research participants were approached on different EFL and educational forums on Facebook and Whatsapp by sharing Google form to collect their responses for the phenomenon. Collected data was presented in the forms of tables and then was further interpreted qualitatively. The results showed a higher degree of usage of smart phones preferred on laptop or desktop computers by both EFL learners and teachers. The results suggest that in the times of controlled spaces and virtual realities smart phones were prone to replace almost every other device for a hassle free execution of EFL learning and teaching activities.

Keywords: MALL devices, COVID-19, smart phones, E-classrooms, EFL pedagogy