Effectiveness of Video Conferencing in a Web-based ESL Classroom

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Abstract – In the present era, technology plays an unparalleled role in the field of education, contributing immensely to the teaching-learning process. However, even if the classroom had shifted from the traditional setting to web-based classrooms, the effectiveness of the classroom should be taken into the consideration. Thus, the language teachers can introduce various tools and methods to enhance the experience of the learner whilst encouraging active participation in the classroom. Therefore, through this mixed method study, it is intended to determine how the use of Video Conferencing in an English Language Teaching (ELT) environment affects the efficiency of an online ESL (English as a Second Language)classroom according to learner's perspective. In order to investigate that, two research instruments: questionnaires and interviews had been used to collect data which are later analyzed thematically. Participants in the study had been undergraduates who follow English for Academic Purposes (EAP) modules in various universities / higher education institutes in Sri Lanka. From the findings, it was evident that video conferencing in a language classroom is far more effective than using only audio conferencing for online classrooms. Nevertheless, it was found that the active participation and the engagement of the classroom were highly increased when both the teacher as well as the students joined the online classroom through video conferencing. Thus, it can be concluded that video conferencing can be taken as an effective method to be used in an online classroom.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Video Conferencing, Web-Based Classrooms

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