IDENTIFICATION OF RAMIFICATIONS ON DISTANCE LEARNING RELATED TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

KPS Sandamali[*1]

[*1]Institute of Human Resource Advancement, University of Colombo.

ABSTRACT

Learners should be facilitated online or onsite with the learning. During the pandemic season, distance learning played a great role in learning as an alternative to onsite learning. In this study, the main objective was to identify the ramifications of distance learning related to English language learning while it tries to identify the possible solutions for answering the identified ramifications. This study has used 50 fifty students who have done distance learning during the post-pandemic situation for English language learning. Throughout the study, the attempt was to identify the ramifications of distance learning from the student's point of view, and basically, it has identified that speaking would not be effective under distance learning. Further, the analyzed data shows that the student population should be technologically advanced to get maximum outcomes from distance learning.

Keywords: Distance Learning, Post-pandemic, Ramifications, Alternative.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka, as a country that practices a bound culture, education also has been planned with the bound system. In the usual practice, the teachers were supposed to attend the process of face-to-face teaching in the classroom while students should do the learning by sitting in the classroom. It has taken a number of years that teaching has become done in a face-to-face setting. The acceptance of the quality of the teaching is also done according to the way that the teachers are attending the classes for teaching and distance education has not been respected by society. However, many developed countries had identified this distance teaching and learning as a best practice that helps the students to acquire more in learning and the teachers to do best in teaching than consuming time to attend physical lectures.

With the outbreak of the Covid- 19 in the global context, a considerable number of countries went for distance teaching and learning since it gave many students to practice learning in a safe environment. Even though, many countries have taken action to lock down public places and educational institutes with the identification of the effects of gathering a larger community, technology had taken the initiative to make everything possible for the people without spreading the risk of being gathered.

Sri Lanka also got adjusted distance teaching and learning to provide the students with better education. In beginning, many of the private educational institutes went on rapid success by adhering to distance teaching and learning than the government educational institutes. When it considered the University system of Sri Lanka, it had provided many facilities for staff and students to do their best to continue their education. This is not only about teaching and learning but for evaluation as well, the University had taken initiative to take relevant measures without embarrassing the student population.

When distance teaching and learning are going on, the students in the country faced different issues. Many students got affected by the issue that they didn't have proper devices to join the lectures and the connectivity issues also were there with the students. The students who are living in rural areas had to face this problem mainly than the other categories. Sometimes, students cannot hear properly what the lecturer is telling and the sharing documents also cannot see properly. The low income of the parents was another issue that the students faced. The parents should pay a considerable amount for the data in addition to the other expenses of the family. Further, it was difficult to do the teaching and learning without a proper background in learning. A proper place to sit and do the learning was an essential fact. Sometimes due to the background noise, the students cannot switch on the mick and answer the questions of the teacher. More than all the aforesaid facts, the attitudes of the people were the considerable fact that should give more attention, when it talks about distance teaching and learning. In the Sri Lankan context, it is a matter of fact that changing of attitudes of the people is not that much easy task. More than the students, the parents of the students need to sit their children before the teacher to correct all the mistakes that the students are doing. The parents have not been taken that as the responsibility of them and instead they have kept it in the shoulder of the teacher. Due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the system got changed and parents had to be responsible on the children and their education.

The researchers have done many studies to identify the issues that students and teachers are facing with distance education. Those studies mainly focused only on the common issues that already we know and many of the findings really do not address the issues that the students are facing related to language teaching and learning. The ramifications should be identified and then only the solutions can be given.

Language teaching and learning cannot be done easily as we are learning other subjects. A language should be mastered in a relevant environment that is suitable for the learning. This environment can do much for learning. The teachers can give the fact and ask the students to practice the given activities or the grammar. However, pronunciation and speaking need much attention of the teacher. The students should try on acquiring language than learning. Many studies have been done on language teaching and learning, they have found that acquiring is the effective than learning.

In this study, it tries to identify the ramifications of distance learning related to English Language learning, since many of the researchers have given their focus only to identify major issues on distance learning. This study would be effective for the teachers who are engaged with language teaching to identify what their students are feeling difficulty with the teaching and learning process while enabling scholars to find solutions for potential issues which the students are facing.

Presently, the researchers are encouraged to engage more with the research activities to facilitate society with new features of the findings. Further, these studies can reveal more about the existing knowledge by adding weight as it has not been done before. In this sense, many studies have been done to identify the issues that the students are facing with distance learning due to the Covid- 19 condition in Sri Lanka. Even though, studies have been completed to solutions for the mainly highlighted issues related to learning and teaching, there is negligence for the minor issues that the people are facing.

This saws the necessity of having actions and studies to address minor issues to provide better opportunities for students and teachers. If there is a failure to address and take an action to answer the ramifications arising from distance learning, the condition will be worst when it comes to see the output of the teaching. Especially, with language teaching and learning, each and every aspect should be examined by the researchers before recommendations for solutions. So, this study tries to find out the ramifications of distance on distance learning related to language learning of School leavers in the Sri Lankan context.

1.1 Background of the study

Within the current Sri Lankan context, the outbreak of Covid- 19 pandemic uncovered ample opportunities for the globe to forward with a number of technological enhancements. This situation gave Sri Lankans to test different options to carry out day-to-day activities without any delay. For teaching and learning also, this revealed different paths to continue their education. In the case of second language teaching and learning, many of research studies have been done to identify problems and failures related to teaching and learning. Even though the major problems have been addressed by the studies, no measurements have been taken to identify minor issues that the students are facing related to English Language teaching and learning. And also, the lack of studies to address the issues of school leavers related to English Language teaching and learning has become a major aspect that requires the attention of researchers. This study 'Identification of Ramifications on Distance Learning related to English Language Learning of School Leavers' takes its opportunity to identify the minor issues that school leavers are facing related to English language learning as their second language.

1.2 Objectives

- To identify the ramifications of distance learning related to English language learning.
- To identify the possible solutions for answering the identified ramifications.

Research question

What are the ramifications of distance learning related to English Language learning of school leavers?

1.3 Methodology

The data will be collected based on the selected sample from the ABC Institute through quantitative and qualitative methods. The primary data is obtained by distributing a questionnaire among the selected sample for the study and secondary data has been collected by referring to paper articles, resrch papers, and different books related to the subject.

2. DISCUSSION

This section talks about the analysis of the collected data. The students were given a questionnaire that consists of twenty-five questions based on distance learning. The first five questions were based on the attitudes of the students toward distance teaching and learning.

2.1 The opinions of the students about distance learning

The opinions of the students were seen as an important fact that should be identified before looking into the other aspects of the study. The following charts show the willingness of the students to attend the session physically in the Institute.
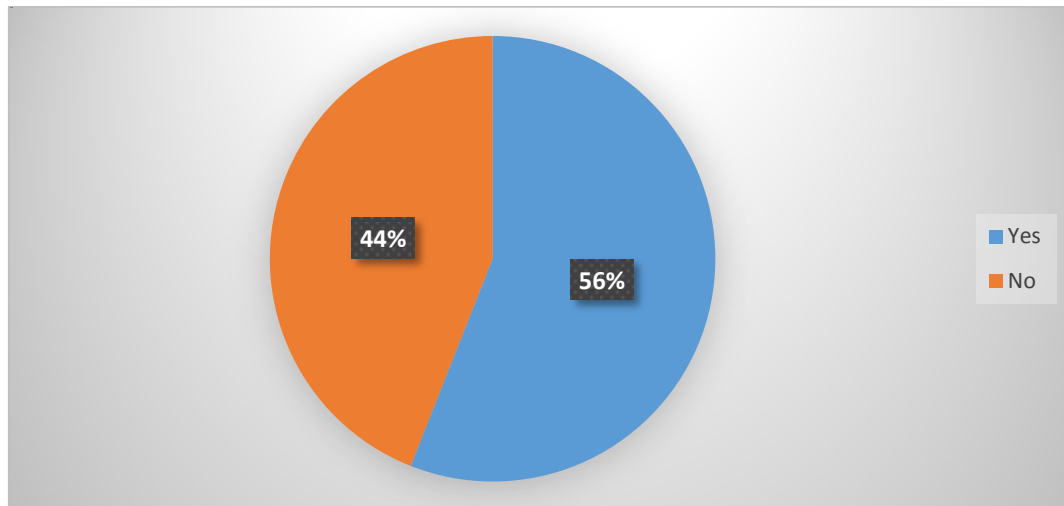

Figure 01. The willingness of the students to attend lectures physically on the Institute premises

Source: Author generated

The opinions of the students about their willingness to attend the physical session on the institute premises have been recorded in the above chart. According to that 56% of the sample have agreed to attend the physical sessions on the institute premises while 44% disagree. With the above same question, the author wanted to identify the reasons for rejecting the opportunity of attending the physical sessions and the result was as follows.
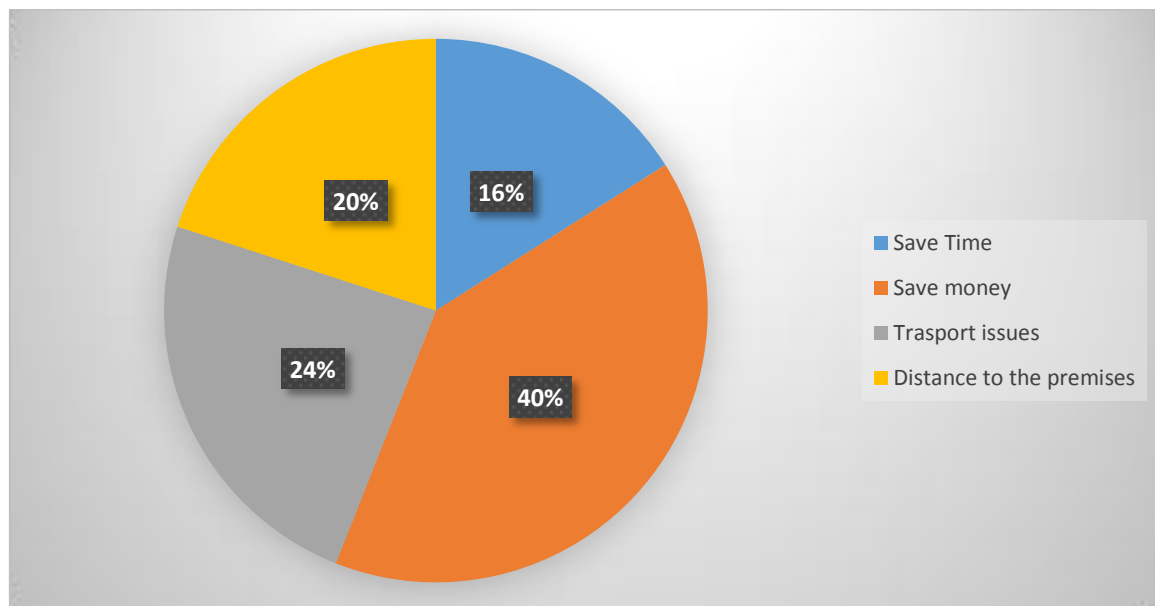

Figure 02. Reasons for not attending physical sessions on the Institute premises

Source: Author generated

According to the collected data, it shows that a maximum number of students do not like to attend physical sessions since it can save some money when they join the sessions online or while sitting in the same area. Further, 24% of the selected sample do not like to attend physical sessions due to transport issues, and 20% were reluctant to attend physical lectures considering the distance that they need to travel to the institute. Finally, 16% of the students avoid physical sessions since it saves them time.

However, when it studies the reasons for the student's willingness to attend the physical sessions on the institute premises, the following reasons were identified. The physical sessions provide active interaction between the teacher and the students. Further, it provides more learning resources and opportunities. And also, it does not allow students to idle while the teaching is going on in the face-to-face sessions. Especially, the students have reported in other comments that physical sessions are ideal for speaking practices and it enhances the students' speaking skills.

2.2 Effectiveness of Facilitating Learners

The learners should be facilitated sufficiently to conduct the learning process effectively. The second section of the questionnaire was devoted to check the facilities that the learners can access through distance learning. The answers of the students for the facilitation them with enough facilities were recorded as follows.
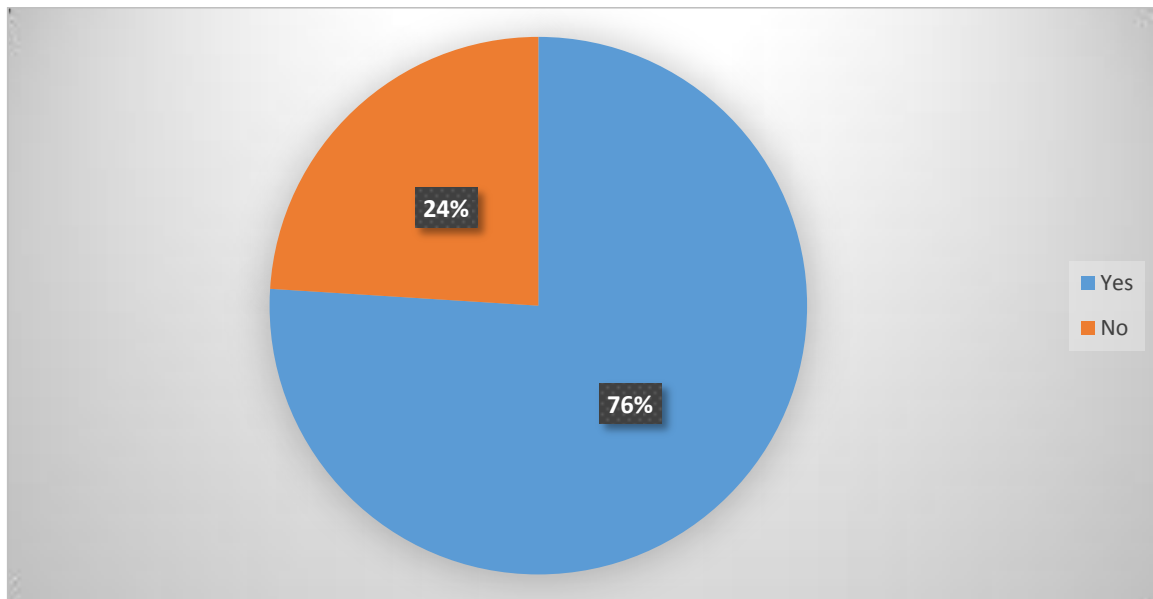

Figure 03: Facilitating students for better learning.

Source: Author generated

According to the displayed data, it shows that students are satisfied with the provided facilities to conduct distance learning for the students. The institute has provided enough facilities which are essential for language learning. However, 24% of the selected students have given their response as "no", since they are not satisfied with the facilities.

In language learning, the assistance of the teacher is required to correct the mistakes of the learners. In this study, the support of the teacher to learn through mistakes for the learners also has been recorded. A question was added to the questionnaire to see the help of the facilitators to clear out the mistakes that the learners are doing. The given question of the questionnaire was "Do you get enough opportunity to correct your mistakes?"
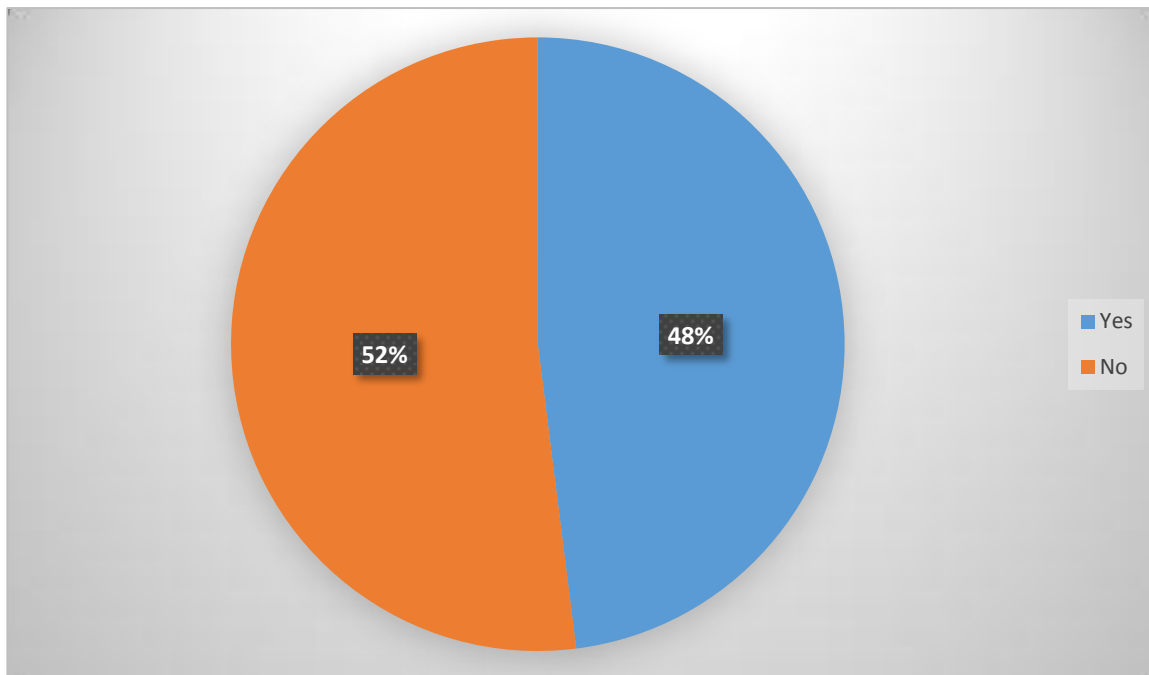
Figure 04: Opportunity to correct mistakes

Source: Author generated

The analyzed data suggest that the students don't get enough opportunities to correct their mistakes during the learning process. The different reasons can be affected by this and 48% have answered that they get enough chances to correct their mistakes.

3. FINDING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

The findings of the study can be mentioned as follows.

- Distance learning helps save time for learners since it does not consume time.
- It helps learners and teachers access technology-based teaching and learning resources.
- Face-to-face discussions do much on correcting the mistakes of the learners.
- Distance learning is ideal for enhancing reading and listening skills.
- Face-to-face sessions help to improve speaking and writing skills.

Recommendations

- Different teaching methods should be used by the facilitators to improve writing and speaking skills when institutes practice distance learning.
- The teaching and learning should be done more learner-centered since it does not encourage learners to ask questions and speak.
- The learners should keep more independent during the teaching and learning process.
- Digital facilitation should be improved by the Institutes.
- The awareness programs for accessing teaching-learning resources should be conducted by the institutes before starting the teaching-learning process.

4. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to identify the ramifications of distance learning related to English language learning of school leavers. Fifty students were selected for the study as the sample and answers were taken from the students. The distributed questionnaire was planned under four sections including testing the attitudes of the students toward distance learning, facilitating students with enough resources for language learning, challenges faced by the students, and finally the ramifications of distance learning. Through the collected and analyzed data it was seen that distance learning is ideal for a technologically developed society that facilitates more learning opportunities. Further, it has been identified that distance learning is not effective for writing and speaking, since those two skills require close monitoring of the facilitator. Finally, the study has shown that distance learning can be used as an alternative when face-to-face teaching and learning are unable to do.

5. REFERENCE

[1] Beatty, I. D., & Gerace, W. J. (2009, January 7). Technology-enhanced formative assessment: A researchbased pedagogy for teaching science with classroom response technology. Journal of Science Education and Technology 18, 146–162. doi: 10.1007/s10956-008-9140-4

[2] Belawati, T., & Zuhairi, A. (2007, March). The practice of a quality assurance system in open and distance learning: A case study at Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia. The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning 8(1).

[3] Bell, M. W. (2008, July). Toward a definition of virtual worlds. Journal of Virtual Worlds Research 1(1), 2–5. Benkler, Y. (2008, September). Common wisdom: Peer production of educational materials. Paper presented at the17th Annual Instructional Technology Institute at Utah State University, Logan, UT.

[4] Biesenbach-Lucas, S. (2004). Asynchronous web discussions in teacher training courses: Promoting collaborative learning—or not? AACE Journal 12(2), 155–170.

[5] Binns, F., & Otto, A. (2006). Quality assurance in open distance education—Toward a culture of quality: A case study from the Kyambogo University, Uganda [PDF document]. In B. N. Koul & A. Kanwar (Eds.), Perspectives on distance education: Toward a culture of quality (pp. 31–44). Retrieved from http://www.col. org/SiteCollectionDocuments/PS-QA_web.pdf

[6] Black, P. J., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. Phi Delta Kappan 80, 139–48.

[7] Bloom, B. (1971). Mastery learning. In J. H. Block (Ed.) Mastery learning: Theory and practice (pp. 47–63). New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

[8] Butcher N and Wilson-Strydom M, A Guide to Quality in Online Learning. Academic Partnerships, 2013.

[9] Crane B. E, Online Teaching and Learning: a Practical Guide for Librarians. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

[10] Sadiku M. N.O, Musa S.M. , and Nelatury S. R. , "Massive open online courses," International Journal of Engineering Research and Allied Sciences, vol. 2, no. 5, May 2017, pp. 1-3.

[11] Salmon G, E-moderating: The Key to Online Teaching and Learning. New York: Rouledge, 3rd edition, 2011.

[12] Stephenson J (ed.), Teaching & Learning Online: Pedagogies for New Technologies. Kogan Page, 2001.

[13] Sun A and Chen X, "Online education and its effective practice: a research review," Journal of Information Technology Education: Research, vol. 15 2016, pp. 157-190.

[14] Suryanarayanan S. and Kyriakides E , "An online portal for collaborative learning and teaching for power engineering education," IEEE Transactions on Power Systems, vol. 19, no.1, February 2004, pp. 73-80

[15] Zsohar H. and Smith J. A, "Transition from the classroom to the web: successful strategies of teaching online," http://northeast.edu/CTC/Pdf/Successful-strategies-for-teaching-online.pdf