DEVELOPING THE LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS OF ENGLISH FOR SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) LEARNERS THROUGH COMPUTER-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL)

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This paper reports the results of a study focusing on developing the listening and speaking skills through computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in the Advanced Technological Institutes for the ESL students who are following the Higher National Diploma in English course. It further explores the impact of using computers in ATIs for developing those skills in and out of class. *Via* a methodology which includes the analysis of survey questionnaires, open-ended oral interviews and participant observation the study examined learners' perception of the use of computers for skills development by a group of 300 Sri Lankans, learning English at Jaffna and Dehiwala ATIs in a communicative classroom environment. By adopting a variety of research tools, we hope to explore the phenomenon of using computers for language learners to develop their language skills in depth. It covers what kind of computer-based tasks are used, how interaction between people emerges and what the perceptions of lecturers and students are regarding using computer programmes for listening and speaking. The current philosophy of CALL with the development of technology puts a strong emphasis on student cantered learning and student – centred materials that allow learners to work on their own. These materials may be structured or unstructured, though they normally embody two important features: interactive learning and individualized learning. The conclusion supports the positive findings and evidence if CALL used efficiently in l_2 classrooms for language skills development. (see. Warschauer and Healey, 1998, Chapelle 2001, 2003 and Hegelheimer and Tower, 2004) and also would answer the questions about How do students develop their listening and speaking skills?, What computer programmes and computer- based tasks do the ATIs provide for developing students' listening and speaking skills?, What are the perspectives of teachers and students in the target ATIs in using computer programs to develop listening and speaking skills?, In what ways do students collaborate when completing tasks using computers for listening and speaking? What types of support do teachers provide for students when working on computer- based tasks? Etc. Overall, the results are consistent with the consensus that students perceive this system as a positive addition to their classes as its use increases the skills development, participation, enjoyment, fosters interactions, self- assess and compare their performance with their peers. As the research on CALL in L_2 settings is still in its infancy, this paper contributes data and analysis which highlights the pedagogical benefits of the implementation of CALL system in L_2 pedagogy.