The Impact of Smartphone Applications on Language Learning and Teaching (A Literature Review)

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Abstract

Technology continues to grow in importance as a tool to help teachers facilitate language learning for their learners. This study focuses on the role of using new technologies in learning. English as a second/foreign language. Rarely any younger person can now picture life without mobile devices. The aim of this review study is to examine whether mobile applications used as a foreign language for learning English are beneficial. The results reveal that mobile learning is becoming a salient feature of education as it is a great opportunity for foreign language learning. Its key advantages are: improving the learner's cognitive ability, Motivation of learners to study in both formal and informal settings, autonomy of the learner and Confidence, and the promotion of customized learning to support low-income students Attain the aims of their study. Although mobile learning appears to be eligible in general, it is desirable Plan, schedule and execute it with care, according to the needs of the students and include multiple Language competencies in realistic learning environments.

I. Introduction

The present digital technology has influenced the modern era with its new innovations and discoveries where the human beings are enjoying the fruits of these technologies that change the way of their lives and make convenient for them to lead a comfortable and happy life. As technology advances, there have many changes in almost all the areas. Many countries have advanced their studies in science and technology and machines are doing the work of humans.

Srinivas rao (2019) in his article entitled of The Importance of Mobile Apps in the English Language Learning Environment mentions Mobile phones are widely used for several purposes in the field of education also. They are used by educationalists, researchers, teachers and learners differently depending on their purpose. Educationalists and researchers use them to retrieve information about the ongoing trends in education and they even give some valuable suggestions to the whole educational field. They do research on their fields and also try to set new trends in education. Teachers use mobile phones to get the information instantly in the classroom and also to visualize the learners some videos related to the topic. Therefore, mobile devices play a vital role in education, especially, in learning a language. (101-102)

The usage of mobile phones in learning a language has got numerous advantages, that too, while learning English there are several benefits for the learners. According to the study conducted by Chen, Chung & Yen (2012), "Cell phones are flexible tools which have the potential to be exploited to cater to the needs of language learning students". Students may improve their skills in creating new vocabulary objects, enhancing their grammar knowledge, improving communication skills, and developing other language

skills. The learners can watch videos relevant to the lessons taught in the classrooms, and they can also record and repeat the teachings of the teachers at home during their leisure time.

Technology plays a very important role in dealing with affective considerations by providing learners with opportunities to practice and improve their pronunciation in a private space and without presence of their classmates (Nunan, 2015).

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the effect that college students use mobile devices to study English on their own. And, answer this following question: Do the mobile apps enhance significant progress in college student's English Ability?

II. Review of Literatures

According to Ellis (2008), implicit knowledge is intuitive, procedural, systematically variable, and automatic; explicit knowledge on the other hand is conscious, declarative, anomalous, and inconsistent. The former is for use in fluent and spontaneous language use, whereas the latter is accessible through controlled processing in planned language use (ibid.). In this regard, it is possible to identify three potential positions related to explicit and implicit learning in SLA.

Smith, (2017). Mbah, Mbah, and Iloene (2014), investigated students' experiences and expectations on the use of podcasts in learning English pronunciation in Nigeria. The study concluded that podcasts improved students' English pronunciation regardless of their Internet-using habits, language proficiency level, or gender. In this study, students considered podcasts as an effective tool which improved their oral performance in English phonetics-related courses to a satisfying level through the use of mobile gadgets. In another study, Saran, Seferoglu, and Cagıltay (2009) using a mixed-method approach, examined the potentials and effectiveness of using mobile phones and multimedia massages via mobile phones in improving language learners' pronunciation in Turkey.

Blattner and Lomicka (2012) investigated how social networking sites (SNSs) are used in a language course and how students responded to them. This study was also intended to examine the attitudes of language learners and teachers regarding the use of Facebook (FB) in an academic setting. Based on their findings, researchers reported that students reacted positively to the use of FB in their language class as they found many benefits such as real audience. Participants also recognized FB as a new platform where they can put their developing language skills into practice and interact with native speakers in authentic and meaningful interaction.

McCarroll & Curran, (2013) focuses on Arrival and popularity of the Internet as the first global computer network for scientists and educators to search information and conducting research as well as the development of personal digital assistances (PDAs), laptops, and desk top computers pave the way to provide more resources to be accessible. Later on in 1989, the creation of worldwide web (www) gave rise to the next generation of Electronic- learning.

Mahbobeh Rahmatirad in her article The Effect of Task-Based Syllabus on Iranian EFL Learners asserted, also known as the traditional syllabus, it is organized along grammatical items giving primacy to language form. The structural syllabus holds the theory that functionalability arises from structural knowledge. Structural patterns, organized according to such criteria as structural complexity, difficulty, regularity, utility and frequency, are the basic units of learning. It makes an abundant use of highly controlled, tightly structured and sequenced pattern practice drills. It deals with Semantics and sentence types such as statements, questions, interrogatives and grammatically defined types such as simple,

compound and complex sentences are seen. Morphology can also be found in structural syllabi such as singular, plural marking; determiners, articles, prepositions, gender markers and so on. (38)

Studies on the effectiveness of focus-on-form instruction have increased greatly and suddenly in recent years. Ellis et al (2002) improved Long's (1991) definition of FonF instruction by making the difference between two types: 'Planned focus-on-form' and 'incidental focus-on-form.' In many studies, focus on form was the result of prior planning on. (Alahmad, 44)

Assessment of student is one of the most important responsibilities of teachers, because the quality of teaching in classroom is closely associated with the quality of the applied assessment. Hence it is essential for teachers to possess assessment literacy. Assessment literacy is important because it helps teachers to perceive, analyze and use data on student performance to improve teaching. Stakeholders are influenced by language tests, therefore; being assessment literate is more vital for them, because assessment illiteracy results in inaccurate assessment and consequently the purposes of assessment could not be fulfilled. (Rahimirad, 10)

Ghaem and Sayed Golshan (2017) administered a study to investigate the effects of Telegram as a social network on teaching English vocabulary among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. To this end, an experimental approach was applied to assess the efficacy of short messages services (SMS) via Telegram on teaching students' vocabulary learning. The study has revealed that the use of SMS-based teaching had a positive effect on students' vocabulary learning.

Shahryar Banan (2016) in his article The Impact of Enhancing Skewed vs. Balanced Input on Iranian Low Intermediate EFL learners' Knowledge of Verb Use , discusses Some "theory of the child" is necessary, then, to bring the facts about the input – how adults speak to children – and the facts about the output – how children speak – into some sort of responsible alignment. This alignment is what linguistic theory is designed to be about (Chomsky, 1965). Under-standing how environment and nature in this sense come together to explain the course and outcome of language learning is a crucial question. Indeed, it is the only question worth asking in this domain given that children's exposure to a language is finite and limited, and yet they come to say anything they choose (or at least anything they can get away with).

The researcher finds that social media network Telegram can be employed by Iranian Language teachers and learners in various ways. However Iranian EFL learners are restricted in using widely popular SNSs such as FB, Twitter, and YouTube.

III. Discussion

3.1 The Situation of Usage of Mobile Apps among College Students in Iran

Mobile apps have become very popular among college students. Almost all of them download apps on their mobile devices. It shows that over 50 percentage of college students spent over three hours on various apps by using their mobile devices every day. It focuses on the use of mobile technology in language learning. According to Banister (2010) students can use different types of apps on mobile devices to watch online tutorial, read material, and listen English records, they can stop or fast forward through materials as their desired, giving them the independent control based on the pace they receiving information, it permits students to decide their own learning processes (54). Learning that is supported by large plenty of English-learning apps is a new way for college students in the world. Using online resources is being regarded as having the function to improve the quality of learning, increase

the chance of accessing to education and training, reduce the expenditure consumed on education and facilitate the effectiveness and efficiency of education (Alexander, 2001)

3.2 Impact of Telegram on Knowledge of EFL Learners

It seems to be true that the penetration of smartphones and the potential utilization of mobile devices make m-learning a great opportunity. Most young and adult learners use smartphones all the time. Teachers as well as their peers can approach them at almost any time. Mobile devices can be used for storing study materials, which significantly decreases heavy loads that children have to carry on their backs.

Besides, the Internet enables the learner to access target language content that they are interested in. At the same time, m-learning has become a major developing area in education. It is no coincidence that there are a lot of teachers who have started using m-learning in their classes and researchers who conduct research into it. Last but not least, the way that people live in the 21st century supports using mobile technologies in education.

On the other hand, some apps used by learners are not designed by language experts. Moreover, it seems that students should be guided and controlled in using language learning mobile apps for various reasons, including the lack of self-confidence in using new technologies or an unsuitable language level of apps used for particular students. Other downsides of using smartphones in education could be small screens, external interference as well as distraction, the addictive nature of smart devices, and the sometimes unfavorable attitudes of some teachers and parents. First, mobile apps are effective in developing all skills, particularly vocabulary. Second, students' perceptions towards using mobile technologies for language learning are positive. Third, students using mobile technologies for language learning are more motivated to learn both inside and outside class. (Kacetl and Klímová, 9-10)

Klimova also listed both benefits and limitations linked to using m-learning in language learning. Another review by Hwang and Fu had a wider scope and studied 93 papers, dividing their research into two periods. First, most mobile-assisted language learning teaches English as a foreign/second language. Second, researchers' attention was paid mainly to higher-education students, whereas pre-school children had rarely been the subject of such studies. Third, research on vocabulary was the most common. (55)

Traditional approaches lead students through correct content in the curriculum and rely on obsolete learning aids such as blackboards and textbooks. As such, the teacher simply relays the information without taking into account either positive or negative results. Traditional methods rely on simple strategies in the teaching process which do not meet the learning purpose or basic needs. Since teacher-centered. Since such teacher-centred pedagogies situate the learner as a recipient, their overarching goal is the extent to which a student can replicate information without necessarily understanding it. According to Concordia Online (2012), group work is encouraged, and students learn to collaborate and communicate with one another. There are some advantages as followed:

1. Students learn important communicative and collaborative skills through group work.
2. Students learn to direct their own learning, ask questions and complete tasks independently.
3. Students are more interested in learning activities when they can interact with one another and participate actively.

3.3 MALL Promotes Students' Self-regulated Learning

MALL can be used to motivate and engage English language learners to develop their literacy and language skills by themselves. Softa expressed his opinion "the importance for

use of MALL as a motivational piece to encourage language learning." (127)   Sofa conducted a questionnaire given to 230 students about student motivation from the learning environment and the use of mobile technology. During using apps to learn, the students are more likely try to complete the study task independently. Mobile apps, a new technology, have greatly impacted students' learning, and the technology is integrated effectively and appropriately that these learning practices will enforce students' learning motivation and autonomy.

Mobile devices supports students in gaining autonomy and independence to expand the academic day beyond the time, place, and pace in which learning can occur. The expansion of time, place, and pace allows students for the continual exposure and practice of literacy skills. MALL has the ability to make students conduct self-access English learning. It has been found that MALL has a benefit for English language learners as mobileapps tailor instruction and individualize learning so as to meet the students' needs and rate of learning Mobile apps can help English learners develop speaking, writing, listening and reading skills.

3.4 The Impact of Using Mobile Technologies for Teaching and Learning

The use of technology has become vital part of the learning process in and out of the class. Every language class usually uses some form of technology. Technology has been used to both help and increase language learning. Technology aids teachers to adapt classroom activities, thus enhancing the language learning process.The findings of the Attewelle, Savill-Smith, and Douch's (2009) practitioner-led research suggest that using mobile technologies in teaching and learning has some effects:

1) It can encourage and support learning at any time and in any place including home, school, or college, etc.
2) It would make learning more convenient, accessible, inclusive and sensitive to learners' needs.
3) It makes learning more interesting, enjoyable and more attractive.
4) It engages both non-traditional learners and those not succeeded in traditional learning in learning process giving a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem to learners.
5) It overcomes the digital barrier between those learners who have broadband access at home and those who do not.
6) Finally, it helps teachers to provide various learning activities to suit learners with different learning styles. Attewelle et al. (2009) argue that there are some significant caveats in mobile learning. They demonstrated that mobile learning is not a single solution for supporting learning. There are some other technology-pedagogy combinations which may or may not be suitable for this purpose.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, using social media networks in language teaching can benefit language teachers. Yet in other ways, as teachers can monitor learners' communities and the way they use target language outside the classroom in those networks to find out difficult and challenging aspects of their language use, and focus language teaching in classroom on these features. The researcher concludes to before incorporating new technologies into language teaching, teachers need to spend some time on training learners. Learning English refers to listening, speaking, reading and writing, although there are many applications that create a multimedia learning material that is very helpful in developing an English environment for Iranian students who not only learn English from text, but also suck in audio and video in English. To summarize, using mobile apps has a positive effect on learning English. It can

also foster self-regulated learning for students. It can be said that these mobile applications are becoming perhaps the most popular connective tools among language learners not only at the higher level of education but also in high school settings since this type of learning is beneficial for foreign language learners and considerably increases students' interest in the topic. This application seems to have an impact on language education as well as collocation learning as one form of language chunks. Language especially collocations help learners acquire the language more quickly and efficiently.

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