

The Effectiveness of Telegram App in Learning English

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Abstract

There have been enormous improvements in every field in the modernized and technological period. When human understanding advances, several new developments have come to light and Such innovations contribute to human development. Because of the emergence of this modern technology and internet, the field of education is evolving a lot. The usual, blackboard books are replaced by smart boards and e-books. In addition, there is a behavioral shift in the learning of the learners and they rely more on modern technologies. Education, rather than teacher dependence. While teaching English, the teachers bring the new technology into their classrooms using the technology available, they change their methods and techniques to teach the EFL/ESL learners English. In their EFL / ESL classrooms even some teachers encourage the learners to use mobile phones to make their learning simple. This paper focuses on the studies done on the use of mobile phones in the classrooms. Moreover, the pros of using mobile apps for the learners are discussed.

Keywords

Apps, EFL/ESL; mobile phones; technology



I. Introduction

In recent years, the growth of internet, multimedia and the social networks have changed our lives dramatically. Education generally and the foreign language teaching and learning area also benefited enormously from this those inventions and such progresses. The face of language learning is changing and new technologies offer language learners and teachers with tools and opportunities incredible before. The rapid technology has an impact on the education system.

The growth and development of digital, multimedia and social technologies in the 21st century Media networks have dramatically transformed our lives and "our cumulative experience with communications technologies has progressively changed behavioral and social norms" Baron, 4).

Today, every individual in the society has access to a huge amount of information which was unimaginable some years ago, and "mobile technologies offer a new paradigm in connectivity, communication, and collaboration in our everyday lives" (McQuiggan, Kosturko, McQuiggan, & Sabourin, 7). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), "Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (61). Despite the fact that these new forms of communication are very attractive to language teachers, learners, and language learning materials producers, their use in language learning and teaching is controversial and there is a lack of evidence on whether and how they can promote language learning (Zourou & Lamy, 2013).

The 21st century has brought other fundamental improvements in communication as well as in information technology. As a consequence, most people nowadays bring portable devices such as laptops, notebooks, ipads, palmtops, smart watches, cell phones, iPads, flash drives, pagers, and so on everywhere they go. People use mobile phones amongst them because they are portable and useful. In this regard, Yamaguchi (2005: 57) says, "Mobile phone is superior to a computer in portability and some students don't have their own computer". Miller (2014) asserts, "Smartphones are being adopted unprecedentedly by youth and they are potentially the tools for future study technologies". As people find that mobile phones are widely used to do multi-tasking, they always prefer to use them.

Cell phones have brought about dramatic shifts in people's lifestyles. For these smart phones, by purchasing them online, people get items back home that are available on the global market. Individuals can communicate with others and even though they live in various parts of the world they can have video chat with them. Technology has also brought marked changes to the fields of travel and tourism. Tourists wanting to visit foreign countries book their hotel and air ticket reservations online and even browse the internet to read about the locations they are visiting. With the advent of technology, people can read the world's newspapers online and watch news channels and programs on TV and on. The reality is that we don't know whether it is efficient and effective for college students to use mobile apps to learn English by themselves.

Up to the present time, the bulk of the research into the effects of second language instruction have recorded the linguistic progress of one group exposed to an FonF approach and another exposed to FonFs instruction (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2002; Loewen, 2003). The present study aims to further explore this area, concentrating on the effect that FonF, and FonM have on the acquisition of a grammatical form with communicative value: the six forms of conditional sentences have been selected. 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)

The goal of current study is to investigate the effectiveness of Telegram in teaching English to Iranian EFL learners. This social media network is highly popular in Iran. Thus, the study investigated the EFL college students' perception of using Telegram for English language learning.

II. Review of Literature

There are other review articles focusing on m-learning. The review article by Klimova (2018) assessed 15 original articles and the findings include the following facts. First, mobile apps are elective 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. Klimova (5) also listed both benefits and limitations linked to using m-learning in language learning.

Another review by Hwang and Fu (2018) had a wider scope and studied 93 papers, dividing their research into two periods, i.e., 2007–2011 and 2012–2016. It uncovers the following trends. 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. Fourth, higher order thinking, e.g., problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, and communicative competence, only became an important issue between 2012 and 2016, whereas prior to 2012 it had not appeared in the reviewed articles at all. According to Hwang and Fu (13), earlier studies on m-learning usually focused on teaching individual language skills, whereas nowadays it is more common to deliver multiple language skills in authentic learning environments. The authors also maintain that most studies agree on the effectiveness of m-learning.

Naderi and Akrami (2018) investigated the effect of reading comprehension instruction by means of Telegram (Messenger) groups. According to these authors, online instruction has become popular, and their results suggest that students prefer the mobile phone as the best tool for reading short texts. Similarly, Aghajani (2018) looked into the influence of m-learning on cooperative learning (two or more people learning together) and compared face-to-face instruction of English writing with that by means of Telegram. They conclude that Telegram makes the learning environment more meaningful and it helps improve students' writing performance. In addition, Telegram, as the authors claim, actively encourages a cooperative environment and increases motivation.

Awada (2016) also looked into the effectiveness of WhatsApp in language teaching and claims that teaching writing skills by means of WhatsApp was more effective than through regular instruction. Moreover, it increased the learners' levels of motivation. The author states that the WhatsApp tool creates a positive social environment, encouraging a sense of belonging to a community or a team with other learners as well as the teacher. It also reduces anxiety. Therefore, the utilization of mobile devices in education should be seen as vital.

Andujar (2016) claims that WhatsApp with its mobile instant messaging shows the potential to improve the student's writing skills in the second language and activate their involvement. In addition, WhatsApp seems to be accepted among students

Khansarian-Dehkordi and Ameri-Golestan (2019) examined the way mobile learning influences both acquisition and retention of vocabulary and concluded that even though the traditional method brings benefits, the results of those who used mobile phones or tablet PCs with a social networking application Line were significantly better, and these students themselves noticed their improvement. Nonetheless, the authors emphasize that technology cannot replace the physical classroom. Mobile devices should rather be used to encourage learners to interact with each other in the virtual world and create a fun environment for mutual learning.

Zhang (2016) studied the effectiveness of an app called English Fun Dubbing (EFD). The author claims that EFD supports the student's language learning autonomy by providing them with an opportunity to practice by themselves at their own pace. Zhang (2016) concluded that a reasonable choice of a suitable application not only enhances learning but also makes students use mobile devices in more reasonable ways than they usually do.

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). Understanding 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).

According to Klimova (2019), research indicates that mobile apps help develop all language skills, primarily retaining new vocabulary, and the use of these apps also increases students' motivation to study. Using the apps also boosts confidence, class participation, and students' tendency to use mobile devices in education.

Gamlo (2019) emphasizes the importance of motivation to learn English. The author believes in using mobile game-based language learning. Nevertheless, the apps should be selected based on students' interests, needs and level. It seems to be true that the penetration of smartphones and the potential utilization of mobile devices make m-learning a great opportunity. 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. Moreover, the Internet enables the learner to access target language content that they are interested in.

Many of previous studies were conducted on the effectiveness of the Telegram app in teaching and learning English language skills (Aghajani & Adloo, 2018; Heidari-shahreza & Khodarahmi, 2018; Xodabande, 2017). However, there are little previous studies that examine the learners' perception of using Telegram as a mobile device' application in EFL education (Zamakhshari, 2018).

Besides, in the Saudi context, smartphone proved its outperformance in EFL learning. Ahmed (2015) examined smartphones enhancement of EFL learning mainly on linguistic knowledge and language skills. The research sheds light on learners' vocabulary acquisition, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The researcher affirmed that EFL students who used smartphones were more enthusiastic than those who were still held in paper-text materials. This affirmation was reinforced by Al Fadda & Al Qasim (2013) who shed light on improving listening comprehension via podcasting. The authors exposed that applied of podcasts can create a positive and significant difference to the EFL listening comprehension for EFL Saudi students.

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)

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.

III. Research Methods

This is descriptive research. The methods are based on a literature review of available sources found on the research topic in two acknowledged databases: Web of Science and Scopus Journals.

IV. Discussion

4.1 Telegram as a Social Media for Learning English

It seems clear that smartphone penetration and the future use of cell phones M-learning apps represent a great opportunity. Most smartphones are used by young and adult learners it's time. Teachers and their colleagues should contact them at just about any time. It could update communication. On the other hand, the language experts do not build such applications used by learners. What's more, it seems that students will be driven and monitored by the use of mobile apps for language learning in various ways Reasons include lack of faith in the use of emerging technology or an unacceptable language of software used by different students. Telegram app could be incorporated into higher education curriculum to improve Universities educational process. This study recommends that teachers can use Telegram app as a corresponding tool for face to face instruction and assessment. Additionally, EFL students can use Telegram app to develop their English language outside the classroom. It is also suggested to use Telegram app to inspire self-study and to change the learners' role.

Mei Yusmita, (2014.) in his article entitled of Pemanfaatan Whatsapp Messenger Sebagai Media discusses the social media that is widely used by the younger generation are WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, etc. These applications are used to communicate with each other, but not only to communicate but also they are used in other needs, for example in business and education. They have different features that offer their own advantages and disadvantages. One example is the superiority of WhatsApp revealed by Mei Yusmita, he said that WhatsApp has advantages over other social media, namely in terms of sending images, audio, and files, even WhatsApp has certain signs that show delivery, which has been read, etc

Due to widespread popularity in application use, these tools are not only substituted with each other but also serve as extension for each other in learning environments. A range of advantages such as sharing photos, videos, audio messages, marketing, connecting to web-based resources, and sending files as well as sending messages to other users individually or to groups of up to 5000 members for broadcasting to infinite audiences make Telegram a better choice in place of its counterparts among users. In sum, "Integrating Telegram channels into existing learning practices can provide informal learning contexts and create new opportunities for English learning. ((Mashhadi Heidar & Kaviani. 67)

There are many kinds of channels from Telegram that can educate about English, one of the channels offers English vocabulary learning. Based on Nation, the students or learners have to know around of 5000 lexical items to understand nontechnical English text⁵. In the common situation, most students cannot have a long time to practice and mastering many vocabularies because of lack of class hours, so it can lead to some problems for language teachers and learner. On the other hand, because telegram has been familiar tools to students' for their daily communication needs, it is not only social media but it can also bring about a new type of language learning. (Kaviani, 65-76)

4.2 Vocabulary Learning by Telegram App

Vocabulary is the part of language, which has an important role in the process of communication in both written and oral. It is needed in daily life and education field. So this study aims to determine the way or procedure of Telegram to facilitate students' vocabulary abilities. Kinsella states that vocabulary is the single strongest predictor of academic success for EFL learners. Development of vocabulary is not only the key to improve speaking skill,

but it also helps students with both writing and reading comprehension. Vocabulary is an important thing to build some sentences, it is used by people to express some situations in daily life even in reading, writing, or speaking skills.

Pirouz (2015) adopted an applied method and used a descriptive and correlation technique for data collection. She investigated the relationship between using Telegram and interpersonal communication of Islamic Azad University students of Karaj. Among 3865 candidates, she selected 345 students as the sample of her study. The obtained results indicated that the average scores of the students who are members of Telegram application higher than that of the students who do not use Telegram. Furthermore, a significant relationship exists between Telegram and emotional dependence. She suggested that universities have duties to inform the society in relation to the role and use, and also the various effects of Telegram on students.

Ashiyani and Salehi (2016) conducted a study in which they investigated the use and effects of mobile applications such as WhatsApp. They selected 60 participants as experimental and control groups equally. The experimental group installed WhatsApp application on their mobile phones in order to learn and practice new collocations, while the control group did not use any tool for learning them. The results in each group were statistically evaluated and the findings manifested that the experimental group that used WhatsApp application in collocation learning outperformed the control group. This study also prepares pedagogical implications for utilizing mobile applications as an instrument in learning a second language.

Mashhadi Heidar and Kaviani (2016) conducted a study to investigate whether Telegram would be an effective and easy learning tool of vocabulary for Iranian female EFL learners at intermediate level at Payam Noor University of Babol. For the purpose of this study 50 female EFL university students among 100 candidates were selected and after using proficiency test concerning the learners' vocabulary knowledge, they were divided into two experimental and control groups. They stated that Telegram learning can bring unique technological pedagogical advantages for EFL learners. The results also revealed that Telegram learning has a significant positive effect on the development of vocabulary learning.

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 chunks especially collocations help learners acquire the language more quickly and efficiently.

English teachers should be encouraged to devote some more time to applying Education in their schools, and the use of telegram software should also be given greater importance to make colloquial learning more meaningful and effective in language development Schoolchildren. Telegram application is currently one of the most innovative apps that can be used in the classroom and in s healthy environments.

V. Conclusion

To sum up, Telegram is viewed as an ELL platform that could be due to a variety of features such as its ubiquity, ease of access, ease of exchanging personal ideas and peer input, as well as input from the teacher to individual students. Moreover, students can enjoy the comfort of using it which could be catered to their own needs and to a capability of Telegram to provide them with a feeling of security. It confirmed that the Telegram today is almost an integral part of EFL college students' daily lives. The Telegram application, a free online

app, has everything in itself: a massive cloud-based storage system to keep the files, a venue for organizing collaborative online classes, dozens of robot assistants, and the capability of making one's own customized robot for any particular purpose. Working on different skills and sub skills in Telegram is very easy but it depends on considering some educational provisions. As many distance language learning programs require online contact between the instructors and the students, the educational policy must facilitate the possibility of coordinating a communicative link to get the job done. Also, the broadband internet connections should be made accessible. Learners and teachers in demonstrating the importance of using social media to improve students' English knowledge.

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