

## The Use of Mobile Apps in Learning English Language

**Maryam Ameri**

Faculty of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Tehran North Branch, Iran  
[amerimaryamameri@gmail.com](mailto:amerimaryamameri@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Throughout and out of college, the use of technology has become an integral part of the learning process. Technology helps teachers to adapt lessons in the classroom, thereby improving the learning process, English as a second language/international. This paper discusses different attitudes which help English language learners by using technologies to increase their learning skills. Researcher indicates that the effective use of new technologies improves learners' language learning skills.*

### Keywords

technology; language learning; apps; classroom; education; EFL; mobile phones



### I. Introduction

Language is one of the significant elements that affect international communication activities. In addition, Ahmadi stated that one of the important elements for learning is the method that instructors use in their classes to facilitate language learning process. According to Bull and Ma (2001), technology provides offers unlimited resources to language learners.

Harmer (2007) and Genç İter (2015) emphasized and teachers should encourage learners to find appropriate activities through using computer technology in order to be successful in language learning. Clements and Sarama (2003) declare that the use of suitable technological materials can be useful for learners. According to Harmer (2007), using computer-based language activities improve cooperative learning in learners. Technology has always been an important part of teaching and learning environment learning. When we talk about technology in teaching and learning, the word 'integration' is used (Eady & Lockyer). Although learners have been born into a technologically rich world, they may not be skilful users of technology. In addition, just providing access to technology is not adequate. Meaningful development of technology-based knowledge is significant for all learners in order to maximize their learning. In this review paper, the researcher will review some of the significant issues pertinent to the use of technology in the learning and teaching of English language skills. (Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 56-57).

Nowadays, mobile technologies and mobile applications (apps) are becoming an indispensable part of learning, including foreign language learning. In fact, mobile learning research shows that the use of cell phones and their applications continues to be Beneficial for learning the foreign language, thanks in particular to its special features (e.g. interactivity, Ubiquity, or portability) and encouragement and feedback from teachers. Klimova (2018) in his book Evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of a mobile application on students' study achievements mentions , The trend nowadays of using mobile phones in language learning is that they are mainly used As the language acquisition service. The Blended Learning (BL) approach, therefore (a combination of Face-to - face instruction and online learning) are mainly implemented for their use. In addition, the BL approach is especially suitable for distant students, who due to their work commitments cannot be involved in full-time English language study.

The purpose of this review study is to explore whether mobile apps used in the learning of English as a foreign language are beneficial. Do the mobile apps improve important progress in college student's English ability?

## II. Review of Literatures

The study of mobile phone use in the classroom and language learning is not novel. Many research papers have been conducted in this field supporting the use of mobile phone in learning.

Thornton and Houser (2005) in his article entitled Using mobile phones in English education in presented three studies in mobile phone learning. University students. Students felt that using mobile phone in learning is «a valuable teaching method» and they highly rated its «educational effectiveness» in the classroom. A further study by them were subdivided into three groups: using cell phones text messages, using computer e-mail, and speaking.

Attwell,( 2004) in his article Mobile Technologies and Learning asserts mobile phones have positively contributed to the field of learning in many different ways. First, mobile learning helps learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and to recognize their existing abilities. Second, it can be used to encourage both independent and collaborative learning experiences. Also, it helps learners to identify areas where they need assistance and support.

Telegram app has an impact on English language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Naderi and Akrami (2018) stated that using telegram groups in instruction has a significant effect on the learners' reading comprehension ability. They affirmed that it improved the learners' ability in reading comprehension. In the same context of implementing Telegram app in the educational process of English skills, there were two of a previous study (Abbasi & Behjat, 2016; Setiawan & Wahyuni, 2017; Xodabande, 2017) which concentrated on improving speaking ability. Abbasi and Behjat (2016) investigated the effect of storytelling with Telegram on EFL students 'speaking complexity. The result showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group regarding their speaking complexity.

Additionally, Setiawan and Wahyuni (2017) showed the role of E-talk Castel's model in improving students' speaking skill in English by using a recording tool in telegram application. The results revealed that implementing E- talk castle model supported by Telegram provided students with good aid to improve their English speaking skill.

Stepp-Greany (2002) used survey data from Spanish language classes which utilized a range of technological approaches and methods in order to determine the importance of the role of teachers, the relevance and availability of technology labs and individual components, and the effect of using technology on the learning process of a foreign language. The results confirmed student perceptions of the teacher as the primary learning facilitator, and stressed the importance of regularly scheduled language labs and the use of CD Rom. Stepp-Greany recommended a follow-up study to measure the effects of relevant technology on the learning process of foreign language acquisition.

Shyamlee (2012) analyzed the use of multi-media technology in language teaching. The study found that such technology enhances student learning motivation and attention since it implicates students in the practical processes of language learning via communication with each other. Shyamlee recommended the use multi-media technology in classrooms,

particularly as its positive impact on the learning process aligns with the ongoing efficacy of the teacher role.

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. They also described FB as “casual” and “pressure free” which makes them comfortable practicing their written skills outside the classroom. On the other hand, participants of this study were less familiar with using FB in academia and tended to use it for group discussions and videos. Blattner and Fiori (2009) consider community building and development of socio-pragmatic competence via FB as useful pedagogical practices and possibilities in technology integrated classrooms.

According to Susikaran (2013), basic changes have come in classes beside the teaching methods because chalk and talk teaching method is not sufficient to effectively teach English. Raihan and Lock (2012) state that with a well-planned classroom setting, learners learn how to learn efficiently. Technology-enhanced teaching environment is more effective than lecture-based class. Teachers should find methods of applying technology as a useful learning instrument for their learners although they have not learnt technology and are not able to use it like a computer expert.

Dawson, Cavanaugh, and Ritzhaupt (2008) and Pourhosein Gilakjani (2014) maintained that using technology can create a learning atmosphere centered around the learner rather than the teacher that in turn creates positive changes. They emphasized that by using computer technology, language class becomes an active place full of meaningful tasks where the learners are responsible for their learning. Drayton, Falk, Stroud, Hobbs, and Hammerman (2010) argued that using computer technology indicates a true learning experience that enhances learners' responsibilities. Technology encourages learners to learn individually and to acquire responsible behaviors. The independent use of technologies gives learners self-direction.

Warschauer (2000a) described two different views about how to integrate technology into the class. First, in the cognitive approach, learners get the opportunity to increase their exposure to language meaningfully and make their own knowledge. Second, in the social approach, learners must be given opportunities for authentic social interactions to practice real life skills. This objective can be obtained through the collaboration of learners in real activities.

The findings of the research support the proven ineffectiveness of traditional English teaching methods, and confirm that learners are more enthusiastic and interactive when using modern technology to integrate English.

### **III. Research Method**

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.

## IV. Discussion

### 4.1. Use of Technology in English Language Class

Technology is an effective tool for learners. Teachers should model the use of technology to support the curriculum so that learners can increase the true use of technology in learning their language skills. Cooperation is one of the important tools for learning. Bennett, Culp, Honey, Tally, and Spielvogel (2000) asserted that the use of computer technology lead to the improvement of teachers' teaching and learners' learning in the classes.( 33)

Dramatically, we live in a world that is evolving the mobile technology at such a rapid pace that we have difficulty following. With the advent of smartphones with android system and Apple products with iOS system such as iPad and iPhone, the mobile market has changed dramatically in just a few years, and the number of people who own such devices is increasing rapidly, particularly among young people.

The students can easily and freely access these English learning apps based on their own interests. In addition, these apps are built in terms of the specific objectives of the learners. The use of apps on mobile devices to learn English also breaks time and place restrictions. (Subian, 7) It means that students can learn English at any time and in any place. Mobile devices are becoming a kind of important tools for students to learn English.

According to the relevant researches, the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning can not only enhance students' English ability, but also increase students' learning motivation. With the rapid growth of apps on learning English and the popularization of mobile devices among college students, the learning advantages that apps on mobile devices offer to students have become increasingly important. Core features of mobile-learning, such as personalized learning, time- and place-alone, Collaboration between peers and teachers in both formal and informal environments, interactivity and ubiquity Make m-learning scientists of mobile devices. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) focuses on language acquisition using mobile technology. There's no need for learners to sit in a classroom or at the front of a computer to study in MALL environment. MALL can actually be seen as an ideal solution for barriers to language learning in terms of time and place. (Miangah & Nezarat, 309)

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.» 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. It is important to embed learning supports within the MALL that the learner is in control of. The expansion of time, place, and pace allows students for the continual exposure and practice of literacy skills. (Beecher & Williams, 333-35). The rapid growth of app technology has rendered these English learning apps capable of incorporating various media, such as text, image, animation, audio, and video, to create a multimedia instructional material, as well as prompt student interest in research. In addition, online interactions can enhance learner-to-content interactions and learning effects. These interactions include multimedia presentations, learners' contributions to learning materials and links to related learning materials. Recent studies also show that learning apps have a positive impact on learning English. College students in Iran, for example, are skilled and passionate users of mobile devices, so they can rely on internet-based or supported language learning for independent language learning and academic writing.

## 4.2. Mobile English Learning

Students use mobile phone in learning, but in a very limited way. According to Molenet, mobile learning can be broadly defined as 'the exploitation of ubiquitous handheld technologies, together with wireless and mobile phone networks, to facilitate, support, enhance and extend the reach of teaching and learning. Mobile technologies include mobile phones, smartphones, mini notebooks or netbooks, handheld GPS or voting devices, and specialist portable technologies used in science labs, engineering workshops or for environmental or agricultural study. Virtual learning environments and management information systems. It can be argued that tools used by learners are of little relevance; what is relevant is the notion of mobility and building conversations on learning in that cycle. Hashemi (2011) in his article entitled Using Mobile Phones in Language Learning/Teaching mentions First, ownership of the device makes a difference, since a tool that has only been borrowed may not be used in the same way as one that is owned and very familiar. Second, learners who have more than one device are likely to behave differently from those who only have one, because the former can more easily overcome common problems of short battery life and reliability. Third, particular mobile devices have strong associations with specific realms of activity, be it work-related or for leisure. (2478-2479)

Most mobile devices are valuable in education as, teaching aids for practitioners, and also as learning support tools for learners. Here are some of the main benefits: Learners can interact with each other and with the practitioner instead of hiding behind large monitors. It's much easier to accommodate several mobile devices in a classroom than several desktop computers. PDAs or tablets holding notes and e-books are lighter and less bulky than bags full of files, paper and textbooks, or even laptops. Handwriting with the stylus pen is more intuitive than using keyboard and mouse. It's possible to share assignments and work collaboratively; learners and practitioners can e-mail, cut, copy and paste text, pass the device around a group. Mobile devices can be used anywhere, anytime, including at home, on the train, in hotels - this is invaluable for work-based training. These devices engage learners - young people who may have lost interest in education - like mobile phones, gadgets and games devices such as Nintendo DS or PlayStation Portable. This technology may contribute to combating the digital divide, as this equipment (for example PDAs) is generally cheaper than desktop computers. (2479)

The emergence of apps about education has changed the traditional learning mode, gradually changing from the teacher-centered to self-regulated, learner changed into knowledge construction of the active learning (Yiping & Lei, 2010). The technology-enriched learning is designed to enhance students' self-regulation and motivation (Kramarski & Gutman, 2006).

According to James (2013) the easy availability of apps on mobile devices means that students are increasingly turning to online resources for learning. At the same time, it's also worth considering the benefits of apps that can help students to organize and compare different sources as part of projects and revision. Internet has its problems.

## 4.3. Merits of Mobile Learning

Regarding to the advantages of English-learning apps, being free to get these online resources and the accessibility that students can download resources into mobile devices and study without the restrictions in time and place are two main advantages. Furthermore, the large number of relevant apps can provide many choices for students to find the online resources they are genuinely interested in. It should be noted that the learning materials are regularly updated in most apps.



There are some benefits of Mobile Learning for English students as follow: Quiz control and self-assessment as a question or as games. Take the lessons and tutorials. Receive archived or brooked lectures live. Access to audio or video clips. Be part of virtual learning communities on the go. Student interaction with instructors and among each other. Enables several students work together on assignments even while at distant locations. The new generation likes mobile devices such as PDAs, phones and games devices.

#### **4.4. Demerits of Mobile Learning**

The social restrictions can be found in that “students don’t use mobile phone seriously”. Some students play video or music in the classroom and that makes it “noisy and out of control”. In addition to that, some teachers “don’t allow to use it” in the classroom because students cannot focus and will not pay attention. To the contrary, other students have expressed the disadvantages of Mobile telephone by saying they’re "feeling bored" with it. Moreover, it's "not interesting to use mobile telephone to learn." We still don't use it, since they are not motivated by teachers. The non-users of cell phones in the classroom reported their reasons for not using it, such as the high Internet prices, the small mobile screen, and the health problems.

Cell Phone and PDA displays on small screens. Devices can become out of date quickly. It is also Difficulties with printing, unless connected to a network. Difficulties with printing, unless connected to a network. Unfortunately, one drawback of mobile learning is that it merely increases a student's screen time in one day. Although, on the one hand, we aggressively aim to reduce the amount of time spent in front of a computer, smartphone, tablet, or TV screen for students – particularly younger ones – mobile learning requires students to spend time in front of a screen to learn. Using mobile learning causes a great deal of confusion too. Most students open the smartphone to learn something, and end up chatting, posting photos, or playing video games using social media websites. Such forms of distractions waste one’s energy which could have been used to do a successful job. This can be a concern in rural areas and in areas where Internet and energy use is not yet widespread. If you have a device but don't have the electricity or internet you need to run the device and use the mobile learning facility. In the end some respondents suggested the University Ought to play a part in promoting and supporting the use of Mobile education technology, as one student suggested "University will draw up some mobile learning programs English.

## V. Conclusion

In conclusion, the most important resource in the ICT world at the moment is mobile learning. Mobile learning is considered to be an important factor in keeping young people interested in learning, where more conventional approaches have struggled. PDAs with desktop functionality, the learning world is getting more mobile, more flexible and more exciting. What makes mobile technology so interesting is that it has an association with indoor and outdoor movement, through formal and informal environments, allowing learners to at least lead some way. Mobile technology takes learning out of the classroom, often outside of the teacher's reach. The industrial world is attaining achievement in all fields, despite their hard work. In the area of science and technology even the same progress is observed. New and creative technology has replaced outdated and out-of-date technology. Because of the emergence of this modern technology and internet, the field of education is evolving a lot. Given their hard work, the modern world is attaining milestones in all fields. Only the same change is made in the field of science and technology. New and innovative innovation has replaced obsolete and obsolete technology. The area of education is changing a lot, due to the advent of this new technology and internet. In addition, the teachers use some valuable smartphone devices when they teach English in their EFL / ESL classrooms. So, the learners take this opportunity to use the mobile apps to learn the language skills and focus more on learning them both inside and outside the classroom.

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