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Mobile Assisted Language Learning in Fostering Speaking Skills: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is a technology-mediated training form that utilises handheld devices such as computers, tablets, and phones to provide students with an interactive and stimulating learning experience. Teachers and students utilising mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones to provide access to educational materials at any time, anywhere, pose the potential for widening learning horizons beyond classrooms. The application of MALL in ESL teaching has been increasingly popular in recent years as it has the potential to make learning easier and offer learners a more interactive learning experience. Mobile devices provide an extension of learning in a new environment with new opportunities, not a substitute for existing learning tools [1]. Besides, the students have hands-on access to perform tasks, engage in evaluation, and provide feedback through MALL. The research examines the way MALL enhance the learning outcomes of the students as well as their active involvement in learning English speaking ability.

1. Introduction

It became popular in the last few years because of mobile device proliferation. The use of smartphones is significantly growing these days, and it has also paved the path for a

ubiquitous learning environment to learn and rehearse. Mobile learning allows learning "anytime and anywhere" (8) with the assistance of applications, with the help of the internet. The relevance of MALL applications is now better understood by language learning researchers, practitioners, and instructors (1). Kukulska-Hulme and Viberg arrived at the same conclusion, focusing on the necessity to integrate Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles and frameworks in empirical studies within the framework of mobile learning. Moreover, they stressed the necessity of investigating social interaction facets in MALL research, especially when researchers are involved in design-oriented experiments and studies (9).

This research particularly seeks to ascertain the effectiveness of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning achievement of the learner. The ability of the learner, their prior knowledge, and experience in applying mobile devices for learning, as well as their disposition towards mobile-based learning, have a considerable impact on the quality of achievements in activities done using mobile phones (5).

One of the significant strengths of mobile learning is that mobile phones are highly available across a broad section of the population. Typical applications support learners with different language competencies like reading, listening, speaking, and writing, individually or through co-activity. Current MALL applications increasingly utilise the learner's physical environment to provide access to language resources pertinent to their locale or to allow for the capture and sharing of authentic language use. Mobile learning is possible in formal or informal environments, with mobiles acting as a tool to bridge in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. (6).

This research targets instruction, results, motivating aspects, and participation related to mobile-assisted learning. This research aims to better comprehend the potential of mobile-assisted learning in the present context by examining the application of mobile learning in educating ESL students. This study examines the effect of MALL on ESL classrooms and evaluates its effectiveness through a survey of ESL students.

2. Background

Mobile-assisted learning is an interactive and engaging type of technology-mediated instruction that utilises mobile phones to provide learners with an interactive and stimulating learning experience. Over the last few years, the application of MALL in ESL teaching has become increasingly popular due to its potential to enhance the learning process and provide learners with a more fascinating learning experience.

Mobile learning technology, nonetheless, possesses a fast rate of development from a teacher-learner text-based methodology towards an upcoming multimedia supporting technology. Still, podcast lectures and audio comments are digitalised, creating an

online interaction between learners, feasible in a more convenient manner without time and space constraints

The development of mobile learning technology has gone through a rapid transformation, evolving from a text-based mode between instructors and students to an upcoming multimedia-supported technology. The evolution has promoted more accessible online interaction between instructors and students through functions such as podcast lectures and audio comments in digitised form. Notably, these advances have done away with the time and space constraints, allowing smooth communication and collaboration in the mobile-learning process.

MALL can be utilised to support classroom teaching by offering students access to interactive materials and activities that are individually customised. MALL can also be utilised to offer feedback and evaluation of a student's improvement, which can serve to stimulate and sustain the student's interest in the material. MALL can also give students access to a range of resources, including audio files, videos, and web-based activities.

3. Methodology

This research investigates the impact and the participation of the learners in the acquisition of speaking ability using Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. For gaining insight into the ESL teachers' thoughts and experiences who implemented mobile-assisted learning in the classroom, the quantitative study methodology was employed among the teachers and the learners. The online questionnaire has utility and efficacy of perceived Mobile-Assisted Language Learning questions.

The questionnaire contains five-point Likert scale items from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Data collection and analysis are interpreted using a descriptive IBM SPSS tool, Version 26. The study period is four weeks. A sample of 49 ESL learners and 18 English teachers is invited to take part in the survey during this period of time. A convenient Sampling Method is employed for the research. The sample consists of students with varying levels of English proficiency.

The questionnaire is set to gauge participants' beliefs and attitudes towards Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. The questionnaire has items on participants' exposure to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, their perceived effectiveness and usefulness, and their satisfaction with the process. The questionnaire also aims to reveal any possible obstacles in the use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning.

The gathering and processing of data utilising the descriptive SPSS software. Descriptive statistics like means, median, standard deviation, sample variance, and percentages are employed to process the results of the survey. The findings of the study

are employed to evaluate the effectiveness of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in learning English as a second language. The results of this research provide informative and informative data on the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English as a second language (ESL) classes.

4. Research Findings:

MALL can be used as a useful and interactive tool for language learning, especially by students who are not able to attend conventional forms of classroom instruction. More specifically, evidence indicates that MALL can offer a more personalised learning process and improved access to a greater number of learning resources and activities. Furthermore, MALL provides the opportunity for students to learn at their own pace and on their schedules.

Research also identified that MALL can be particularly advantageous to ESL students since it enables them to exercise their language skills in a simulated real-world setting. This can be achieved using apps, games, and virtual reality simulations that reproduce natural language contexts. In addition, MALL can be utilized to complement instruction in the traditional classroom, so that students are able to receive faster feedback and exercise their skills in more diverse contexts.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Mean	4.00	3.72	3.72	3.78	4.33	3.94	3.72	3.83	3.83	4.28
Standard Error	0.24	0.27	0.29	0.29	0.16	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.33	0.18
Median	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Standard Deviation	1.03	1.13	1.23	1.22	0.69	1.06	1.13	1.15	1.38	0.75
Sample Variance	1.06	1.27	1.51	1.48	0.47	1.11	1.27	1.32	1.91	0.57
Kurtosis	-0.47	-1.34	-0.30	0.00	-0.58	-0.88	-1.34	0.64	-0.02	-0.93
Skewness	-0.73	-0.21	-0.69	-0.85	-0.55	-0.55	-0.21	-0.94	-1.02	-0.53
Range	3	3	4	4	2	3	3	4	4	2
Minimum	2	2	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	3
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Count	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18

Table - 1

Table 1 below illustrates the results of a survey that asked about how frequently and effectively the use of mobile-assisted learning is in teaching ESL. The survey was administered to 18 teachers. The mean scores across all questions range from 3.72 to 4.33, indicating that most of the participants believe that the use of mobile-assisted learning is effective in teaching English as a Second Language. The standard error range of 0.16 to 0.33 shows that the results are quite similar. The mode for all questions was 5, indicating that most of the respondents found mobile-assisted English as a Second Language teaching to be very successful. The range of standard deviation between 0.69 and 1.38 shows a high degree of variation in responses. The skewness ranges from -1.02 to -0.53, indicating a slight left bias in the data. The range of scores per question is from 3 to 4, indicating that responses were extremely consistent. The minimum and maximum scores per question are 2 and 5, respectively, indicating that respondents generally agreed that mobile-assisted learning is effective in ESL instruction. The findings reflect that mobile-assisted learning is being utilised moderately often in instructing English as a Second Language. The score of 4.00 signifies that the majority of respondents tended to use mobile-assisted learning in instructing English as a Second Language, generally. The scores of median and mode at 4 also prove that mobile-assisted learning is utilised often. The 1.03 standard deviation tells us that there is some deviation in the frequency of use of mobile-assisted learning to teach English as a Second Language. The range is relatively constrained in the frequency of use of mobile-assisted learning. The minimum and maximum scores tell us that some have lower frequencies of use for mobile-assisted learning, and others have higher frequencies of use. In general, findings indicate that mobile-assisted learning is utilised with high frequency and regularity when teaching English as a Second Language.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Mean	4.12	4.00	3.92	3.90	3.92	3.96	3.65	3.73	3.73	3.69
Standard Error	0.14	0.13	0.15	0.15	0.17	0.15	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.16
Median	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
Standard Deviation	0.95	0.91	1.08	1.07	1.19	1.04	1.09	1.20	1.11	1.12
Sample Variance	0.90	0.83	1.16	1.14	1.41	1.08	1.19	1.45	1.24	1.26
Kurtosis	-0.59	-	-	-	0.15	-0.59	-	-	-	-

		1.02	1.14	0.32			0.74	0.31	0.73	0.79
Skewness	-0.71	-0.34	-0.46	-0.65	-0.93	-0.73	-0.36	-0.73	-0.48	-0.46
Range	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
Minimum	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Count	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49

Table – 2

The statistics in Table 2 show that students have positive views towards the use of mobile devices to support them in learning English. The fact that the teachers assigned a mean rating of 3.92 to the quality of instruction and a mean rating of 3.90 to the relevance of the teaching strategies shows that they were satisfied with these features of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. The effectiveness, ease of use, and benefit to learners of employing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning all scored average marks of 3.92, 3.96, and 3.65, respectively.

It is also clear that the employment of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in teaching the English language is regarded as a suitable and effective method of learning by the participants. Both the teaching quality and the methods employed in teaching were highly rated, as were the usefulness, ease of use and advantages of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. Both the quality of learning activities and learner motivation were regarded as being satisfactory, whereas participants were inclined to recommend using Mobile-Assisted Language Learning for English language teaching to other learners.

Discussion

The results of this study specify that MALL can be a useful tool for the teaching of English as a Second Language. Specifically, its personalised and flexible approach makes it an excellent tool for students who do not have access to conventional classroom learning, as well as those who wish to augment their learning. Moreover, its capacity to simulate real-world language situations can assist students in becoming more at ease with speaking English.

This study also specifies that there are some possible disadvantages of MALL. For instance, learners might find it hard to grasp sophisticated language principles or conversational tactics if they over-rely on technology. Moreover, the application of MALL might involve extra resources, like subscriptions for some sites and programs, which might not be readily available to teachers and learners.

This research results indicates that MALL can be a useful and motivating tool for English as a Second Language teaching. Although there are some possible

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disadvantages, the advantages of MALL in terms of greater access, flexibility, and customisation outweigh them. Therefore, it can be helpful for teachers and learners to consider implementing MALL in their ESL instruction.

Advantages

1. Improved Accessibility: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning provides ESL students the ability to view learning materials and activities anywhere they are. This gives them greater autonomy in learning and eliminates the necessity to physically be in a classroom or another physical environment.

2. Improved Engagement: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning may be more engaging than more traditional approaches since learners can become involved with the content in a more active sense. Mobile-assisted learning also has the potential to be more engaging for learners, as it may be adaptable to the students' personal styles of learning and interests.

3. Improved Motivation: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning can give students immediate feedback and rewards, which can encourage them to keep learning and improving their English language skills.

4. Improved Efficiency: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning can be utilized to provide content more efficiently so that students can access materials and activities at any moment and in an easy way.

Disadvantages

1. Technical Constraints: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning may be constrained by the technical capacity of the device, e.g., operating system, speed and memory capacity. This can restrict the variety of activities that can be employed.

2. Social Constraints: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning isolates some students because they do not have the interactions with other teachers and students that traditional approaches provide.

3. Cost: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning is costly, as it involves a mobile data pack and network facilities.

Challenges Faced:

1. Accessibility: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning needs the availability of mobile phones, which could be too costly or unavailable to certain learners.

2. Data Security: Permitting students to use their own devices to access sensitive content is a data security issue.

3. Flexibility: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning necessitates flexibility with respect to the limitations of mobile phones, like battery life and dependence on network connectivity.

4. Technology Acceptance: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning will only work if students are accepting of the technology.

5. Interactivity: Developing interactive tasks that are both effective and engaging on a mobile is difficult.

6. Personalization: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning needs to be personalised in order to cater to the individual learning needs of each student.

Conclusion

The implications of this research are sound since the use of mobile phones probably enabled collaborative tasks for participants both within and outside the classroom, hence the encouragement of positive attitudes towards learning among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This implies that the mobile apps created sufficient opportunities for learners to carry out collaborative tasks, making speaking exercises more convenient and enthusiastic. This corroborates with Lu's (10) findings, who also claims that Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) promotes learner interaction, strengthens integration between language learning and authentic communication needs, and facilitates retention of language learning capabilities. This study implies that mobile-assisted learning can be an effective method of teaching English as a second language. The results indicate that mobile-assisted learning can increase student engagement and learning achievements, leading to greater student comprehension and motivation. Moreover, mobile-assisted learning can reduce the duration of completing a course, which enables students to study more efficiently.

To conclude, Mobile-Assisted Learning has many benefits in teaching English as a second language. It is a motivating and effective means to enhance the understanding and engagement of students and can act as a helpful tool for teachers. Pedagogical strategies, Individual differences and adaptive learning, assessment and feedback on the effectiveness of mobile-assisted learning as an instruction method for ESL can be researched further.

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Appendix:

a. Research Questions for Table 1

1. How often do you use mobile-assisted learning in your ESL classes?

A. Never B. Rarely C. Sometimes D. Often E. Very Often

2. How effective do you think mobile-assisted learning is in helping students improve their English language skills?

A. Very effective B. Somewhat effective C. Neutral D. Not very effective E. Not

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effective at all

3. Do you think mobile-assisted learning is an efficient way to teach English as a Second Language?

A. Very effective B. Somewhat effective C. Neutral D. Not very effective E. Not effective at all

4. Do you find that mobile-assisted learning motivates your students to learn English?

A. Not at all motivated B. Slightly motivated C. Moderately motivated D. Highly motivated E. Extremely motivated

5. How satisfied are you with the results of using mobile-assisted learning in your ESL classes?

A. Not at all satisfied B. Slightly satisfied C. Moderately satisfied D. Highly satisfied E. Extremely satisfied

6. In your opinion, does mobile-assisted learning reduce the time taken to learn English as a Second Language?

A. Definitely reduces B. Moderately reduces C. Neutral D. Slightly reduces E. Does not reduce

7. Do you believe that mobile-assisted learning is an effective way to teach English as a Second Language?

A. Very effective B. Somewhat effective C. Neutral D. Not very effective E. Not effective at all

8. How user-friendly do you find mobile-assisted learning tools while teaching English as a Second Language?

A. Extremely user-friendly B. Moderately user-friendly C. Neutral D. Slightly user-friendly E. Not user-friendly at all

9. How do you rate the use of mobile-assisted learning in terms of its ability to engage learners?

A. Very engaging B. Moderately engaging C. Neutral D. Slightly engaging E. Not engaging at all

10. How satisfied are you with the use of mobile-assisted learning in teaching English as a Second Language?

A. Highly satisfied B. Satisfied C. Neutral D. Not satisfied E. Extremely not satisfied

Research Questions for the Table 2

1. How effective do you find the use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Very effective B. Somewhat effective C. Neutral D. Somewhat ineffective E. Very ineffective

2. How satisfied are you with the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Highly satisfied B. Satisfied C. Neutral D. Dissatisfied E. Highly dissatisfied

3. How do you rate the quality of teaching in the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Excellent B. Good C. Average D. Poor E. Very poor

4. How relevant do you find the teaching methods used in the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Very relevant B. Relevant C. Neutral D. Irrelevant E. Very irrelevant

5. How satisfied are you in terms of engagement to do the assignments given by the teacher?

A. Always B. Often C. Sometimes D. Rarely E. Never

6. How user-friendly do you find the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Extremely user-friendly B. User-friendly C. Neutral D. Unfriendly E. Extremely unfriendly

7. To what extent do you think the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction is beneficial for learners?

A. Extremely beneficial B. Beneficial C. Neutral D. Not beneficial E. Not at all beneficial

8. How do you rate the effectiveness of the learning activities in the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Highly effective B. Effective C. Neutral D. Ineffective E. Highly ineffective

9. How motivated do you find the learners to use the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction?

A. Highly motivated B. Motivated C. Neutral D. Unmotivated E. Highly unmotivated

10. How likely would you recommend the application of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in English language instruction to other learners?

A. Highly likely B. Likely C. Neutral D. Unlikely E. Highly unlikely