

Utilizing a cell phone to become familiar with the English Language

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Abstract: This study investigates the impacts of using cellphones on the English language learning of undergraduate students. The research reviews articles and research that have been recently published and which focus on using mobile phones and other technologies in different educational institutes that teach foreign languages. Another area of concentration of the study is how students' motivation can change the environment of teaching and learn in the classroom. Data was collecting through a questionnaire and the students' responses were worked out in terms of percentiles. According to the result of the study, the participants showed a high level of use of their mobiles phones in different areas regarding English language learning in addition to showing a good degree of motivation regarding that end.

Keywords: Mobile phone usage, Mobile learning, Learning language, Positive influence

1. Introduction

Today, portable technological devices have significant advantages; therefore, people have come to rely on them more and more. Such devices are changing the daily lives of their users in different ways. According to Cummins and Sayers (**in Kim, Hagashi, Carillo&Gonzales 2011**) technology is a strong tool to level up the chances of accessing learning in a society that has been broadening in terms of information (p.466).

In particular, mobile technology can give access to or complement learning in rural areas, and this is because such technology requires little effort and because it is accessible. It is easy to access mobile technology, and it also encourages independent learning, encourages learners to gain more knowledge, and to work with one another. It also helps in having activities that are inquiry in nature (**Kim, Hagashi, Carillo& Gonzales, 2011**).

Moreover, such technologies include versatile information constructs that can be used in areas of educational opportunity in the form of portable learning devices, allowing users to transmit and receive information regardless of time or place' (**Shuler as referred to in Kim, Hagashi, Carillo, and Gonzales, 2011, p.467**).

Also, Thomas and Muñoz, (2016) argued that in the past few years, mobile phones have developed in such a way that they can carry out the vast majority of functions that a personal computer can do regardless of where the person is and at any time. Nonetheless, Jones and Marsden (**in Kim, Hagashi, Carillo& Gonzales, 2011**) pointed some constraints; which can be solved by having a user-focused design that takes into account needs, abilities and communication instances; when using mobile phones such as how big the screen is and the way

to insert data to mobile phones (p.468). They also noted some limitations related to the context (ibid). To Thornton et. al. & Chinnery (in Lu, 2008, p.515) mobile phones technologies can allow students to encounter the content of the target language while making them self-learn at any time and place. By making critical knowledge low-cost, portable (transportable), and widely accessible, language learning can be maintained in a variety of locations, including work, home, leisure, and travel. The consequences of this knowledge of the availability and widespread exposure to learning opportunities have slowly come into existence and become more elaborate. Mobile devices offer many important advantages concerning language learning by providing admission to a series of ordinal properties and several other tools.

We must get to know what the learners do in terms of learning using their mobile phones whether in the classroom or outside of it so that we can support them (Demouy, Jones, Kan, Kukulska-Hulme & Eardley, 2016)

By making use of essential characteristics found in mobile phones such as independence, flexibility, freedom, and choice teachers and curriculum designers can enhance motivation for autonomous learning (Ushioda as cited in Demouy, Jones, Kan, Kukulska-Hulme & Eardley, 2016, p.10). Students are encouraged to continue learning by repeatedly discovering familiar educational behaviors/actions. This is different from what is found in some educational institutions where students are instructed to follow only certain rules and are fixed in place, where students' goals and objectives are usually not taken into account. The nature of formal educational institutions is the same as the nature of familiar education in that there is a purpose and comfort for students with strong connections that will generate much enthusiasm in the future. There are new ideas in mobile learning, defined as a particular sort of electronic learning related to a couple of specific characteristics and the ability of devices the capacity of the bandwidth and a couple of additional traits related to network technologies (Stone as cited in Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009, p.78).

Cell phones are especially useful for students because they serve the purpose of their portable PCs that suit the needs of students who find them reliable (Prensky as cited in Lu 2008, p.516). Today, it is known that the language teaching capabilities of cell phones have been affected by the way wireless technology has changed in response to the fluctuating desires of schools. The main questions are how to create a mobile structure for teaching language and how to create a proactive and effective structure with features that are even more valuable to the user. This study reviews recent research published on this issue to discover the potential of using cell phones in applying new methods of language learning to undergraduate students. In addition to observations, measurements, and interviews designed and distributed in different contexts, a questionnaire was employed for data collection and to examine the research questions. The structure of the survey was established taking into account statistics and mixed methods of finding participants for the interviews. Kukulska-Hulme, Lee, & Norris (2017) state that mobile devices can be seen to play a variety of roles in the out-of-class language learning tasks described in the previous section. They can support both multimodal language generation and reflection. This is the mobility of the learner that is central to bridging learning that takes place across contexts of use. (p.19). Furthermore, Hilao and Wichadee, (2017). said that m-learning is specified by Lan and Sie as a novel model of learning that permits students to attain learning content regardless of time or place through wireless communication and the Internet.

2. Study Objectives

- To identify combine information about using a mobile phone for learning.
- To analyze the attitudes of Erbil Polytechnic University English as a foreign or a second language towards the cell phone application when learning English.
- To recognize the relationship between the level of education and the comfort level of using mobile cases.
- To identify the comfort level of students in using a cell phone to improve their English as a foreign language (EFL).

3. Hypothesis

- The preferred mode of improving the English language for the student in Erbil Polytechnic is through cellphone.
- Students at Erbil Polytechnic University are comfortable using a cell phone.
- Website does not have an impact on student awareness of cell phones.
- There is a positive relationship between the comfort and ease of learning while using a cell phone.

4. Literature Review

Although the literature on cell phone use in the classroom has not been extensively researched, there are several prominent studies on this issue. In a study conducted by Cavus (2009), a questionnaire was distributed to 45 undergraduate (first year) students in the School of Computer Information Systems. They used SMS and completed the questionnaire on time in nine days. Students' attitudes were measured before and after the test. As a result of the test, the participants stated that they found it more convenient and enjoyable to learn using cell phones than in the classroom (Cavus and Ibrahim, 2009).

Baçoğlu&Akdemir (2010) in their study, which prepare 60 undergraduate students for multiple-choice test guided by the experimental and controllable group before and after study. They have used mobile phones, precisely ECTACO Flashcard for learning vocabulary, independent and dependent t-test were used for the analysis of quantitative data, a post-test score of the experimental group was(M=38.62) higher than pre-test, which was (24.82). So, the result was positive, it showed that the used mobile phones for learning English vocabulary are more impressive to Turkey undergraduate students to learn English vocabulary than one of the traditional tools vocabulary learning. However, Lu (2008) provides the possibility of mobile phones in vocabulary learning. Information that is offered by the qualitative data from interviews is about the learning method, the advantages, and the limitations of mobile learning. The result of the questionnaires showed that the participants generally had constructive attitudes to learning vocabulary through mobile phones. For instance, in Lu (2008) there was a favorable relationship between how often the student reads and the amount of vocabulary gained when student's gains were compared in terms of using a mobile phone in comparison to using paper-based learning. He goes on to say that Chad was a slow learner and couldn't learn any new vocabulary after the first week using the traditional paper materials. However, according to Lu (2008), Chad agreed in the questionnaire given to him after the experiment that SMS or LVMP allowed him to retain more vocabulary and stress out that four words every day using the phone were more digestible

than having fourteen every day through the traditional paper means. Therefore, **Lu (2008)** concluded that using mobile phones is more efficient in learning new vocabulary. Moreover, in a study conducted by **Kim et. al. (2011)**, one hundred and sixty students were divided into two groups. The first one was an experimental group while the second was the control group. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and questionnaires and the results showed that mobile phones drastically affected learning outcomes. According to Brown (**in Kim et. al., 2011**), the aforementioned studies were the first in terms of making use of mobile phones to learn a new language. It should be noted that while using mobile phones, students are not detached from the learning outcome attained utilizing the classical classroom interaction; mobile phones allow them to learn and practice at any time or place they desire.

Huang et. al. (2016) mentioned that mobile phone learning possesses a flexibility feature and scholars have differently sketched the term mobile learning. **Davie, & Hilber, (2015)** said that “computer-assisted language learning has been present in schools and universities for many years, with the development of new powerful mobiles, more and more responsibilities which were formerly confined to desktop PCs can be accepted out on mobile devices.”

Chen and Hsu (2008) argued that students can learn activities regardless of time and place using mobile phones. This innovation in digital learning was attainable due to the five traits of mobile phones (Klopfer & Squire, 2008) and these are movability, social interactivity, contextual sensitivity, connectivity, and autonomy. In other words, it is possible to carry mobile phones whenever and wherever the person is going and it is possible to interact with people face-face using different mobile phones applications i.e. social interactivity. As far as contextual sensitivity is concerned, it refers to the fact that it is allowable to obtain information that has been localized while connectivity refers to connecting mobile phones and the fact that information collection can be carried out from one phone to another. And lastly, autonomy is a matter of using the mobile phone individually where the learners can assess their learning (p.264).

This argument recommends that using mobile phones for learning has delightful in the classroom and progress knowledge whenever and wherever it is flexible for learning and it will help students to continually develop their knowledge. Cell phones have improved customary examination, which thusly, prompted more introduction to the objective words and more vocabulary picks up than did the point-by-point introduction of the lessons. Rahamat, Shah, **Din, & Aziz (2017)** argued that the use of appropriate materials and tools in teaching and learning is undeniably cooperative in making the process more meaningful. Current global growths have opened up more chances for educationists to design and implement ICT-based lessons. The impact of ICT in education has been proven in various studies as it can make teaching and learning more interesting, motivating as well as meaningful. (p.69). The term innovation is never again thought to be outside of the field of training, and now the utilization of the portable innovation for learning has started to draw in enthusiasm from instructors. All the fundamentally, ICT opens more learning methods, for example, Web 2.0 applications may trigger nearly 21st-century aptitudes to be specific basic considering and critical thinking, coordinated effort and correspondence, worldwide mindfulness, and data education. Sharples (as mentioned in **Rahamat, Shah, Din, & Aziz 2017, p.71**) argues that technologies can be employed in learning as a smart tutoring program, context providers, and learning means in addition to being

educational helpers, resource providers, interaction and connection tools and reproduced classrooms.

5. Methodology

5.1. Research Design

This study adopted a questionnaire design to collect and analyze the data. This study focused on using mobile phones to learn English as a language. Students used mobile freely for different purposes by connecting with their studies. students of English learners studying English as a foreign language from the first- year in the Department of Business Management and Translation Techniques at Erbil Polytechnic University (EPU) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq participated in this study. For example, these students could regularly get extra motivated to prosper in accomplishing their language learning targets than the student who used the traditional setting. In total Participates there were 140 EFL learners.

5.2. Participants and Sampling

The sample of the study consisted of 140 students studying in the Department of Business Management and Translation Techniques at one of the public universities in Iraq. The participants were first-year students. The participants were of both genders (male and female) between the ages of 20 -22 years old, and they were Kurdish native speakers learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

The purpose of this research is to identify combine information about using a mobile phone for learning. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used by the researchers. The enjoying of performing of students' language, students train their mobile to enhance their learning.

The following inquiry questions are addressed in this study;

- 1- What are the attitudes of Erbil Polytechnic University English as a foreign or a second language towards the cell phone application when learning English?
- 2- What kinds and levels of samples and sample sizes were in these research papers?
- 3- What study designs and data analysis methods were generally of use?

5.3. Data Collection

A questionnaire was employed by the researcher. The aim of the study to identify the apply cellphone by the student in our researcher university. And encourage them to use cell phone to learn English language as the second language. The data of the questionnaire were analyzed using the (SPSS) version 22 program.

6. Finding and Results

Respondents were asked to designate their scale of agreements or disagreements to measure their attitudes and perspectives of given statements about using a cell phone in learning. Five-point Likert scale was used to measure the scale of agreement and disagreement as follows:

Item	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%
1-I usually speak to other students in English over the phone	10	37.1	17.1	18.6	12.9
2-I use my phone to listen to songs in English	21.1	39.3	10.1	14.3	13.6
3-I encourage my friends to use their cell phones to improve their English	26.4	47.4	13.6	7.1	6.4
4-I use my mobile phone to watch popular English language movies	29.3	30	15	17.9	7.9
5- I use my mobile phone to visit different websites designed to teach English.	27.9	40.7	11.4	15	5
6-I use my mobile phone to visit a site dictionary that give translation English words	48.6	44.3	3.6	0.7	2.9
7-I use my phone to visit a site that teaches English vocabulary more than other things	25.7	47.4	12.1	7.1	7.1
8-I use my mobile phone to learn the correct spelling of the new English vocabulary	35	40	10	9.3	5.7
9-I use more English than Kurdish to write text messages on my mobile phone	18.6	34.3	21.4	17.9	7.9
10-I think using a mobile phone to learn English is very effective	47.9	36.4	5	7.1	3.6

Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

According to the above table, more than half of the participants were using English while speaking on the phone in contrast to 30% who were not doing so. Approximately, 60% of the population reported listening to English songs in comparison to 30% of the students who were not listening to English songs.

Moreover, 26% of the participants were strongly encouraging their friends to use their cell phones for English learning while 47% were doing this less; however, only a combination of no more than 13% of the participants was not encouraging their friends to use mobile phones for English learning.

Regarding statement four, the same percentage of participants of nearly 30% strongly agreed that they use their phones to watch popular English language movies and a percentage of 30% agreed with the statement; thus, 40% of the participants either disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were neutral about that matter. A total 68% of the participants reported using their mobile phones to visit different websites designed for English language learning in contrast to a sum of 25% who were neutral, disagreeing, or disagreeing with the fifth statement.

Nearly all the participants reported using their phones to visit a site dictionary that gives translation English words. 7% of the participants disagreed and the same percentage was found for those who strongly disagreed regarding using their phone to visit a site that teaches English vocabulary more than other things. However, the vast majority of the participants (72%) were using their phones to visit websites for teaching English vocabulary. 35% of the students strongly agreed for using their mobile phones to learn the correct spelling of the new English vocabulary while 40% agreed to that statement leaving a total of no more than 25% who either disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were neutral.

When it comes to the ninth statement, students were divided in their responses since 18% strongly agreed while 34% agreed that they use more English than Kurdish to write text messages on their mobile phones in comparison to 21% who were neutral about this matter. More than a fifth of the participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed regarding using more English than Kurdish when writing text messages. And finally, more than four-fifths (87%) of the students had the perspective that using a mobile phone to learn English is very effective.

7. Discussion

The data composed in this research investigated the possible inference of the mobile learning technology-based learning model in different places. The quantitative analysis creates a powerful positive effect of complementing regular classroom education with such technology. For example, following the delivery of papers in terms of the research design, data collection tools, and data analysis method; the mixed and qualitative method was employed less in comparison to the quantitative method. The quantitative method was used more than the qualitative one in the research. When it comes to data collection, different methods were made use of. The data collection tool that had the highest rate was the questionnaire while the one that was the least was the experiment.

According to the result of the study, undergraduate or high education students had the highest rate in these research papers, students in primary school had the least rate. The discoveries of this study were inconsistent with the results of most of the researchers in different areas and they show that the quantitative method was employed more than the mixed or the qualitative one.

8. Conclusion

Overall, using mobile phones has been affected by students' motivation, they can use mobile phones anytime and anywhere to enrich their knowledge. All of the more participants especially undergraduate students spoke their gratification, and pleasure of learning away from the classroom with the help of their mobile phones (Cavus& Ibrahim,2009; Kim, Hagashi, Carillo, Gonzales, Makany, Lee, &Carate,2010; Huang, Yang, Chiang &Su, 2016). These results approve the proposals for the learning language using mobile phones in the classroom. To accomplish the aims and objectives of this study, the research relies on some researchers that have been done in this field, and data collected through answering the questionnaires, or through experiments, conducting interviews, or a multiplicity of more than one instrument. The result revealed that autonomous learners have precious information about how mobile phones feature and promote learning the English language.

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