

USAGE OF MOBILE APPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Mobile applications particularly of English language like 'Oxford-Dictionary', 'Learn English Grammar', 'Speak English', 'Hello-Hello' etc. focus on listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary etc. of English language. These applications do not focus just on learning English language but on learning it in an interesting, easy and innovative way by involving multi-senses through multi-media. The present paper attempts to study awareness of 200 students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language. The major findings of the study were (i) there exists significant awareness among students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language and (ii) there exists no significant difference in awareness among boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language.

Keywords : Awareness, Mobile Applications, English Language

Introduction

With the advancement in technology, mobile phones are providing different types of applications which have become popular forms not only of entertainment but also of learning like Contact, Clock, Calendar, Calculator, Mobile Music (radio, songs and movies), Email, Global Positioning System (GPS), Banking, Order Tracking, Ticket Purchasing etc. The advanced mobile technology has provided various educational mobile applications like Wikipedia, TED etc. These educational mobile applications have also brought a revolution in the field of education resulting in students' learning particularly of English language.

English Language

English is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in Anglo-Saxon England in the early Middle Ages. It is now the most widely used language in the world. It is spoken in many countries around the world. It is the first language of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and a number of Caribbean nations. English consists

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of the following four components without which learning of English language is not possible (as depicted in Figure 1):



Figure-1: Components of English Language

Mobile Applications

Mobile applications, popularly known as mobile apps, are computer programs or software designed to run on smart phones, tablets and other movable electronic devices like e-readers, laptops, etc. They are usually available through application distribution platforms which began appearing in 2008. They are typically operated by the owner of the mobile operating systems like Apple App Store, BlackBerry App World, Google Play and Windows Phone Store. Some mobile applications are free and some are chargeable. Usually, they are downloaded from the platform to the target devices like iPhone, BlackBerry Phone, Android phone or Windows Phone but sometimes they can be downloaded to laptops or desktop computers too. Some of the useful mobile applications for learning English language have been given in the following Table 1:

Table-1: Name of Mobile Applications for Learning English Language

Serial No.	Mobile Applications
1	Listen & Speak
2	Busuu
3	Cartoon- Free English
4	Speak English Pictures
5	English Podcast for Learners
6	Fluent English
7	Learn English Elementary
8	Language Verb Trainer
9	English Irregular Verbs
10	PvP- Phrasla Verbs
11	Guide to English Idioms
12	Question Tags
13	Lang Learner English Idioms
14	50 Languages
15	English Level Checker

Source: <http://www.educatorstechnology.com> (2012)

Usages of Mobile Applications for Learning English Language

- **Listening Skill** : By having English listening practice session through audio-videos prepared by native speakers of English language
- **Speaking Skill** : By having English speaking sessions in different accents with immediate feedback
- **Reading Skill** : By having English reading practice sessions with immediate feedback.
- **Writing Skill** : By having English writing practice sessions with immediate feedback.

Review of Related Literature

Berk (2009) found that when watching videos, people experience feelings which enhance the learning capabilities. Godwin and Jones (2009) found that mobile phone technology is expected to provide greater assistance to language learners using their mobile devices. Cavus and Ibrahim (2009), Eisa (2012), Rachel H. et al. (2013), Melissa (2014) and Rana (2012) also supported that technological devices should be always used by students and teachers to enhance learning outcomes. The results of an experimental study conducted by Basal et al (2016) demonstrated the effectiveness of mobile applications on learning idioms. Suen and Fung (2016) paper described a project which examines the current developments in mobile learning applications of English literature with a focus on Shakespeare related apps listed in iTunes. Prabhakaran (2016) in his conceptual paper on learning through technology discussed and favored MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning).

Emergence of the Problem

It came to the observation of the investigators that some of the pupil teachers were using many free of cost mobile applications available in their mobile phones not only for the purpose of entertainment but also for the purpose of learning particularly for learning English language such as for reading e-books, for locating the meaning of difficult English words in English as well as in Hindi, for checking the spelling of tough words, for knowing the method of pronouncing new words, for correcting the grammatical mistakes etc. To find the educational benefits of this new digital way of learning, the investigators simply got fascinated and inspired to explore and to spread this educational world of mobile applications to the students to equip them with the latest device to develop their skills especially their skills of English language.

Objectives of the Study

- To study awareness among students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language.
- To compare awareness among boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language.

Hypotheses

HO.1 : There exists no significant awareness among students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language.

HO.2 : There exists no significant difference in awareness among boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language.

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to Government Senior Secondary School students of Union Territory of Chandigarh only.

Tool used in the Study

Mobile Applications Usage Awareness Questionnaire (MAUQA), developed and validated by the investigators themselves, was used with the objective to know awareness among students towards the usage of mobile applications for learning English language. The questionnaire consists of 33 items with Yes/No options. The face validity and content validity of the questionnaire were ensured by taking opinion of subject experts of English and Computer Science of different colleges of Chandigarh and Panjab University, Chandigarh. The response of each respondent was scored as per the response options available- Yes/No. For every correct response (i.e. 'Yes'), the score point was 'one' while for every wrong response (i.e. 'No'), the score point was 'zero'. Reliability of the questionnaire was ensured by computing Point-Biserial Correlation of all items. The computed value of Point-Biserial Correlation of each item of the questionnaire was above 0.25 and so considered them to be 'good' items. Thus, the investigators presumed the questionnaire to be reliable for the present study after its validation process.

Sample and Design of the Study

The sample and design of the study has been presented in the following Figure-2 :

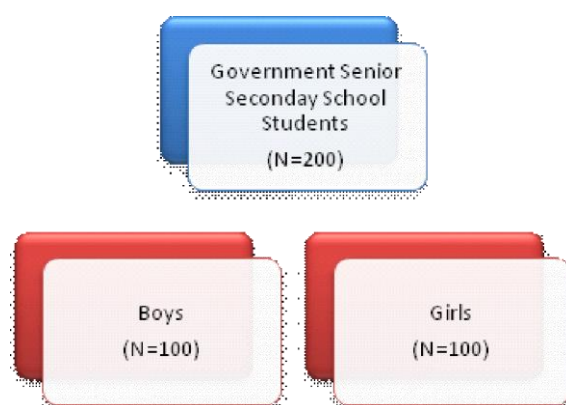


Figure-2: Sample and Design of the Study

Out of 39 Government Senior Secondary Schools in Union Territory of Chandigarh, four schools were selected randomly by using Simple Random Sampling Technique i.e. Lottery System. Out of the selected four schools, the list of 2865 students was taken as population. To get a sample of 200 students out of these 2865 students, all students' roll numbers were entered into spreadsheet and a random number was assigned to each student and then the list was sorted by random number. Thus, sample of 200 students was drawn randomly, selected from selected four schools. The students were compared with regard to the criteria that they were studying in Senior Secondary classes irrespective of the streams they have opted like Arts, Science, and Humanities. The study was conducted in the year 2015-16.

Procedure of Data Collection

The data was collected from the students by getting them fill the questionnaire. Then, the questionnaires were scored according to the prescribed scoring keys and the data, thus obtained, was subjected to statistical analysis.

Statistical Techniques

The descriptive statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation and inferential statistical techniques like chi-square, t-test were used.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

- **Mean Scores :** The Mean and Standard Deviation of the scores of students for usage of mobile applications for learning English language were computed and have been recorded in the Table 2:

Table-2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Scores: All Students

Serial No.	Sample	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value
1	All Students	200	25.79	3.780	-
2	Boys	100	26.18	3.935	1.463
3	Girls	100	25.40	3.596	

Table-2 reveals that although the mean scores of boy students were found to be higher than the mean scores of girl students yet the difference among them was not much.

- **Chi-Square Value :** The chi square value for N=200 was computed. The calculated value of chi square of all students was 2092.00 and was significant at 0.01 level. Thus, **H_0 that there exists no significant awareness among students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language was rejected** at the specified level of significance.

- **t-value** : Table-2 reveals that the calculated value of t ($=1.463$) for boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language was not found to be significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus, H_02 that ***there exists no significant difference in awareness among boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language*** was accepted at the specified level of significance.

Discussions of the Results

- The result based on H_01 that there exists significant awareness among Government Senior Secondary School students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language seemed to be consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Rana (2012) that mobile phones are used for teaching and learning purposes among both teaching staff and the students. The results also seemed to support the findings of the study conducted by Rachel et al. (2013) that the usefulness of mobile devices has increased greatly in recent years allowing users to perform more tasks in a mobile context. Khanghah and Halili (2015) also stated that the rapid development of technology has touched almost all aspects of life such as education and new development of the Internet and mobile devices has impact on education.

Thus, in the present study, it meant that the students used mobile phones for learning purposes only because they had sufficient awareness towards them.

- The result based on H_02 that *there exists no significant difference in awareness among Government Senior Secondary School boy and girl students towards usage of mobile applications for learning English language* seemed to support the findings of the study conducted by Cavus and Ibrahim (2009) that the students, irrespective of their sex, enjoy and learn new words with the help of their mobile phones. The result of the study seemed to be consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Godwin-Jones (2011) that today, new iPhone or Android phone users face the quandary of which of the hundreds of thousands of apps (applications) they should choose where it seems that everyone-male or female from federal government agencies to your local bakery has an app available. This phenomenon, not surprisingly has led to tremendous interest among educators. Mobile learning (often 'm-learning') is in itself not new, but new devices with enhanced capabilities have dramatically increased the interest level, including among language educators.

Thus, it meant that both boy and girl students learnt English language with the help of their mobile phones almost equally only because both had almost equal awareness about them.

Educational Implications of the Study

Though the present study was done on Government Senior Secondary School students yet, on the basis of the results obtained from this study, we can sensitize the English teachers, administrators, educational institutions, students and parents towards the usage of mobile applications for learning English language on the following counts:

- The usage of mobile applications for learning English language can be used effectively not only to learn English language but also to learn many other languages like Hindi, Punjabi, etc.
- Students should be made more aware about the English language learning mobile applications by the teachers, administrators and parents so that they may excel in English language.
- Teachers can guide their students to use mobile phones for educational learning purposes.
- A mechanism should be build up by the teachers and administrators with Do's and Don'ts where the students can have access to mobile applications during teaching-learning process of English language in school campuses.

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