

**“Autonomy Of Learning- Developing Writing Skills By
Acquiring Vocabulary Power Through Mobile Assisted
Language Learning (Mall)”**

C.VINOTH KUMAR

PH.D RESEARCH SCHOLAR (PART-TIME), DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY,
COIMBATORE, TAMILNADU, INDIA.

Dr.J.JAYACHANDRAN

PROF. & HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, ANNA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING VILUPPURAM
CAMPUS, TAMILNADUN, INDIA.

Abstract:

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has become one of the fastest ways in making a successful learning of any language in the present era. Comparing Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the MALL enables an easy approach in developing language learning skills through its mobility. Many of the CALL users turned into effective users of MALL as it is the only predominant way to enhance their language throughout their busy scheduled life. The mobile technologies through number of applications are the doors where any levels of English language learners as framed by The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF or CEFR) from A1 to C2. Especially, EFL learners are the most users that revealed in the course of research results from various countries, where English as Second language. It is strongly believed that the development of android applications that are used on smart phones provides an easy way in acquiring languages. They wrap all four skills of

English Language- Listening, Speaking, Reading & writing. This paper throws light on the list of applications that promotes the English language writing skills and their trouble-free access in practice as autonomy learning.

Introduction

Mobile devices namely Mobile Phones, Smart phones, tablet, MP3 and MP4 players are self assisted personal digital devices that can be easily carried and handles by anyone with the adequate technical knowledge. They can be easily inter connected to multiple source of information whenever and wherever the presences of anyone. It further provides an easy access and user friendly regardless of gender and age. People may find difficult in investing their time for language learning or enhancing their effective communication among their scheduled work and the possibility of making their presence in class regularly is questionable one. Thus the solution has been sort out in the form of Mobile devices where not only contacting person anywhere in the world but can learn languages on their hand. This results in the evolution of mobile devices through various advanced technologies and the feasibility of the firm progress in language learning at one's own pace.

A new perception of transfer from CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) has brought a crucial change in regardless of any language learning with the assistance of smart phones and mobile phones. Though the usage of mobile technology in education especially at college level may be prohibited due to the code and conduct framed by the educational institutions, yet it would be inevitable in future considering the effective use of it. A new educational environment shall be flourished where all the learning modules comprised

into mobile technologies. It shall lead all the four language skills- Listening, Speaking, Reading & writing with its effective components.

Literature review

Mosavi Miangah and Nezarat (2012) observed “the use of Computers in language learning has become common. Students use e-dictionaries, visual vocabulary, grammar software, and e-books almost every day and enjoy the facilities. They can practice their language lessons on their personal computers. Teachers keep in touch with the students through moodle. In addition, learning through mobile devices may let the learners take more advantages of their time wherever they are. Therefore MALL can reduce the time and place barriers in language learning”. Teachers as well as students in the present scenario are very familiar with the technology development and their learning through gadgets become inseparable in terms of time and scheduled work.

Ducate and Lomicka (2009) cited in Tai and Ting, (2011) “Recent studies on the use of technology in second or foreign language learning reveal the efficacy of mobile devices in language learning. Research has exploited MALL in different field of language learning such as pronunciation”, **Edirisigha et al. (2007) cited in Tai and Ting (2011)** “listening skill”, **Morita, (2003) cited in Tai and Ting, (2011)** “writing proficiency”, **Chen and Hsu, (2008) cited in Tai and Ting, (2011)** “reading comprehension” and **Chen and Chung, 2008; Levy and Kennedy, (2005); Lu, (2008) cited in Tai and Ting, (2011)** “vocabulary”.

Baleghizadeh and Oladrostam (2010) lighted “According to some of the studies, mobile phones play a beneficial role in learning vocabulary and idioms. English

vocabulary lessons are sent to the learners' mobile phones using short text messages. As mobile phones are ubiquitous, learners are ready to read the messages and therefore the result will be noticeable”.

Jiang (2000) expressed “Vocabulary learning is usually delivered in a strictly conventional ways, such as providing abstract definitions and sentences stripped off the context of use (and learners try hard to learn them”.

Kolb (2008) expressed “As technology is developing day by day, it affects the lifestyle, doing a variety of activities and self-study. There are different sites which are designed to help people to learn languages in their spare time. There are learning system and mobile language lab that let people study, practice and review any languages, anytime and anywhere”. Hundreds of mobile applications are made available for the people who are with keen interest in learning English as a second language.

Alemi, Anani Sarab, Lari, (2012) emphasis “An integral part of English language learning is learning English vocabulary. If learners expect to understand the language, they should learn more vocabulary and use them in their speaking. As the classroom hour limitation causes less opportunity for the learners to converse, both teachers and learners face problems” Making a learner to understand the content of the second language as well developing their vocabulary skills in parallel shall be a challenging one. Viewing this as a significant issue, there have been number of investigation done on innovative strategy for the successful learning.

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

Teachers around the world use various terminologies to refer to the level of Language that a learner has achieved. Some of the descriptions of levels are like Starter, Beginner,

Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Proficient or any variations on these. While an experienced teacher may intuitively understand these levels, a far more useful and structured way of understanding students' levels is to become familiar with The CEFR. The Framework sets out the standards to follow in teaching languages in Europe, and now more countries around the world are using them as the standards of choice. There are six levels within the framework and these are A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. With these levels, the learner can easily work out the ability in acquiring language proficiency. The levels are often used indifferently by language learners to explain their ability at the four skills of English language - speaking, reading, writing and comprehending.

Writing Skills

Writing skill is the most significant part of communication skills. Good writing skills with a unique vocabulary usage depends on context can make stand out of other writings clearly and transparently. It is easy to communicate through writing with a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations. We need good writing skills when we are asked to write a project report, a press report, a job application and so on. We can communicate our ideas online via blogs. Paying less attention on writing skills can establish poor impressions on the writer and readers will have an immediate adverse response if they inevitably come across with spelling or grammatical error often. A well tailored context or a framework with sufficient cautions will be an authentic source of information for many in the research. An error free grammar, punctuation and spelling are the key to attain success in writing skills.

Moreover, a drastic grow in terms of communication skills can be revealed if the

selection vocabularies are well chosen. Thus, a writer needs a good vocabulary bank to improve our writing skills. Vocabulary acquisition is considered as one of the most demanding errands in learning English as a foreign language. The various aspects of word recognition should be discussed regarding the essential impact it plays in vocabulary acquisition process. In addition, learners should be aware of the different types of vocabulary and the role of memory while acquiring new items. Therefore, a number of vocabulary learning mobile applications used for the acquisition of vocabulary will be discussed for developing the specific skill.

What is Vocabulary?

Every language has a set of words that distinguishes it from other languages. Albert Lado (1974) claimed that “a word is a combination of sounds acting as a stimulus to bring into attention the experience to which it has become attached by use” (cited in Aichaoui, 2005, p. 17). Moreover, vocabulary is the sum of words that people use in order to communicate among each other. The American Heritage dictionary defines vocabulary as “the sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group” (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004). Vocabulary items that contain more than one word are sometimes called “‘chunks’, ‘lexical bundles’, or ‘clusters’” (McCarthy and Carter (2002); O’Keeffe, McCarthy, and Carter, 2007; cited in McCarten, 2007, p. 8). Thus, it is more accurate to say vocabulary items. In fact, one’s vocabulary size depends largely on the purpose of the learner; if the purpose is to achieve native-like proficiency, then it is supposed to have a vocabulary size similar to a native speaker (Schmitt, 2010). Hence, increasing the vocabulary bank size aids

learning the language and also communicating effectively and appropriately as possible.

Vocabulary Acquisition through Writing

Text messaging applications such as whatsapp messenger seem to be the most commonly employed tool in vocabulary learning research. Text messaging through social media is considered as an effective means to improve vocabulary power. Explicit as well as incidental vocabulary learning activities can be done through such text messaging. In other words, it can be through purposeful messaging of vocabulary items or it can be through accidental vocabulary acquisition as one may send SMSs and emails using EFL. Many different types of social media such as Wikipedia, blogs, Twitter, Face book, video sharing (You tube), photo sharing (Flickr) etc. can be used for vocabulary acquisition through writing.

Mobile Applications to improve Vocabulary for Writing

WhiteSmoke : It allows a writer to type the content that they wish to proceed with and ensures the content free out of spelling, grammar. The writers can confidently display his work to the required platform and wins the hope of readers whenever they read. A good academic writings indulged with time and effort may not be failed in any circumstances considering the significance of them.

Power Vocab : Power Vocab is a mobile app which is specifically useful for language learners who are looking to significantly enhance their vocabulary into top level. This app lets you build a lifelong writing skill. The key features of this app are large wordlists, quiz, and a handy dictionary. The words contain detailed definitions, sample

sentences, and phonetic pronunciation of words. Audible pronunciation is also available if the cell phone is running on Android 1.6 or above.

VoLT (Vocabulary Learning Techniques): This is a mobile application which provides the language learner with various innovative techniques to remember complicated English words. Numerous psychological research studies have proved that the human brain can easily be recollected the previous information when it come across the new information. In the said app, the difficult as well as the complicated English vocabularies that many feel complex in remembering are well tailored with life events, funny stories, pictures and ensures the essence of the context well reached to the readers.

Penny Dell Crosswords: This mobile application provides the best crossword puzzles to improve the vocabulary power of language learners. Playing fun games and learning new words is the best method of obtaining language skills interestingly. The new words should be used in the daily writing practice in order to make it thorough.

Vocabulary.com: This is the world's smartest and fastest dictionary on the Google Play store. Fun and addictive games are compiled with enough ratios that results effectual vocabulary learning and become master over it.

The application plays the role of a good coach to teach new words to the beginners and it will continue reinforcing the learned things even though the learner achieved mastery.

Conclusion

This research paper has investigated the competency of Mobile Assisted Language Learning, as an approach in learning English as a foreign language, especially in enhancing students' vocabulary attainment. Accordingly, the thesis aimed to explore

whether both EFL teachers and students use MALL activities to support their teaching and learning process, and vocabulary acquisition aspect in particular. The expediency of mobile technology used in vocabulary activities was indicated as having a constructive impact on students' achievement in English as it assists the students in various levels. It was also found that Language teachers became conscious about the vital role of mobile devices in the new educational methodologies used to teach the four different language skills. EFL teachers' approach towards the implementation of mobile devices as educational tools was extremely positive, which proved their keenness in using the up-to-date newest educational technologies. Finally, the research would like to conclude with an interesting point that this new surge of learning tool has been proved to be an excellent tool with unlimited affordance for the EFL students' to attain their language skills, especially for developing vocabulary power.

References:

1. Mosavi Miangah, T., Nezarat, A. (2012). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. *International Journal of Distributed and Parallel System (IJDPS)*, 3(1), 309-318.
2. Tai, Y., & Ting, Y. (2011). Adoption of Mobile Technology for Language Learning: Teacher Attitudes and Challenges. *JALT CALL Journal*, 7(1), 3-18.
3. Baleghzadeh, S., Oladrostam, E. (2010). The Effect of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on Grammatical Accuracy of EFL Students. *METESOL Journal*, 34(2), 1-10.

4. Jiang, N. (2000). Lexical representation and development in a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(1), 47-77.
5. Kolb, L. (2008). Toys to Tools: *Connecting Student Cell phone to Education in and out of the Classroom*. USA: International Society for Technology in Education.
6. Alemi, M., Anani Sarab, M.R., & Lari, Z. (2012). Successful Learning of Academic Word List via MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning. *International Education Studies*, 5(6), 99-109.
7. <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/writing-skills.html>
8. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details>
9. Aichaoui, T. (2005). A proposal for improving students' proficiency in English vocabulary. Case study: English first year students of Biskra University (Unpublished master's thesis). Biskra University.
10. McCarten, J. (2007). Teaching vocabulary: Lessons from the corpus, lessons for the classroom. New York: Cambridge University Press.
11. Pikulski, J. J., Templeton, S., (2004). Teaching and developing vocabulary: Key to long-term reading success. U.S.A: Houghton Mifflin Company. Retrievable from <http://www.eduplace.com.pdf>
12. Schmitt, N. (2010). Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.