

Teacher Views on Mobile Language Learning

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Abstract: Nowadays, technology has been widely used in education. Mobile learning has got researchers' attention for being mostly described as portable, ubiquitous, accessible, and not depending on time or place. Some researchers define mobile learning as an extension of e-learning. Many educators try to integrate the mobile devices in teaching activities inside and outside the classroom. Thus, there is a great potential to nurture learning with mobile devices. As the new generation is already familiar with a wide range of technological tools, the use of traditional methods of teaching will no longer aid learners to achieve better results. For that reason, it has become indispensable to use technological devices in teaching and learning process to meet the needs of the new generation. The purpose of this study is to find out the perception of language teachers toward the effective use of mobile learning in language learning. Questionnaire was used to collect necessary information to answer the research questions. Based on the results of this research, lecturers have good intention towards mobile learning although their potentials are not yet matched for the integration of mobile learning that requires more time, training, technical and pedagogical infrastructure.

Keywords: Teacher Views on Mobile Learning, Mobile Learning, Implementation of MALL

1. Introduction

Mobile technologies offer new viewpoints in many aspects of our lives such as teaching and learning of foreign languages. Learning a new language is a process which may occur in any age period of the life. Nowadays language learning age has fallen to even nursery school period.

The use of mobile devices for educational purposes has been increased these days (Chinnery, 2006). Almost all parts that take role in education, particularly EFL teachers, scholars, policy makers, materials designers and curriculum developers state the effectiveness of mobile devices for second language learning and teaching, though this area is still fresh and needs to be work on and gain some more proofs. There are a lot of researchers who already started to investigate the positive effects of integrating mobile devices in learning and teaching language. For instance, Cuing and Wang, (2008); Reinders, (2010); and Sad, (2008) investigated how to use mobile devices in teaching English. Reinders (2010) points out that mobile phones can be used in order to do several activities such as using the camera option for taking a

picture of the material, activating voice recorder to record conversations, surfing the social media networking and checking students' task to give feedback.

Technology usage in classrooms depends on the preference and acceptance of the teachers. Lecturers still face a lot of problems in terms of integrating technology into teaching and learning process in many countries. Some of these problems are related with teachers' lack of speciality of technology and installation to build up a mobile learning atmosphere (Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Roth, 2014). The difference between older and younger generations is visible in terms of technology usage. The new generation is accepting the latest technologies, while the older generation restrict themselves to a narrower range of most recent technologies (Thomas & O'Bannon, 2014).

2. Mobile Learning and its Implementation to the Skills

Mobile technologies could be incorporated in teaching and learning the language skills and sub-skills. For the purpose of better comprehension of the new items, vocabulary can be allied with pictures. Furthermore, online dictionaries reached over mobile devices might help learners to develop vocabulary and pronunciation. Students may listen to the unfamiliar words over over and correct their pronunciation. Mobile devices have recorders which learners might use in order to record their voices and compare them with the original version supplied. Apart from this, students can be given vocabulary practice designed materials based on the activities held during the lessons.

As regards to listening comprehension, students have a chance to reach lots of websites that offer songs, podcasts, videos, or news. Students may also use the audio recorder option in order to save classroom listenings to mobile memory and listen to them over and over again.

Grammar skills can be developed by different applications that are specifically designed for mobile devices. These applications contain a lot of variations such as multiple-choice activities, true /false questions, fill in the blanks, tests, games, and so on. They are interactive and supply immediate feedback to students.

In concern with speaking skill, through mobile learning students are in contact and talk in the target language what they want to learn. Learners may also record their voices to assess their pronunciation.

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills that should be developed. It could be improved through applications, pdfs, news or text messages. In all cases, the reading activity should be followed by exercises in order to assess the learners' comprehension level. Such exercises are also useful for enhancing vocabulary. Apart from this, course books can be installed in the mobile device to read outside the classroom. After all, mobile devices can be used in different areas of language depending on the design of the activities and the functionality.

Social media sites such as facebook, twitter, instagram etc. are good to enhance writing skill. It is very easy to access such sites by means of mobile devices. Furthermore, blogs might be used for students to practice writing communicating with teachers to provide feedback. Academic writing was supported by some experimental researches even though most of the writing occurs informally such as text messages, social media comments, etc. According to an experimental study at Walter Sisulu University, students

use text messages as a platform for writing short paragraphs as well as providing feedback that was stated as key benefit of SMS (Chaka & Ngesi, 2010).

Additionally, Oyinloye (2009) states that mobile phones can be used for teaching and developing writing skills through potential of using Global system for mobile communication (GSM) when they are writing essay with content producing, coherence, cohesion, punctuation and tense agreement.

Research questions

Basically, there were three research questions:

- 1-To what extent university lecturers accept the use mobile learning through devices during the teaching and learning process?
- 2-To what extent do lecturers have the mobile technology experience?
- 3-To what extent are university lecturers ready to use mobile learning through devices during the learning process?

3. Setting and Participants

Ishik university teachers (N=30) who teach English at English language teaching department or preparatory school participated in the research. A questionnaire was used to investigate English teachers' thoughts concerning the usefulness of mobile devices in English language classes. Teachers were asked to complete their demographic information such as, their age, gender, teaching experience. There are fifteen items in the questionnaire. Participants were asked to respond to a five-point Likert-scale type of questions.

4. Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted with the participation of 30 English teachers working at Ishik university in Erbil. The main focus of the research was limited to teachers' preference of mobile phones in English language learning. The findings were based on the teachers' responses. All the data collected and presented are the result of only one research instrument which is questionnaire.

5. Data Analysis

Teachers were asked to complete their demographic information in the beginning.

Table 1: Teachers' demographic data

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Age	20-25	6	20.0	20.0
	26-31	7	23.3	23.3
	31-36	4	13.3	13.3
	37-42	7	23.3	23.3
	43+	6	20.0	20.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0
	Gender			
	Male	18	60.0	60.0
	Female	12	40.0	40.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0
Teaching Experience				
	1-5 years	6	20.0	20.0
	6-10 years	6	20.0	20.0
	11-15 years	5	16.7	16.7
	16+	13	43.3	43.3
	Total	30	100.0	100.0

Participant teachers' age ranged from 20 to 43 and above. Out of 30 lecturers 18 (60%) were males and 12 (40%) were females. As for the teaching experience, most teachers had 13 and above years of teaching experience, 5 (16.7%) teachers had 11-15, equal number of teachers 6 (20%) had 6-10, and 1-5 years of teaching experience, respectively.

Table 2: Acceptance of teachers' use of mobile devices in language class: (research question 1)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
q.1	13	7	5	3	2	30
	43,3%	23,3%	16,7%	10,0%	6,7%	100%
q.2	13	10	4	2	1	30
	43,3%	33,3%	13,3%	6,7%	3,3%	100%
q.3	9	7	7	5	2	30
	30,0%	23,3%	23,3%	16,7%	6,7%	100%
q.4	10	7	5	4	4	30
	33,3%	23,3%	16,7%	13,3%	13,3%	100%
q.5	12	6	5	4	3	30
	40,0%	20,0%	16,7%	13,3%	10,0%	100%

Related with the second part of the questionnaire the graph shows the results of teachers' acceptance of mobile devices in language classes. The response to the first item is 20(66.7%) which is the combination of strongly agree and agree mention that mobile devices should be used for teaching and learning English at university. In the second question, 23 (76.7 %) teachers state that mobile learning in language teaching has lots of advantages. Regarding the third item in the second part of the questionnaire 16 (53.3%) lecturers think that students will learn more if they could use their mobile devices. When comparing this result with the previous item, 5 teachers think that mobile devices have advantage but students will not learn more if they use their mobile devices. Talking about the fourth item, 56.7% of the teachers believe that mobile devices are good tools to give feedback to the students in the classroom. In the last item 16 (60%) lecturers state mobile devices should be encouraged inside the classroom. Generally speaking, teachers point out that they have a positive feeling towards using mobile devices in language classes.

Table 3: Lecturers' experience towards mobile technology (research question 2)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
q.1	5	5	3	10	7	30
	16,7%	16,7%	10,0%	33,3%	23,3%	100%
q.2	7	8	4	7	4	30
	23,3%	26,7%	13,3%	23,3%	13,3%	100%
q.3	15	9	2	2	2	30
	50,0%	30,0%	6,7%	6,7%	6,7%	100%
q.4	16	6	6	1	1	30
	53,3%	20,0%	20,0%	3,3%	3,3%	100%
q.5	13	6	5	4	2	30
	43,3%	20,0%	16,7%	13,3%	6,7%	100%

In the third part of the questionnaire, lecturers' experience towards mobile technology was investigated. First item was about using mobile devices in English classes. Only 10 (33.3%) teachers use mobile devices in their English classes. Majority of the teachers 17 (76.7 %) donot use mobile devices in the English class. In the second item, 15 (50%) teachers use mobile devices for listening purposes, but 24 (80%) teachers use their mobile devices for wathcing videos. Regarding the fourth item 22 (73.3%) lecturers think that mobile devices for learning purposes would save students a lot of time. As for the last item,21 (63.3%) teachers state that mobile devices for learning purposes would enhance the effectiveness of students' learning. According to these results, lecturers believe in thebenefits of the mobile devices but for some reason they donot have possibility or capability to integrate themin their classes.

Table 4: Lecturers' readiness to adapt mobile learning into language teaching (research question 3)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
q.1	17	6	4	1	2	30
	56,7%	20,0%	13,3%	3,3%	6,7%	100%
q.2	18	7	2	2	1	30
	60,0%	23,3%	6,7%	6,7%	3,3%	100%
q.3	18	8	1	1	2	30
	60,0%	26,7%	3,3%	3,3%	6,7%	100%
q.4	10	5	6	6	3	30
	33,3%	16,7%	20,0%	20,0%	10,0%	100%
q.5	19	6	1	2	2	30
	63,3%	20,0%	3,3%	6,7%	6,7%	100%

The last part of the questionnaire was about lecturers' readiness to adapt mobile learning into language teaching. In the first item lecturers were asked how much they are ready to use mobile devices for learning purposes. 23 (76.7%) teachers mentioned that they are ready to use mobile devices for educational purposes. In the second question 25 (83.3%) teachers state that they need training to use mobile devices for learning purposes. In the next question 24 (86.7%) teachers point out they will be motivated if they could use their mobile devices. Looking at the fourth item only 15 (50%) teachers can afford to pay for the applications for learning purposes. This is an understandable issue due to economic situation right now. According to the last item, 25 (83.3%) teachers believe that mobile learning could improve collaboration among students.

6. Results

In this study, teachers' views on mobile learning in language teaching were surveyed. This study uses as the sample of EFL teachers at Ishik University in Erbil. The results of the study clarified that teachers have positive attitudes toward mobile assisted language learning and ready to stimulate their students to use it.

7. Discussion of the Results

The questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect data from participants. Teachers have shown their acceptance towards mobile assisted language learning, though they mentioned that they need training in order to integrate mobile devices for learning purposes. Besides, majority of them do not use mobile

devices for educational purposes but this is not to deny the fact that teachers have positive attitudes toward mobile learning. Better conditions should be created for them with this purpose in mind.

8. Recommendations

After investigating teachers' views towards the usage of mobile learning in language teaching, a number of recommendations could be suggested:

- Rising teachers' awareness of the effectiveness of mobile learning in language classes is necessary.
- This can be achieved by training courses or organizing seminars for teachers' concerning the issue of mobile learning and its implementation.
- Although there is a lack of infrastructure in some places, it is time to build and supply the required instruments.
- Teachers can use mobile devices for teaching activities.
- School administration should provide internet access inside and outside the classrooms.
- More studies dealing with mobile language learning should be held in state-run and private universities in order to gain broader results.

9. Conclusion

Mobile devices and technology are invading every aspect of our lives and education as well. According to the findings of this study, teachers have positive feelings towards mobile-assisted language learning. They state that their teaching skill is not yet matched for the implementation of mobile learning that requires more time, training, and pedagogical infrastructure.

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