

Mobile ESL Apps and Students Motivation: A Case Study

Rasha Osman Abdel Haliem, The Higher Technological Institute, Egypt

The European Conference on Language Learning 2018
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Using mobile ESL apps greatly impacts students' motivation. The main reason for using mobile apps is that the students learn in an engaging way using online/offline tools. Using mobile apps support the usual face to face learning by encouraging students to practice the language with the help of various multimedia-based assignments. This approach inspires learners to know more and discover L2 by using their smartphones. The use of portable technologies makes it easier for learners to study whenever and wherever they want. It also facilitates 'just-in-time' learning, where learners can often take advantage of unexpected free time, since they frequently have their devices with them. Learners can create, share, and adapt their own content and evaluate these in social media networks of peers, colleagues or others that are not necessarily sharing the same lesson or classroom, expanding the learning experience beyond the traditional teacher-centered classroom model. The researcher will survey some free mobile ESL apps, online and off-line, show how mobile ESL apps increased her students' sense of control and autonomy over their learning and reflect on the way the apps were used to improve students' ESL skills. The researcher will also share best practices on how mobile ESL apps can be used to motivate students and enhance the processes of teaching and learning.

Keywords: Mobile apps, m-learning, language learning motivation, technology, interactive, learning, teaching, ESL classroom

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

Language learning is influenced by many factors. Motivation, attitude, interests, age, methods, will and character unquestionably affect language learning. Motivation is a force that energizes and directs behavior. In language learning, motivation drives students forward in English learning, and make them exert extra effort to acquire the language. One way to increase intrinsic motivation is using mobile ESL apps. Making students get the habit of using mobile apps in language learning, make them active learners, and increase their inclination to experiment and perform willingly. This case study investigates the impact of using mobile apps in sustaining students' motivation. Initially, motivation is defined, then mobile learning and the use of mobile apps in the ESL classroom are reviewed. Then, the researcher shows how mobile apps were used in her educational context as a tool to enhance students' interest and to keep them motivated. Once motivated, students can work on their own to improve their language skills and use the language to enhance their educational and professional opportunities.

Using mobile ESL apps greatly impacts students' motivation. The main reason for using mobile apps is that the students learn in an engaging way using online/offline tools. Using mobile apps support the usual face to face learning by encouraging students to practice the language with the help of various multimedia-based assignments. This approach inspires learners to know more and discover L2 by using their smartphones. The use of portable technologies makes it easier for learners to study whenever and wherever they want. It also facilitates 'just-in-time' learning, where learners can often take advantage of unexpected free time, since they frequently have their devices with them. Learners can create, share, and adapt their own content and evaluate these in social media networks of peers, colleagues or others that are not necessarily sharing the same lesson or classroom, expanding the learning experience beyond the traditional teacher-centered classroom model (Anderson 2015; Statista 2016; Backowski 2017). The paper will survey some free mobile apps, online and off-line, show how mobile ESL apps increased students' sense of control and autonomy over their learning and improved their skills. The paper will also share best practices on how mobile ESL apps can be used to motivate students and enhance the processes of teaching and learning.

Literature Review

Using technology in ESL teaching/learning is booming on daily bases. MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) is also tried and advocated by many teachers (Traxler and Kukulska-Hulme, 2015, 8). In the context of Egypt, teaching English is quiet challenging especially in universities. Students are overwhelmed with their subjects and many (especially those who were in public schools) have not been introduced to using mobile phones in teaching/learning. Technology offers wide opportunities to learners especially in language learning. Technology is enhancing the teaching/learning experience in Egypt though the internet availability and infrastructure is ineffective. Mobile devices (cell phones, smart phones and tablets) can enhance the learning experience via increasing student motivation (Schunk et al. 2013, 34). Many teachers worldwide use these devices in the ESL classroom on daily bases, others evade using technology (McQuiggan et al 2015, 8). Teachers play a relevant role in choosing the correct tool and on training students on the use of such

tool. Teachers also help in encouraging students use such tools on their own to improve their educational and professional opportunities.

Motivation and Language Learning

Motivation is generally defined as any force that triggers, directs or maintains behavior towards a certain goal. Motivation stimulates actions and directs behavior. A motivated individual shows interest towards a subject and exerts effort to attain a certain level of mastery towards that subject. Motivation is considered the key in terms of language learning because it drives behaviors, enhances students' efforts and encourages students centered learning. Motivation is divided into extrinsic and intrinsic. Intrinsic is considered the real driving force. Nonetheless, extrinsic motivation can be a tool that can enhance the inner desire. Teachers use tools (extrinsic motivators) that can enhance students inner drive. Extrinsic motivation is as an outward force in the form of expectation, praise and rewards (Gunby and Schutz 2016, 7).

In language learning motivation includes students' purpose of learning. It encompasses their desire for knowledge, competence, and growth. Students with intrinsic motivation study English independently, experiment with the language and do challenging tasks. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are relevant, inseparable and complementary to each other in English language learning. Nonetheless, intrinsic motivation is more relevant as it is the inner drive that propels students forward and onward. Knowing about the relevance of motivation in language learning made me concerned about trying to find tools that sustain intrinsic motivation. I was interested about using mobile apps to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Currently, teachers are using mobile apps to motivate students and enhance the teaching and learning process. As Scott McQuiggan et al (2015) explain: "mobile learning provides a new way to motivate students by providing high level of engagement and novelty, personalization, and autonomy. The ability to constantly use new apps and find new ways to use the device keeps it fresh and interesting for students (12)."

M-learning

Definition and Historical Background

As Trifonova and Ronchetti (2003) explain that mobile learning is using IT in enhancing the teaching/ learning experience through mobile devices. Mobile are used to help us perform our lives' affairs; they can also be helpful medium that transfer content and enhance teaching the four skills, the learning experience, cooperative learning and self-study. Mobile learning is widely used and developing continuously in the United States, United Kingdom, and other European countries while it is still emerging in Egypt.

Dickey (2001) used teleconferencing to teach conversation. Stanford Learning Labs studied the impact of using mobile in language learning and reach the conclusion that it enhances the teaching/ learning experience (Brown 2001). Likewise, Thornton and Houser (2002; 2003; 2005) also used mobile phones to teach English in a Japanese university with the likening of students. Houser (2003) used mobile in surveying students. Kiernan and Aizawa (2004) explored the use of mobile in task-based

learning. Atewell (2004) enforces the positive effect of integrating mobile in language namely enhancing students' rapport and engagement. Mcneal and Hooft (2006) assert the idea that mobile phones are not widely used in teaching ESL as some teachers evade this tool for fear of integrating technology. Chen, Hsieh, and Kinshuk (2008) enforced the positive effect on using mobile in English vocabulary teaching/learning. Funding is a challenge still Gilgen (2004) has demonstrates the possibilities of developing mobile labs for schools with limited funding.

Janelle Wills (2010) highlighted the positive effect of using mobile learning in language teaching for the ideas of accessibility at any time, any place, and extending the learning behind the walls of the classroom. Motteram (2013), Tomlinson and Whittaker (2013), Hockly (2009), (2013), (2015) cover the development of the use mobile in education. Teacher can use internet access, SMS, MMs, Facebook, Twitter, mp3/mp4 player, digital camera, video recording, running multimedia content. Some mobiles have special inbuilt learning software such as e-dictionary, flash-card software, quiz software and others. Voice recording and listening: students can record their communication in English and listen to it later to work on their weaknesses. Listening to audios and videos can help them improve their listening skills. Tasks give relevance and value to the tools and giving students tasks make them get the habit of using the tool.

Origin and History

The use of mobile devices started at the early 19970s as researchers began to use The Dynabook by Xerox in the early 1970's. The researchers were targeting a "A personal computer for children of all ages" which was produced at \$294 in 1972 money, roughly \$1721 today. Practical mobile learning really started around early 2000's. New technologies and social needs and preferences led to a variety of portable devices.

Advantages of Using Mobile in Higher Education

To prove the importance of mobiles in modern language teaching it has to be highlighted what mobiles can offer for teachers and students. One of the main advantages of using mobile in education is that they make it possible to individualize the teaching-learning process. Students can learn at a pace appropriate to their own level of language skills, which means that it is the learner who determines the progress and often the range of materials being taught or practiced. It enhances motivation as students use their phones all through the day in all matters but education.

Mobile learning, the use of portable electronic devices to access and share information, is a trend in higher education, and is redefining the manner in which learning takes place and how instruction is delivered (Geist, 2011; Miller, 2012). Mobile learning presents students and professionals with the unique opportunity to access information instantaneously regardless of location (Rossing, Miller, Cecil, & Stamper, 2012). This means that learning can occur anywhere at any time through the use of these devices. Devices commonly used are smartphones with Android. (Kessler, 2012). literature related to device use at the collegiate level is proving to be positive influence on student learning. (Kolowich, 2012; Rossing et. al, 2012).

Students report that use of mobile devices allows them to adapt course content to fit their learning style and pace (Rossing et. al, 2012).

A key issue of integrating mobile apps is engaging and empowering students, extending the learning beyond the walls of the classroom, and enforcing the idea that students play a definite role in their own education. Deborah Healy (2016) "the teacher and the learner also have important roles to play" (13). Healy (2016) calls for using "advantage of the opportunities [mobile] ... devices offer" and training students to use "tools at their command to create their own pathways to learning language" (18). She asserts the teachers' role in helping unskilled students choose helpful resources and letting skilled work on their own and return to their teachers for guidance. All the previous studies enforce the idea of the role mobile apps in enhancing students' motivation, teaching the four skills, improving students' proficiency, enhancing the teaching/ learning experience, interaction, collaboration, and self-learning. Helen Crompton and John Traxler (2018) state:

Mobile learning (mlearning) is a potential game-changer in higher education(HE). In many countries, the adult population has more than one mobile device per person (Statista, 2016). With the rapid diffusion of mobile technologies, these devices are now in many HE institutions across the world, is now being replaced by learner-centered teaching (Wright, 2011). This approach transforms students from passive learners who only achieve surface-level learning to students actively involved in their learning, gaining a deep understanding of the concepts. Mobile devices offer new affordances to transform learning. However, this shift in learning is not simple and bigger issues need to be addressed, such as equity, scale, sustainability, and change management." (1)

Teachers' Changed Role

It is generally admitted that using the mobile for learning changes the role of the tutor and the work of the students. The student need to be guided rather than instructed, as they can find necessary information on the World Wide Web, and they can use the app according to their need. Practice showed that when students are working on their phones they pay little attention to their teacher. This requires more flexibility from the instructor in managing the lesson, and allows more time for the students to experiment (David, 2017).

Whereas mobile apps help students in language learning, it is still the tutor's responsibility to ensure that students acquire the knowledge described in the syllabus. Definitely, teachers become co-workers and facilitators rather than leaders in the lesson. Deborah Healy explains in the article "Language Learning and Technology: Past, Present and Future" (2016): "Identifying multiple roles for technology, however does not it fully address the dynamic in the classroom. The teacher and the learner also have important roles to play" (13). Besides, teachers operate as managers, as they have to pre-plan and organize students' work. Certainly, tutors have enormous responsibility in giving their students the right amount of help. Mobile apps complete tutors' work, and they have to be used in a balance with other techniques.

Advantages and Challenges of Mobile Learning

The advantages of integrating mobile apps include studying wherever and whenever, enhancing motivation, providing interesting content, working collaboratively from long distance and improving educational outcome. The challenges of using mobile apps in the ESL classroom include the need of internet access, agreement of the administration and parents, the need for teachers training, communication failure, limited battery life, limited memory size and small keyboards.

How Can Mobile Be Used in the Classroo

a. Offering Mobile Learning Material

This is one of the easiest way of mobile learning. You can offer texts, videos or audios. It's possible to do this whenever you want. Students are able to prepare homework by watching a video that the teacher has put online. It's more about individual consuming which makes it an asynchronous way of learning.

b. Interaction during lessons

If you do want to have some more interaction, you can use mobile devices during your lessons. An example of this is asking questions during your instruction. Teachers ask questions and the students will answer them on their mobile devices. Teachers are able to get immediate feedback. This is especially easy for teaching large groups.

c. Synchronous learning

Immediate feedback from your teacher or fellow students? This is possible with synchronous learning. Teachers can get direct feedback while they are at home. Teachers can interact with their students during their lectures.

Useful Free Mobile ESL Apps

Mobile learning apps are apps that help delivery of information that is convenient and interesting to the tech savvy. They also provide learners with the flexibility to learn anywhere, anytime. Some mobile learning apps work on and offline.

Google Search Engine: Students can search meanings, texts, books, videos, power point presentations, and articles.

Downloadable PDF: Free pdf infographics, articles and book can be easily downloaded

TED Conferences LLC: It includes numerous TED Talks. New talks are added on daily bases. Lectures are on all topics with the time range from five to twenty-five minutes.

TED ED: It is an excellent website that includes short animated videos on nearly all topics with assessment.

RSA Animate: This is an interesting website that has animation videos on big topics. Teachers can ask students to watch one of these videos and ask them to summarize, take notes or comment on the content.

English Test Store: This is a useful website that includes both interactive and downloadable exams on reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It also includes grammar exercises and TEOIC exams.

Wikipedia: students could search the encyclopedia and read on/offline. They do a Google search and eventually search Wikipedia once they enter the website. Once they search a topic they could close the data.

Utube: Your students could open the videos you assign. They then could summarize and comment on these videos. They watch for a reason.

TEDlang Learn English: This app is designed for ESL learners. It has subtitles.

VOA NEWS: Teachers can lead students to Voice of America website and they can read or listen to news, interviews or stories. They also have special material for learning English <https://learningenglish.voanews.com/>

VOA Learning English: The content is wide and useful

Bussuu: <https://www.busuu.com/en/mobile>

BBC Learning English: BBC is an reputable radio and television channel, and the app is really helpful.

BBC Listening English: The app is dedicated to listening and is helpful.

Oxford 500 English Conversation: The app is effective and resourceful.

IELTS Listening: Though dedicated to IELTS, still it can help students even if not preparing for IELTS listening test.

IELTS Practice Test: Another free app that can help students improve.

English Pronunciation: The app really helps students' pronunciation.

Browsing through the playstore, you will find infinite free and for money apps. Choose what you feel is helpful for your students and supports your curriculum. As for me I use mobile in different ways namely the following: I make my students download Infotech, English Vocabulary in Use, English Companion Course, and we do some parts together. Other parts are assigned to be done at home. They are great as they work offline and there no internet access available in my institute. I make my students go to Wikipedia, we read articles together on many topics. The one they love best are those on Arabic movies, writers, and celebrities as they feel English can reflect their culture. We also google many things, words, expressions proverbs. This make them get the idea that technology can help them improve. I also use TED and I assign them to watch videos and comment on them. The play store is full of apps that

are both free and for money. Browse the play store, choose the app you feel will help your students and support your curriculum. Understand the app well as you will be responsible for explaining the app for your students. In addition, your students will always come back to you for questions.

Research Problem

The research problem is: examining the impact of using mobile ESL apps on sustaining language learner motivation.

Formal Statement of Research Question

How does using mobile apps impact students' motivation and interest for the course? The research is also concerned with the question: What impact does using mobile ESL apps has on students of all levels of proficiency and if it will help improve the teaching and learning processes. The case study is also concerned about the impact of mobile learning on learners, teachers and institutions. It will also examine whether mobile learning can help improve retention, achievement, progression and attendance. The case will also trigger the idea whether reflection will empower students, give them a sense of autonomy and help them develop skills for self-directed learning.

Method

a. Research Context and Description of Participants

After carefully analyzing available researches and publications in this field, I developed the following steps for the implementation of the action research. The action research was carried out in the first semester of the academic year 2017-2018 (September- January term). It was conducted on language A students, group 9. The group (class) was comprised of 65 students, 50 students were males and 15 were females. A total of 65 students (the whole group) were enrolled in the action research.

Students were permitted to use the pdf of the book in class. They were encouraged to look up words on their online and offline dictionaries, offline pieces of comprehension were read in class over the course of a term (15 weeks). Students were oriented to online resources namely Utube, TED TED Conferences LLC, TEDlang Learn English, VOA NEWS, VOA Learning English, Bussuu, BBC Learning English, BBC Listening English, Oxford 500 English Conversation, Listening, IELTS Practice Test, and English Pronunciation. Over the course of 12 weeks, a questionnaire, and an interview for ten students were administered. 55 students responded to the questionnaire. Only 8 students of the 65 agreed to be interviewed.

As for the concerns before and while conducting the action research, I was not sure that all students would like the idea of using mobile apps in the ESL classroom. I was also concerned about the administration acceptance of the idea of making students use their mobiles in class. As for the steps I took to make things go smoothly, I spoke to my colleagues and supervisors before taking steps. I also spoke to students and explained to them the relevance of trying to use mobile apps in order to advance their educational and professional opportunities and guide their choices for further learning.

b. Instructional context

I teach in the Higher Technological Institute. I am highly interested in improving the quality of my teaching and making a real difference in students' lives. I believe in student-centered approach. I believe that using mobile apps in the classroom would increase students' motivation and help students improve and become active learners.

The students' ages are 18-23. The number of the students in each class varies from 60 to 90. Their proficiency in the language varies as they come from different educational backgrounds. The students come from all over Egypt: Cairo (30%), Ismailia (15%), Suez (5%), Sharkiya (10%), and Upper Egypt (40%). They are low-middle, middle and upper-middle class. Many of them own laptops, have internet access via their phones, in the library of the institute and at home. Most of my students are graduates of public schools only 20 per cent are either private or international (19 % private schools and 1% international schools). As such, most need to work hard on their English to prepare themselves for the market. All students understand the importance of English in practical life so they try to regularly attend, ask questions, and do the exercises I give. In addition, Some students even ask for extra material to do on their own pace. The class time is three hours. A break is given after each hour. The problems I continuously face are the different levels of students, their large numbers, different levels of proficiency and motivation. I wanted to help students get interested in learning English, enhance their proficiency so I decided to use mobile apps in the classroom.

c. Intervention Procedure

Students were asked to download the books New Interchange and Infotech, and the off-line dictionary Oxford to be used in class. Students were asked to buy data access worth 25 pounds to use the internet when needed in class. Students were oriented and used 2 mobile apps every class and were given assignments.

d. Data Collection Procedure

I collected data from the questionnaire, and the interview students. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to gather as much information as possible. I analyzed the different answers provided by the students to make sure if things were going well or the plan needs adjustment. The questionnaire was conducted at the beginning of the course. The interview was conducted at the end of the course.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was paper-based. It consisted of four parts. The first part was concerned about their attitude to technology. The second part was dedicated to their experience of using mobile internet and the third part was concerned with trends and tools of using technology in learning ESL. The fourth part was related to knowledge of future trends.

The questionnaire is included in the appendices.

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE: Mobile in the Classroom		
Course:	Name:	Date:

A Mobile Device Use

1. Do you own a smartphone or tablet pc that is capable of accessing the Internet (whether or not you use that capability)?

2. How do you use smart phone or tablet pc?

Check all that apply.

Access e---learning tools

Browse the Internet

Download and listen to music

Download and listen to podcasts/audio books

Download and read e---books/print---based content

Download and view streaming movies/video clips

Search for information

Send and receive e---mail

Use camera to take and share pictures

Calendar

Maps

Shopping

Social networking

YouTube

Other (Please specify)

3. What is your level of comfort with your mobile device/handheld device use?

Not at all comfortable

Not very comfortable

Fairly comfortable

Very comfortable

4. Do you use the device for academic purposes?

YES NO

5. Do you use any Apps related to your role as an MSOT student?

YES NO

If yes please specify:

6. Do you use any Apps for studying?

YES NO

If yes please specify:

7. Are You familiar with AOTA's mobile app bank for practitioners?

YES

No

8. Describe possible ways that you would like to see the use of tablet pcs and smartphones Integrated into the ESL classroom.

9. Do you communicate with classmates via social networks? If so, explain.

10. Do you access social networks through your smartphone?

11. Do you use social networks for school related things? If so, please specify.

12. Do you prefer the use of a tablet pc over the use of a laptop in the classroom? Why or why not?

B. Technophobe or technogeek? Or somewhere in between?

How do you feel about using your mobile phone in the ESL classroom? Do this "Attitudes to using mobile" questionnaire and then read the commentary in the answer key.

1=disagree totally 2= disagree 3=not strong opinion 4=agree 5=agree strongly

Attitudes to technology		1	2	3	4	5
1	I enjoy using mobile in the ESL classroom.					
2	I avoid using mobile when I can.					
3	I think using mobile in class takes up too much time.					
4	I know that using mobile can help me to learn					
5	Technology intimidates and threatens me.					
6	Students should know how to use the mobile in					
7	I would be a better learner if I knew how to use mobile technology properly.					
8	I'm very confident when it comes to working with mobile at home/at work/at					
9	I want to learn more about using mobile at home/at work/at university.					
10	I believe that I can improve my language skills using mobile apps.					
11	Using technology in learning languages is not					
12	Technology breaks down too often to be of very					

c. Experience of using the Mobile Internet

7.1. I use the mobile internet	Regularly		Never
at College			
at home			
at work			

7.2. I use the Internet in English for the following:	Regularly	Infrequently	Never
To communicate with people (e.g. e-mail) To find information			
To read the news			

I use the Internet in English for the following:	Regularly	Infrequently	Never
To watch films To prepare home assignments (e.g. projects, web quests etc) To buy/sell products To learn (e.g. online courses, using online dictionaries) To have fun (e.g. playing computer games) To download software Anything else (please specify)			

d. Keeping up with future trends

What do you know about future trends and tools in learning with technology?
Which of these things would you like to incorporate into your studies?

Tool/trend	I know what this is	I'd like to explore this more
e-learnng		
m-learning		
Blogs		
Wikis		
EPortfolios		
Use a mobile phone texting activity in class		
Podcasts		
Join an online discussion group		

Source: Portions of this survey have been adapted from: Rossing, J.P., Miller, W., Cecil, A.K., Stamper, S.E. (2012). iLearning: the future of higher education? students perceptions on learning with mobile tablets. *Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 12(2), 1-26. Retrieved from <http://josotl.indiana.edu/article/view/2023/1985.G> and Dudeney & Nicky Hockly. 2007. How to Teach English with Technology. Pearson Education Limited. Tasks B and Task D (partly adapted).

The Interview

8 students agreed to be interviewed after the end of the course. The number is small as most students concentrate on studying for the exams. Six students were males and two were females. The interview questions are included in the appendices.

The interview questions

1. Did the use of mobile apps in the classroom sustain your motivation throughout the course? Why or why not? If we do this again, what can I do differently to help you learn more?
2. Did the use of mobile apps in the classroom help you learn more?
3. Would you like to use mobile apps in your next ESL classes? Why?

Six out of eight answered that they found that mobile apps sustained their motivation throughout the course as they use the phone all day and they liked the idea to use it in class. Two believed it is helpful but time consuming as the speed of the internet is slow as they use the data access they bought rather than the wi fi at home. 5 out of the 8 students denoted the mobile apps helped them study anywhere and anytime and this helped improve their proficiency.

Two students' answers are included in the paper. One represents those who liked the using mobile apps and the other represents those who do not find it that helpful. Their names are omitted to maintain participant anonymity. Also, students' opinions for using mobile apps and against using mobile apps are summarized.

Student A stated that he liked using mobile apps as they are free, interactive, covers all skills and all areas of the language. They are interesting, informative, helpful and available anytime, anyplace. He denoted that he will continue using the apps in the summer to improve in English to enhance his educational and professional opportunities. He said that he liked TED talks most and added that he wants the apps to be used in other ESL classes as “my phone is my friend and an extension of my hand”, “I sometimes, forget to take money but always remember my extension”. I would also like to use it in other courses in humanities in addition to English.

Student B disliked the use of apps and found it time consuming. S/he said that it was distracting and sometimes she felt s/he was lost in class and s/he likes the old ways better. S/he denoted that reflection needs more time than a weekly entry which s/he has to write to "please" the teacher. S/he stopped the practice of writing reflective entries once the course ended. S/he states that s/he will not speak about the practice as s/he will lose time speaking about something s/he dislikes.

Results

The questionnaire and the interview show how students perceive the benefits of reflection and how it sustained motivation. The reflective practice provided students an opportunity to look back on their experiences in and outside the ESL class. At the beginning of the course, students were extremely timid and shy and did not know how and what to write in their reflections. As the semester progressed, students began to feel more and more comfortable. Reflection provided an excellent opportunity for

students to discuss things in class, understand their active role in language acquisition, and sustained motivation. The students became comfortable enough with the professor and their peers. Qualities such as self-motivation and a truly dedicated work ethic were enhanced as a result of the weekly reflective practice. Students began to put academic goals in mind and work on them.

As such, ESL teachers should make students get the habit of reflecting via assigning reflective assignments. These reflective assignments can be scheduled according to the teacher's design of the curriculum. The reflective practice will sustain students' motivation, make them active learners, and increase their inclination to experiment and perform willingly.

Implications

Evidence from the literature and from the case study indicates the beneficial effect of using mobile apps in the classroom. In the present case study, using mobile apps helped enhance the learning experience of ESL students and sustain motivation. The results from this study reveal that students are using mobile devices for both academic purposes and for support outside of the classroom. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies investigating the use of mobile devices in higher academic settings in enhancing learning and engagement. This is evident in students' reports of using their mobile devices to use 'apps' to support their learning.

Limitations and directions for future research

One of the most significant drawbacks of the current research is the limited time slot, which hinders the researcher to keep track and study the data provided and further and proffer more first-hand data for analysis. The researcher could not also know whether students will stick to the habit of using mobile apps in other English language courses. Besides, the case study was administered on a single university students (adults) class and the results may not be the same in different class settings. As such, more research could be done to delve into the effectiveness of using mobile apps in sustaining motivation and into the optimum number of apps to be used in each class and in each course.

Conclusion

Using mobile apps empowers students by giving them a sense of autonomy and helping them develop skills for self-directed learning. It allows students to select and do extra-curricular activities. Students' motivation is increased, their interactivity and desire for learning is enhanced. Mobile apps for ESL are numerous. Teachers should try the apps before orienting the students to use to be ready for questions. Mobiles could be used for synchronous and asynchronous learning according to the teacher design for the curriculum. The apps are characterized by affordability variety, and increased outreach. ESL teachers should try to enhance interactivity, integrate social media and the apps, use the apps to the full potential and connect the apps to their cultural and educational context.

References

- Anderson, Monica. "Technology Device Ownership: 2015". Pew Research Center. 29 Oct. 2015. <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/29/technology-device-ownership-2015/>
- Atewell, Jill. *Mobile Technologies and Learning: A Technology Update and m-learning Project Summary*. Learning and Skill Development Agency, 2004.
- Backowski, Jennifer. "How Are Students Using Mobile Devices?". *Atomic Learning*, 26 Sep. 2017. <http://blog.atomiclearning.com/how-are-students-using-mobile-devices-infographic>
- Chen, Baiyun, Bennett, Luke, and Seilhamer, Ryan. "Students' Mobile Learning Practices in Higher Education: A Multi-Year Study". 22 June, 2015. <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2015/6/students-mobile-learning-practices-in-higher-education-a-multiyear-study>
- Chen, N.S., S.W. Hsieh, and Kinshuk, 2008. Effects of short-term memory and content representation type on mobile language learning. *Language Learning and Technology* 12 (3): 93-113.
- Cheng, H., & Dörnyei, Z. (2007). The use of motivational strategies in language instruction: The case of EFL teaching in Taiwan. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1, 153–173.
- Cheryl L. Spaulding. (1992). *Motivation in the classroom*. The United States: McGraw-Hill.
- Crompton, Helen and Traxler John. (2018). *Mobile Learning and Higher Education: Challenges in Context*. Routledge.
- Dickey, R.J. (2001). Make it a conference call: An English conversation course by telephone in South Korea. In L.E. Henrichsen (Ed.), *Distance-learning programs* (pp. 51-60). Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ottó, I. (1998). Motivation in action: A process model of L2 motivation. *Working Papers in Applied Linguistics*, 4, 43–69.
- Gilgen, R.G. (2004, April 22). *Creating a mobile language learning environment*. PowerPoint presentation presented at the Educause Midwest Regional Conference, Chicago, IL. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from <http://www.educause.edu/librarydetailpage/666?id=mwr0406>
- Gunby, Jessica T. DeCuir, and Schutz, Paul A. Eds, *Race and Ethnicity in the Study of Motivation in Education* Routledge, 2016.

Healy, Deborah. (2016) "Language Learning and Technology: Past, Present and Future" In *The Routledge Handbook of Language Learning and Technology* Fiona Forr and Liam Murray Eds, Routledge.

Kiernan, P.J., & Aizawa, K. (2004). Cell phones in task based learning: Are cell phones useful language learning tools? *ReCALL*, 16(1), 71-84.

McNeal, Thomas and Hooft, Mark Van't (2006). Anywhere, anytime: Using mobile phones for learning. *Journal of the Research Center for Educational Technology*. Vol 2, No.2.

McQuiggan, Scott, McQuiggan, Jamie, Sabourin, Jennifer, and Kosturko, Lucy. *MobileLearning: A Handbook for Developers, Educators, and Learners*. Wiley and SAS Business Series, 2015.

Miller, W. (2012). *iTeaching and learning: collegiate instruction incorporating mobile tablets*.

"Mobile Fact Sheet." Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech, 12 Jan. 2017, www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/.

Nagel, David. "One-Third of U.S. Students Use School-Issued Mobile Devices". *The Journal*, 4 Apr. 2017, <https://thejournal.com/articles/2014/04/08/a-third-of-secondary-students-use-school-issued-mobile-devices.aspx>

Perlow, Jason. "Can We Finally Realize Alan Kay's Dynabook for \$100?". *ZDNet*. 9 Nov. 2008. <http://www.zdnet.com/article/can-we-finally-realize-alan-kays-dynabook-for-100/>

Poll, Harris. "Pearson Student Mobile Device Survey 2015". Pearson, June, 2015. <http://www.pearsoned.com/wp-content/uploads/2015-Pearson-Student-Mobile-Device-Survey-College.pdf>

Rossing, J.P., Miller, W, Cecil, A.K., Stamper, S.E. (2012). *iLearning: the future of higher education? Student's perceptions on learning with mobile tablets*. *Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 12(2), 1-26. Retrieved from <http://josotl.indiana.edu/article/view/2023/1985>

Schunk, Dale H., Meece, Judith R, Pintrich, Paul R. (2013). *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications* 4th Edition. Pearson.

Shuler, P., Hutchins, G., Lashell, B. (2012). Student perceptions of tablet computers in a cooperative learning experiment. *North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture*, 11-17. Retrieved from http://www.nactateachers.org/attachments/091_Shuler_June%202010%20NACTA%20Journal-2.pdf

Thornton, P., & Houser, C. (2003). Using mobile web and video phones in English language teaching: Projects with Japanese college students. In B. Morrison, C. Green, & G. Motteram (Eds.), *Directions in CALL: Experience, experiments & evaluation* (pp. 207-224). Hong Kong: English Language Centre, Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Thornton, P., & Houser, C. (2005). Using mobile phones in English Education in Japan. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 21, 217-228.

Traxler, John and Kukulska-Hulme, Agnes. Eds *Mobile Learning: The Next Generation*. (Open and Flexible Learning) Series: Open and Flexible Learning, Routledge; 2015.

Trifonova, A. & Ronchetti, M. (2003). Where is Mobile Learning Going?. In A. Rossett (Ed.), *Proceedings of E-Learn 2003--World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education* (pp. 1794-1801). Phoenix, Arizona, USA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved July 27, 2017 from <https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/12226/>.

“The History and Future of Mobile Learning: Part 1”. Educational App Store. 20 Nov. 2014. <http://www.educationalappstore.com/blog/history-future-mobile-learning-part-1/>

West, Darrell M. “Mobile Learning: Transforming Education, Engaging Students, and Improving Outcomes”. Brookings. 17 Sep. 2013. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/mobile-learning-transforming-education-engaging-students-and-improving-outcomes/>

“What is Mobile Learning (m-learning)?”. Easy LMS. <https://www.easy-lms.com/help/lms-knowledge-center/mobile-learning/item10388>

Wills, Janelle (2010). The Queensland Times. Retrieved on January 30, 2018 from <http://www.learnosity.com>

Contact email: rashaosman77@yahoo.com