The Efficacy of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on Language Learning

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Abstract

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. It is a notable solution for the language barriers in terms of time and place. English language learning through Mobile is undergoing a contagious approach. MALL devices have become imperative in all the levels of education and in all subjects to apposite extent, including foreign countries. Since English language has become a universal language, most of the countries education system explores their content into English that enforces the language development almost in all the fields. Learning English does involve in memorizing a quite number of vocabularies and numerous grammatical structures. The present paper focus on the importance of MALL and its impressive way of learning English Language at anytime and anywhere with minimum interactive time being with the language teacher.

Keywords: MALL, Mobile Language Learning, Mobile technology.

Introduction

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is considered to be one of the approaches where in mobile phones or smart phones are utilized to get better progress in learning of any languages that have oral & written form in the world. In the present paper, the writer states the term MALL to refer also to Mobile learning.

The advancement of mobile technologies have changed the way teaching and learning process are being conducted inevitably (Cavus,2011). Many researchers during the beginning of 21st century explored the usage of mobile technology in order to lend its hand in learning a language including the salient features of MALL such as portability, social interactivity, connectivity, individuality and immediacy. The most unique feature of it enables the users to learn a language anywhere and anytime.

Mobile devices become a tool for learning languages. Teachers and students are highly adopted in the platform of usage as quickly as possible. Besides, the rapid growth of internet enables self learning and distance education learning all over the world. The teenagers in this mobile technology era can perform ubiquitous learning easily. They can simply gain access to the information and content from different resources in the web. So, they have more variety of choices to obtain knowledge and information. (Kee and Samsudin, 2014).

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MALL has been predominantly concerned with the mobile technologies such as mobile phones,MP3 / MP4 players and PDAs. MALL students would be able to proceed their activities that assigned by teachers and peers at anytime, anywhere. Today with the revolution of wireless and emerging technologies, MALL is available through numerous devices that include mobile phones, iPods, tablet PCs and hand held computers and more. There are sufficient techniques been found by the MALL designers in providing the maximum benefits of these devices. The inventions of MALL tools enable the learners as well as the language learning courses to quicken the language learning as easily as possible. MALL does serve not only as a primary source of language learning but also promotes preservation and utilization of newly acquired skills. MALL participants can able to keep their linguistic talents sharp. According to Nah.et.al.(2008) among the most noted privilege for using MALL is to access the learning anytime at any place. Unlike the traditional process of language learning skills – accommodating in a class or spending time in front of computers the users are opened a gateway where they can learn their own and update the language skills just before and after a conversation in the language they are learning.

The Concept of Mobile Assisted Language Learning

Mobile phones have become an inevitable device among all the adults and researchers incorporated the steps to integrate their usage with their education especially in learning languages. According to Miangah & Nezarat (2012:309) "Mobile Assisted Language

Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning .In contrast to classroom learning, in MALL there is no need for the learner to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. In fact, MALL can be considered to language learning barriers in terms of time and place."

Pachler, Bachmair & Cook (2010,p.6) defined MALL as "the process of coming to know and being able to operate successfully in, and cross, new and ever changing contexts and learning spaces with an emphasis on understanding and knowing how to utilize our everyday life- worlds as learning spaces." Miangah & Nezarat (2012:309) have stated that 'the main characteristics of mobile learning(m-learning) are recognized as the potential for learning process to be personalized, spontaneous, informal and ubiquitous. Although learning through mobile phones may take longer time compared to computers, the learners feel a greater sense of freedom of time and place, so that they can take the advantage of spare time to learn a second language when and where they are" From the definitions of MALL, the usage of mobile learning gets distinct from other mode of learning. Therefore, the learning process that based on or via with mobile device which get differenciate from the traditional method of learning, then it is Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

Mobile Phones in Main Stream Education

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in mobile learning. The devices used in mobile learning vary, from big devices such as net books, note books and laptops to small devices such as mobile phones. However there are negative perceptions of the mobile phones in main stream education (Smith et al., 2005; Trotter, 2001; Vahey and Crowford, 2002;Katz,2005; Shaw,2005). It is in the way it can be utilized in considering the usage of it. Mobile phones also make reappearance, in the same horizon as last year but nonetheless a year closer...Clearly the use of mobile phone as an educational tool is becoming more widespread and accepted (The Horizon report,2007,p.7). since most of the educational institutions except few do not come forward in accepting the significance of mobile phones in learning language, the effectiveness of common utility still an unanswerable one. Involving mobile phones in the curriculum, no doubt, can provide a pleasant learning environment for the learners whose motto would be achieved easily.

Mobile phones also have the potential that it can be utilized in promoting digital literacy. According to Hague and Williamson (2009), digital literacy is defined as "the functional skills required in operating and communicating with technology and media". Vavoula et al (2009) highlighted the invaluable resources provided by mobile technology that will become transferable skills in students' future career. It reveals that simultaneous growth on language and digital literacy can be done by it. Mobile phones could also to induce the interest of language learning. Kolb (2008) and Saran and Seferoglu

(2010) believed that the phones are very popular among the students and became a sort of motivational tool for their learning. Various learning activities conducted with mobile phones have shown positive outcomes (Kolb, 2008). It proves mobile phones in teaching and learning would be a better approach in overcoming the difficulties crossed by learners as well as the teachers.

Mobile Learning Process and its Revolution

Over the years authors have used various approaches to define the concept of mobile learning.No definite definition thus exists with authors frequently approaching the theory in relation to the context of its use (Kukulska-Hulme,2009: Kukulska-Hulme and bull,2009). Initial definition of mobile learning (m-learning) have focused on understanding m-learning " as a specialized type of e-learning that uses a variety of mobile computational devises" (Lee and Chan, 2007 : 203).

One of the recorded definitions of m-learning was that of Quinn (2000) who defined as m-learning as learning that occurs through the support or use of mobile devices. Later, Traxler (2005 : 262) gave a broader definition of, " any educational provision where the sole or dominant technologies are handheld or palmtop devises".

There were two key concepts been found in the observation: the way in which the learning process takes place and mobility of the learning devices. It is clear that the e-learning environment can be a new step of learning from the olden methodologies. EI-Hussein and Cronje (2010:20) defined mobile learning as, "any type of learning that takes place in learning environments and spaces that take account for the mobility of technology, mobility of learners and mobility of learning. Considering these definitions, it becomes an evident that mobile learning curved a path that makes possible mobility to the learning development.

Mall- A Bang on English Language Skills

It was in 1973 when mobile phones were introduced first time and none ever thought it would become a part of life. In making its association strong, there felt a screw as MALL tasks for learning English language. The mobile devises such as PDAs, phones and tablets are used from voice calling to short message, video chat, surfing web, shopping etc. In addition, it got a reformation tool in the field of education in learning language. MALL applications can facilitate the language learners in interacting with others collaboratively anytime and anywhere. Hence, the development of MALL as a new approach for education has implications for the way students and tutors in educational institutions interact (Huang & Chang, 2010)

Green, Collier & Evans (2001) in 1996, English teachers at Brigham Young University-Hawai taught a distance – learning English course from Hawaii to Tongo via mobile and computer. Dickey(2001) conducted a study to teach an English conversation course in South

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Korea by utilizing teleconferencing. MALL permits learners to access to the desired learning materials. Wi-fi technology in mobile devices allows learners to access supplementary learning materials from the Internet teachers can use mobile devices to communicate and send learning materials to their learners anytime (Ally,2009). MALL includes a quite number of applications or games that can promote the process of learning the second language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling. In others words it does include Listening, speaking, reading & writing. Concentrating the vocabulary skill progress strategies are observed through mobile phones. Some activities can be performed in the class room and the rest of it can be done or completed on their mobile phones and shuttle them to the instructor within the allotted time.

Applications of Mobile Assisted Language Learning

Due to the emergence of 3G and 4G mobile technology, mobile assisted language learning have explored with a significant role among all the traditional methodologies. It enables an impact on the students to act as autonomy or makes a platform where they can learn themselves. There are certain suggestions can be adopted to make its best utility in learning language at class room. First the instructors need to know the mobile technology and its integrity with each process. the same platform of devices that supports applications like Android, Windows and Apple iOs will be appreciable in common. Almost one third of learning language process can be done with it and where as the rest of listening skill can be demonstrated with Mp3 players or iPods which inculcate better activities.

On the other hand, the instructor has to check whether the assigned application for the whole class can be supported by their mobile phones. He has to ensure apart from having internet accessing, the tools which required for running those applications are being installed properly on their own. Lastly, learners have to be taught to practice more on advanced features of smartphones when the applications are used as activities. The ability to access multi applications simultaneously will enable them to complete the task earlier and make their language learning quicker and sharper. Unless getting interest in using technology effectively the process of making attempt on application will no longer provides success and leads to boredom.

Conclusion

It has been clearly found the presence of MALL exists in almost all the electronic devices that become a part of life almost for all. Due to its salient feature it exists through numerous devices like Smartphone, mobile phone, iPods, tablet PC's, PDAs and MP3 Players. The tools available in the MALL make the process of learning English language become much easier than the traditional methodologies. Distance learning for the language learners of any language can step up with MALL application which results in success

at the periodical checking. We should accept the trend and the best ways of learning any language within the aid that can be carried anywhere as well no less important can be admitted the importance of the instructor who can fulfil the process of it.

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