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“MOBILE LEARNING IN TERTIARY EDUCATION; CASE STUDY AT LANGUAGE SCHOOL, SULEYMAN DEMIREL UNIVERSITY”

Abstract. This study may have an impact on social change by helping university EFL teachers expand the written work aptitudes of their students. Significantly more, college educators need to know whether certain written work abilities can be improved by using WhatsApp.

This research is a quasi-experimental and qualitative research. The purpose of this research is to investigate the effect of using WhatsApp on improving the students' performance in English writing in Language School at Suleyman Demirel University. To accomplish this objective, and in an attempt to answer the research questions presented in the first part of this work, the researcher collected data through analyzing an English proficiency writing test which was classified into three domains each of which dealt with sub writing skills (mechanics of writing, usage and sentence formation). The procedures contained design and statistical analysis.

Key words: m-learning, ICT, MALL, WhatsApp, writing skills, SLA Text of the manuscript

“Technology will not replace teachers but teachers who do not use technology will be replaced” Dr. Ray Clifford, 1983

The hypothesis for this work is that learners who are interested in new technology, which in this case is going to be their everyday lesson, learn more easily and more effectively. This method is also in a little time become familiar in Kazakhstani education, which needs more repetitiveness and experiments at (English) classroom. However, it's so important for the process of studying because it is almost certain that the learners will scrutinize the material, their favorite songs, books, English vocabulary foreign the classroom with the help of tablet computers. Nowadays learners of all ages are keen on spending time on internet and social networks with smart phones, tablet computers, laptops, PCs, etc.; they also listen to their favorite music, play games and learn new useful things which are also fundamental for learning. When integrating tablet computer technologies with other advances in teaching English, ELT teachers must re-think what we teach students and how we enable students to learn. We are just beginning to understand how to best take advantage of this new tool in the classroom.

Mobile Assisted Language Learning is perceived as the potential for learning methodology to be customized, unconstrained, casual and omnipresent. Albeit adapting through mobile telephones may take longer time contrasted with PCs, the learners feel a more prominent feeling of opportunity of time what's more, place, so they can exploit extra time to take in a second language when and where they are. MALL manages the usage of mobile innovation in language learning. Rather than classroom adapting, in MALL there is

no requirement for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a PC to get learning materials. Actually, MALL can be viewed as a perfect solution to language learning problems regarding time and place. [1]

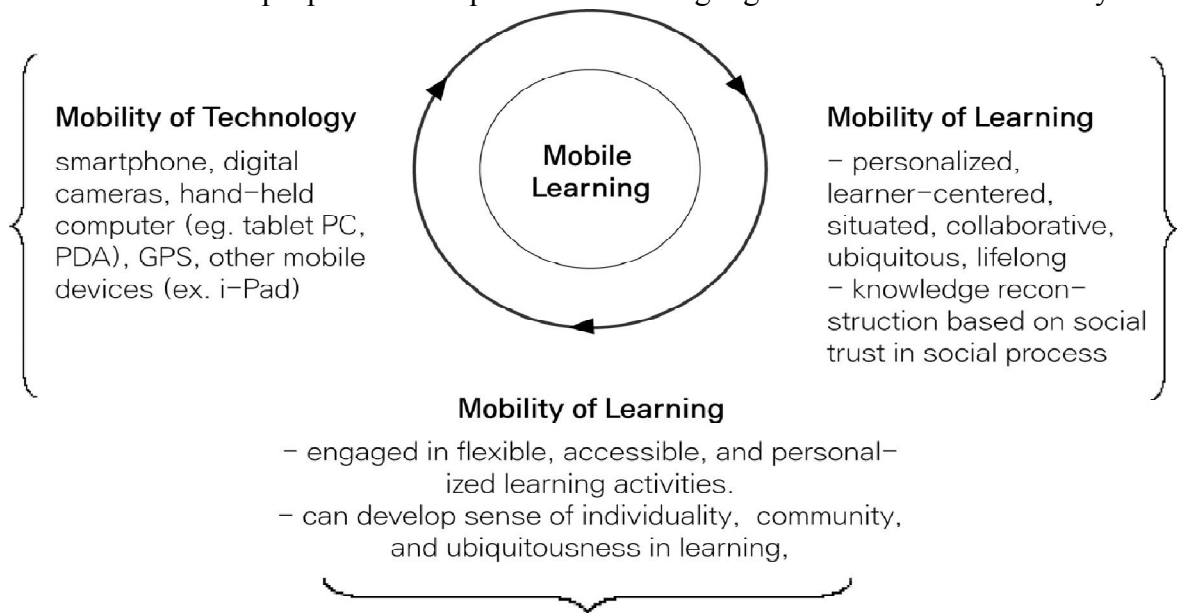
Nowadays many teachers try to find a new method or new approach in order to teach a language. Especially, students get bored when you teach grammar too often and they fail to learn a grammar of any language, the same with the English language. In order to not to bore your students, teachers must use a new technology and get the attention of students to the subject. [2]

M-learning is mobile learning and this includes the use of mobile phones, MP3 play. Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) such as Palm hand-held computers and devices using Windows Mobile Computing platforms such as the iPAQ [3]. While this may seem to be a bit of a fad, recent research has suggested that m-learning works well in environments where access to these kind of technologies is more normal and accepted or where lifestyle-demand more flexible solutions to training and learning [4].

The mobile learners can create feeling of uniqueness, group, and pervasiveness in realizing, which may present to them the pleasure in having a certain measure of opportunity and autonomy. Table 1 demonstrates the idea of mobile adapting in advanced education outlined in the past studies.

Table 1. The Concept of Mobile Learning in Three Areas [5]

The researcher used a purposeful sample which is Language school students at Suleyman



Demirel University. The sample consisted of two groups: the experimental group which was taught using WhatsApp, and the control group which was taught traditionally. Each one of them consisted of sixteen students. The following tables present the study sample.

Table 2. Sample Distribution According to Gender.

Percentage	Number of students	Gender
43.75%	14	Male
56.25%	18	Female
100%	32	Total

Table 3. Sample Distribution According to Group.

Percentage	Number of students	Group
50%	16	Experimental
50%	16	Control
100%	32	Total

The researcher used an English proficiency writing test which was classified into three domains (mechanics of writing, usage of writing and sentence formation) each of which dealt with sub-writing skills. The researcher used a pre-test and posttest distributed over three dimensions.

The pre-test was applied before using WhatsApp and the post-test was applied after using WhatsApp. The students received intensive training of correcting each other's mistakes and giving some suggestions to improve writing in terms of conventions of writing like mechanics, usage and sentence formation through a group on a WhatsApp page, consisting of sixteen students as an experimental group. The researcher's job was to administrate the whole work including correcting, commenting and giving suggestions for presenting ideas in a better way.

The research work was conducted following these steps

- Allocating students into different groups, morning and afternoon shifts, according to the results of Placement Test and speaking interview with ELT instructors at Language School. Groups were divided by common decision of 5 instructors and were as equal as possible in terms of academic performance of students, their age, nationality and gender. 65 students were divided into 5 groups.

- Identifying the study sample. Two groups were chosen by the researcher (Group F14-02 and Group F14-03)

- Pre-test

- Preparing the study tool, which was creating a group of sixteen students who were the experimental group on "WhatsApp" messenger and exposing them to extensive training on correcting each other's mistakes in the mechanics and usage of writing and sentence formation. The researcher as he was the teacher himself created the WhatsApp group and decided with the students in the experimental group to meet each Thursday at 20:00 for an hour on the created WhatsApp group to play and learn English eagerly. Some of the activities were like, story completion, dialogue completion and mistakes correction. Regardless all of the

difficulties at the beginning like not being online at the agreed upon time, the teaching-learning process continued successfully as the activities and the games were full of devotion.

- Applying the post-test to the students writing skills after using WhatsApp.

- Analyzing data by the assessment chosen.

This research used a traditional, classical design, in which procedure involves random assignment of participants to two groups – an experimental group and a control group. Both groups are administered both a pre-test and a post test, but the treatment is provided only to experimental group A. Symbols below clarify the design of this study.

Group A R----- O1 -----X----- O2

Group B R ----- O1 ----- O2

Group A is an experimental group and Group B is the control group. X represents the treatment using WhatsApp and O1 is the pre- test and O2 is the post- test.

Results revealed that using new and different enthusiastic techniques had a positive effect on improving the students' writing skills more than traditional teaching. This progress could also

mean that students participating, sharing ideas, opinions and comments through WhatsApp had better results and a more active role than students in large classes, sitting passively in rows, receiving and not having the chance to produce.

The mean of the pre-test mechanics was (7.8) and the mean of the post-test mechanics was (8.9), while the mean of the pre-test usage was (7.95) and the mean of the posttest usage was (9.0). On the other hand, the mean of the pre-test sentence formation was (7.95) and the mean of the post-test sentence formation was (8.45). Teaching mechanics of writing including punctuation, spelling and capitalization is difficult because those mechanics do not exist in oral or spoken language. Despite the difficulty to teach mechanics of writing, the students of the experimental group showed progress in writing in terms of mechanics more than usage or sentence formation which in turn overemphasized the importance of using WhatsApp in improving the students' writing skills. Students of the experimental group achieved little progress in improving their writing in terms of sentence formation. This fact could be attributed to their lack knowledge of reading. Students learning through WhatsApp could achieve more progress in writing in terms of sentence formation by reading more.

After completing the course using WhatsApp as an additional tool, students were asked to answer the questions in questionnaire to provide feedback on their experiences using the mobile technology to learn English writing skills.

Table 12. Questionnaire results

QUESTION	STRONGLY AGREE (%)	AGREE (%)	NEUTRAL (%)	DISAGREE (%)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (%)
Information on screen was accurately formatted for reading	45.65	32.61	4.35	17.39	0.00
This technology gives flexibility for me to learn anywhere and at any time	52.17	41.30	6.52	0.00	0.00
Learning with mobile technology increases the quality of my learning experience	52.17	41.30	2.17	2.17	2.17
The technology was easy to use to access the course materials.	43.48	30.43	17.39	8.70	0.00
Navigation (moving) through the lessons was easy.	26.09	41.30	17.39	10.87	4.35
The graphics on the screen were clear and easy to read.	34.78	34.78	30.43	0.00	0.00
I would like to take other lessons using mobile technology.	41.30	34.78	21.74	2.17	0.00
I would recommend that other students	43.48	32.61	21.74	2.17	0.00

complete their courses using mobile technology.					
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This study examined the effect of using WhatsApp in improving the students' writing skills in the Language School at Suleyman Demirel University. The results of the study however, shed some light on issues concerning using new, modern and enthusiastic social networking websites especially WhatsApp in the academic field of teaching the writing skills. In general, the results show that there were effective and obvious effects in using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills especially in mechanics of writing (capitalization, punctuation and spelling) on one hand and usage (word order, and subject verb agreement) on the other hand. The effect of using WhatsApp on improving and strengthening the students' sentence formation was not that clear. The main results could be summarized as follows:

1. There was an obvious effect of using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills.
2. There were statistical differences at (≤ 0.05) in using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills between the pre- test and posttest of the experimental group.
3. There were no statistical differences at (≤ 0.05) in using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills between the pre- test and posttest of the control group.
4. There were statistical differences at (≤ 0.05) in using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills between the post- tests for both the control group and the experimental group.
5. There were no statistical differences at (≤ 0.05) in using WhatsApp on improving the students' writing skills between the pre- test and post-test of the experimental group due to gender.

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