

Chapter 12

Engaging Mobile–Assisted Learning Activities Using Multiple Mobile Apps for Foreign Language Practice

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ABSTRACT

Mobile applications have been used to support engaging and interactive learning over the past several years. However, most mobile apps for language education were developed for merely vocabulary learning and simple grammar exercises. Hence, it is important for instructors to encourage and guide students to participate in more diverse learning activities using the mobile apps to learn and practice the target language in their daily lives. This chapter attempts to introduce a sample of engaging mobile-assisted learning activities toward the use of multiple mobile apps like TIMeS (Taylor's Integrated Moodle e-Learning System), Naver Blog, and Quizlet. A survey was conducted to gather student responses and feedback regarding this app-based learning, and 266 students responded over four semesters in 2018 and 2019. The chapter examines how these app-based learning activities are advantageous to the students' learning outside of the classroom in terms of enhancing engagement and flexibly.

INTRODUCTION

According to Edgar Dale's cone of experience, the students retain more information by what they do, as opposed to what they hear, read, or observe (Dale, 1969). In other words, students connect their knowledge and experience in the process of learning. However, one of the main concerns in foreign language learning is finding the time and space to practice the target language. Students who lack confidence in using the target language mostly struggle with sufficient practice because linguistic knowledge is difficult to assess if they cannot express themselves using written and spoken form. Linguistic knowledge and skills taught in class can build authentic connections to an individual's life if they can learn and

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practice the target language in and out of the classroom at their preferred time and place. Considering the significance of practicing the target language in daily life and the frequent use of mobile devices among students, it is not surprising that language instructors have adopted mobile-assisted learning in their instructional design. Mobile-assisted learning has gained popularity and is getting influencing education with the spread of smartphones and internet network. The effectiveness and potential role that mobile applications (apps) play has been discussed over the past two decades (Kukulka, 2006; Kim & Kwon, 2012; Adams, Burkholder, & Hamilton, 2015; Rosell-Aguilar, 2016). This chapter attempts to explore some engaging learning activities using mobile apps among the various features of mobile devices. It includes the instructional design in foreign language learning to support student self-learning and its effectiveness based on the student's responses and feedback.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION AT TAYLOR'S UNIVERSITY

To make effective use of technology integration, institutions must educate and assist their instructors and students on how to use diverse platforms and emerging technologies in their teaching and learning process. Taylor's University has been actively supporting a blended learning approach by providing an e-learning portal and various workshops and trainings for its staff and students. All instructors and students at Taylor's University are currently using its own Learning Management System (LMS). Each course offered must have an online component from 30% up to 79% of the total learning hours. In other words, there is a strong emphasis on the application of instructional technology at Taylor's University to enable students to learn anywhere, at any time. *TIMEs* (*Taylor's Integrated Moodle e-Learning System*) is a Moodle platform that is designed to support the delivery of teaching, learning materials, and activities that enables learning activities to be more interactive and accessible. It provides interactive activities which include forums, wikis, quizzes, surveys, and chat. Instructors are encouraged to design their course sites creatively to suit the characteristics of the course. Learning content on *TIMEs* offers a mix of media including text, images, audio, video, links, and interactive learning objects which engage students in their learning.

Taylor's University is further highlighting student's autonomous learning time and personalized learning into its overall curriculum design and teaching students to become active players in learning. As one of the initiatives of this, the "Teach Less Learn More (TLLM)" philosophy is employed. This initiative is an educational framework on the use of learning and learner-centered pedagogies, whereby the importance of flexible and personalized learning is valued highly. It emphasizes student's engagement and instructor's motivation to try new methods apart from the traditional class instructions (Fogarty & Pete, 2010). With this flow of promoting personalized and student-oriented learning along with the development of blended learning, the use of LMS as well as other programs and apps available on the market is no longer an option to consider in curriculum design. Integrating technology in teaching needs a paradigm shift of teaching and learning as well as practical and technical support and creative ideas. Therefore, instructors should spend time sharing information about new technologies and programs and choosing the most appropriate tools to develop according to their needs. Students are no longer the receiver of knowledge, but the main agent of learning who can actively participate in the learning experience. Hence, instructors are expected to be an active creator of content and course designer.

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