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FINAL RESEARCH REPORT

"The effects of the implementation of the mobile apps in the improvement of

proficiency of Intermediate English I students of the Bachelor of Arts in English

Teaching from the University of El Salvador".

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF: BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH
WITH EMPHASIS IN TEACHING.

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ABSTRACT

The technological world of today has provides new way to develop daily tasks through the use of different technological devices such as tablets, laptops, or smartphones. The use of these devices has been an essential part for everyone making them more dependent on technology. When talking about mobile technology, it can be said that there is a great change concerning the acquisition of new languages. That is why the main objective of this study is to know about the effects of the implementation of the English learning apps in the improvement of EFL learners. In this research, a bibliographical study has been taken to know what others researchers think about the topic being studied. For this bibliographic study, a total of 25 files about the topic have been taken into account as part of the sample. There is a collection of research projects, articles, graduation projects, e-books, among others that are going to help in this investigation. The methodology that is going to be used for this study is a bibliographical study, the researchers are going to select the appropriate documents to analyze them and do a summary of each article or research project. Then, a critic will be provided of each document telling if it is considered that the information presented by authors is reliable and helpful to the research. Also, researchers will analyze every piece of information to see if it can be implemented in the EFL learning process.

INTRODUCTION

English is considered essential for the personal and professional development of a person. Nowadays, people are interested in learning a language in which they can communicate in different countries since English is the most popular, worldwide spoken language, it should be the best option to learn. For this reason, it is necessary to follow new trends, new gadgets, and technology to learn English skills such as listening, Speaking, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation. D. Crystal (2009). In recent years, technology has become an indispensable tool in today's world. This phenomenon has aroused great interest between the principal protagonist in education; educators and learners. Since it offers potential advantages that help to improve their English skills faster and easier.

The advent of technology has become an important part of the world and it has made people´s lives easier than before. Talking about the educational field, great changes in the way of teaching and learning can be seen. Nowadays, if a person wants to learn something such as how to play an instrument, it can be done by the use of internet and some mobile apps. When learning a language as English, there are different ways to learn and improve it through the use of English educational apps or platforms that are available on the internet. For example, popular apps as the case of: Duolingo, Memrise, hello talk, Cake, etc.

Most of the society can take advantage of the advent of new technologies and use it for different purposes. In this case, the educational field has been one of those that benefit the most. Currently, teachers and learners can gain new knowledge of any topic without going to any place or asking anybody for help. Most of the students as well as the teachers are getting used to depending on online resources and the available innovations in education to facilitate their tasks. With the advent of the internet, teachers have access to many useful websites with updated and useful information to teach the different contents. Besides, learners may browse the net to clarify their doubts about a given topic and practice with the interactive activities available there.

In this modernized area, the traditional ways of teaching have been updated. The traditional books and whiteboards are replaced by e-books and smart boards. While teaching the English language, the teachers are using the latest technology in their classrooms, changing the traditional techniques and methods of teaching English to EFL/ESL learners. Currently, teachers motivate learners to use mobile phones in their classrooms to make the learning process an easy and fun-filled experience. Moreover, not only teachers are taking advantage of these improvements but also students because it seems that learners are making use of online resources, as well as English mobile apps that help them to learn and improve their language skills inside and out of the classroom.

According to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) People who are learning a second language want to develop or achieve a better level of fluency. Hence, they

need to achieve 700 hours of practicing and instruction. Nevertheless, conventional institutions of languages cannot give this type of training so students need to look for self-taught options to improve their skills in a shorter time. That is when English mobile apps take an important role as they become the help needed at the fingertips.

I RESEARCH TOPIC

The effects of the implementation of the mobile apps in the improvement of proficiency of Intermediate English I students of the Bachelor of Arts in English Teaching from the University of El Salvador.

II STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

The current graduation project talks about using mobile applications in the academic performance of students. Since the main point is to find out how much impact these English applications have had on English learners. The evidence remarks the huge power that these apps have been having during the last decade and the power that they will still have in the near future.

Nowadays, the use of mobile applications in the language classroom is very popular not only in English academies but also in many civilized countries and it has always been a topic of interest for researchers. Moreover, many studies support the use of technology in language learning and how useful it can be to learn a new

language. On the other hand, some students and teachers think the use of mobiles can cause distraction during the class and when they do their homework.

Since technology has improved and continued improving every single day, there are new devices such as computers, tables, smart watches, smart tv and cell phones, now these devices are used for students and teachers around the world because of their features like Wi-Fi connection, high-definition cameras, voice recording, video recording, and useful English language apps. Therefore, in this project, the main point is to see how much impact these English apps have on English learners.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This study describes the effects of the implementation of the English mobile apps in the improvement of EFL/ESL learners. Regarding this topic, it is known that mobile apps play a great role in the development of learning English since the era of globalization, one of the most powerful developments in education has been the arrival of language learning apps. Regardless of which device you use, one of the main drivers in the mobile learning revolution is the sheer number of apps that are available from different app stores. In May 2013, the number of apps downloaded from the iTunes App store alone reached 50 billion and the wealth of options is particularly notable for language apps. Therefore, English has become the common language of international communication (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999).

The importance of English is evident in international trade as well as leisure and entertainment. English learning has become a vital educational strategy and policy

in numerous non-English-speaking countries. Hence, this research tries to find out how English learning apps might help EFL/ESL learners to improve their English Skills. Also, this research project gives a better understanding of how these English Educational mobile apps can be of great usefulness at the moment of getting started with a new language, in this case, the English language. This study was carried out to find out the evidence of previous research about mobile apps helping English learners. Researchers saw how feasible these apps have been regarding the previous evidence that other researchers have made. So, as a result, our main goal was to encounter how these apps can improve English and how useful they can be.

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To determine how the use of English Educational applications can influence the academic English learners' performance and how they can take advantage.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze which English Educational applications can have a great impact on students' performance.

2. To find out how the use of English applications can help students' skills and subskills such as vocabulary, writing, listening, speaking, and reading.

3. To identify if the use of English application enables the learner to communicate effectively and appropriately in a real-life situation.

4. To describe potential benefits that the use of English applications can have when students use them.

5. To discuss which English Educational apps could be a great support for ESL learners.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

GENERAL QUESTIONS

To what extent does the use of learning English applications influence ESL learners?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. Which English educational applications can have a great impact on students´ performance?

2. How the use of English applications can help students' skills and subskills such as vocabulary, writing, listening, speaking, and reading?

3. Does English application enable the learner to communicate effectively and appropriately in a real-life situation?

4. Which benefits can students have when they use English applications?

5. Which English Educational apps could be a great support for ESL learners?

JUSTIFICATION / RATIONALE

The purpose of documentary research is to investigate how English mobile apps can help ESL/EFL learners to acquire and increase more vocabulary and improve the rest of their English skills. Through this study, researchers will have the opportunity to see previous evidence on how different apps have helped learners to improve their second language by using popular apps to learn English such as Duolingo, Cake, and Reverso.

This research project will be helping mainly to see the improvement in English skills and especially vocabulary since vocabulary is one of the main points in the English language because without sufficient vocabulary students might not understand many aspects of their language. Also, instead of learning just vocabulary in isolated words; they must learn phrases through context. Thus, the realization of this study may help to find out how huge the impact of these English apps has been in the education field and the impact they are making in society without even knowing. Besides, this project will take advantage of all the previous investigations done about the effect of using English learning apps for the improvement of English learning performance.

DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

Researchers are interested in gathering specific information about how the implementation of mobile technology in the educational field can have a great impact, specifically on those students who want to improve their English skills through the use of different mobile apps that can enhance learning. They will find out and analyze some research projects, articles, online books, and graduation work as part of the process to obtain the necessary information about the topic being researched. This will help to provide some English educational apps that can be used for English learning.

FRAMEWORK

HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK / THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
IMPLICATIONS TO USE COMPUTERS EFFICIENTLY IN THE EFL TEACHING AND LEARNING

The use of computer technology in EFL classrooms has changed all the ways that English can be taught. Since the 1950´s computers have been a relevant topic in learning another language; however, it was not until the 1980´s that the widespread use of computers in education raised interest. The results were huge since different academicians and language teachers started involving themselves in the use of this technology to make teaching English a new experience of learning with different methods. Hence, the benefits that computer technology implies in today´s world make a second and foreign language be acquired easily since it offers a gamma of resources such as interaction with distance members and authentic resources. (Alsied & Pathan, 2013, Aydin, 2013).

The use of computers in EFL classrooms also have switched from teacher-centered to student-centered. The teacher in the past was the one in charge of teaching almost everything. Nevertheless, now learner-centered has become a new approach due to the use of computers in EFL. For instance, learners are not just passive pupils; however, they have the opportunity to become more autonomous learners and achieve their goals; therefore, their needs can be accomplished. (Alsied & Pathan, 2013, Aydin, 2013).

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNER AUTONOMY

The importance of learners deciding their learning objectives, choosing ways to achieve the learning goals, and evaluating their progress has long been acknowledged by language learning pedagogy (Ellis, 1994). From a language learning perspective, computers are recognized as attractive learning tools that provide students with opportunities to become autonomous learners (Bork, 1994; Hoven, 1999; Nikolova, 2002). If used creatively and wisely with suitable activities, the use of computer technology can help EFL/ESL learners in many ways and can be an effective tool to motivate students to seek and fulfill their own learning needs by themselves. (Adapted from Alsied & Pathan, 2013)

A Brief History of Smartphones and Smartphones Generations

In this research, it is important to mark the history of mobile technology. This started at the beginning of the Second World War. Where there was need to communicate from one place to another. The first mobile phone system started developing at the end of the 1940s in the United States. These new devices were enormous and heavy; moreover, they were used to be carried in vehicles. They also consumed lots of energy. The mobile phone became portable when Motorola completed the project DynaTAC 8000X, which was officially presented in 1984.

The first smartphone in history was the IBM Simon. It was made in 1992 and It was distributed in EE. UU. From August 1994 to February 1995. It had a user interface without physical buttons and was based entirely on a monochrome LCD-

type touch screen. It showed an on-screen QWERTY keyboard from which you could enter standard or predictive text, calendar, messaging functions, e-mail, fax, and a modem for internet connection. (Adapted from Cerdan K. 2014-2015)

In order to improve this technology, there has been a development during the years. And the generations of the devices are the following: First generation (1G), second Generation (2G), Third Generation (3G), however the most important one in this research is the fourth generation (4G). Cerdan K. (2014-2015)

Fourth generation (4G)

It is the technological evolution that offers mobile users an increased bandwidth that allows the reception of television in high definition. In other words, 4G generation is optimized for a world where communications are almost all over IP. They allow to download much faster and also, they take advantage of the electromagnetic spectrum. (Taken from Cerdan K. 2014-2015)

Fifth-generation (5G) Next step

5G is the successor of 4G technology. It is currently not standardized and telecommunication companies are developing their prototypes. It is planned that its common use will be in 2020. (Taken from Cerdan K. 2014-2015).

In mobile technology, we can find the latest advancement that is the smartphone. It can be said that a smartphone is a mobile phone that allows people to carry out their actions in a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). They go beyond voice calls and messages. The computing power of a smartphone is comparable to that of a desktop or laptop computer. The first smartphones combined PDA functions with a camera and GPS navigator; however, now they include internet connection via

WIFI or mobile network to navigate the web, video calls, e-mails, multimedia player, and so on.

A Brief Description About the Use of Smartphones for English Learning

Mobile Technologies in Teaching and Learning

What is Mobile Learning? It is defined as an advantage of using handheld technologies, together with wireless to facilitate the learning and teaching process. (According to Molenet 2009)

Mobile technologies are nowadays widespread even among children. The learning process can take place in any location, at any time, including traditional learning environments such as classrooms as well as in workplaces, at home, in community locations. Mobile technologies include mobile phones, smartphones, MP3/ MP4 players, notebooks, etc. Mobile learning involves connectivity for downloading, uploading, and/or online working via wireless networks (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2009).

That is why Sharples (2003) encourages people to change the bad perspective they have about these devices and start seeing them as useful tools that can improve the learning process. So that, they can take advantage of all of the positive aspects that these resources bring (as cited in Naismith, et al., 2006).

Thus, Klopfer. Et. al (2002) argue that mobile devices have 5 potential properties that can produce certain types of learning (as cited in Naismith et al., 2006).

The first property is portability which is defined by Klopfer et al (2002) as "the small size and weight of mobile devices"

The second property is social interactivity that focuses more on the data exchange and collaboration with other learners that can happen face-to-face.

The third property is context-sensitivity, Naismith et al (2002) describe this property as the capacity to "both gather and respond to real or simulated data unique to the current location, environment and time".

The fourth property is connectivity, it is a network that can connect mobile devices to data collection devices, other devices, or a common network (as cited in Naismith, et al., 2006).

The fifth property is individuality, in this case, difficult activities can be personalized for each learner (as cited in Naismith, et al., 2006)

On the other hand, Lan and Sie (2010) described mobile learning (m-learning) as a kind of learning model allowing learners to obtain learning materials anywhere and anytime using mobile technologies and the Internet, carry mobile phones to all the places is very practical. Also, the salient features of mobile phones help the learners throughout the day.

Larry Irving (2013) co-founder of The Mobile Alliance for Global Good, wrote, "There is almost no area in which digital technology has not impacted me and my

family's life. "Mobile learning essentially influences the learning effectiveness and allows more flexibility in time and physical location for learning actively and collaboratively because the more the students use a mobile device for training and practice purposes the more, they take advantage to improve their pronunciation. There are different ways to have an improvement such as record themselves and test how they have pronounced the exercises, drills, and dialogues.

Mobiles emerged in the late '80s and '90s, they became an essential part of people's lives. And with the advent of new technology, smartphones have become to catch teenagers´ lives. Since then, students have increased the use of portable and wireless devices. It has been observed that the growing population of students now has a potential need to learn a new language and with mobile technology. Now it has become achievable because smartphones are easy for mobility and portability, and they make learning on the move anytime, anyplace. According to Kukulska-Holme (2009), there is a description that mobile devices are more spontaneous, portable. When talking about it is understood that these devices can be used anyplace with or without an Internet connection to practice pronunciation. This means that there is no excuse for students and teachers to have extracurricular assignments for oral practice. The use of mobile phones and other portable devices is the beginning to have an impact on how learning takes place in many disciplines and contexts, including language learning.

According to Cheung (2012) "mobile learning essentially enhances the learning effectiveness, allows more flexibility in time and physical location for

learning actively and collaboratively because the more the students use a mobile device for training and practice purposes the more, they take advantage to improve their pronunciation. Mobile learning can be more useful outside the classroom with activities such as pronunciation practice. It will enable learning to be more significant because the students will have a chance to practice pronunciation not only inside the classroom but also at home in their free time.

A survey carried out by steel (2012) showed that in the classroom what students are learning is not enough and as it turns out they compensate for that by using English mobile apps for their second language. The advantages that these apps bring are diverse and therefore students get interested in using them. The survey demonstrated that English apps have benefits for learning vocabulary, reading, writing, grammar, and so on; apart from that, the apps students used the most were dictionaries, translators, flashcards, and vocabulary games. Mindog E. (2016)

According to the evidence, the work carried out by steel is considered highly essential since the information received by the students inside the classroom is not enough and most of the time, they have questions about the topic being studied and they cannot be answered. Therefore, these apps serve as a complement for the students, and it is necessary to understand all the relevant topics they put on the table for the improvement of English. The areas mentioned above are important in the development of the English language since not having enough vocabulary or not understanding what structures represent, students might struggle a lot. Hence, apps, in general, can be used by the students anytime and anywhere and whenever they

need it without any problem since these apps are the most convenient apps for improving a second language. Kukulska-Hulme, 2012; Steel, 2012.

Purposes of using mobile phones

Nowadays, mobile phones are widely used for several purposes in the field of education. They are used by many educationalists, teachers, researchers, and learners depending on their purpose. Different educationalists and researchers use them to retrieve information about the ongoing trends in education and they even provide some valuable suggestions to the whole educational field. Teachers use mobile phones to get the needed information instantly in the classroom and also, they can get the opportunity to visualize videos related to the topic being taught to the students. Therefore, mobile devices can be considered a highly vital tool in education. However, learners, most of the time use mobile phones for browsing the net, sending emails, and chat on social networks and they do not use them to learn a language. So, the responsibility is on the shoulders of teachers to educate their pupils to use mobile phones for educational purposes such as learning new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and language skills.

THE ROLE OF MOBILE PHONES AS EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

The advancement that mobile technology is having today has become an indispensable tool for our lives. At present, we cannot imagine a younger person's

life without the use of mobile technologies because they use them on a daily basis. The use of mobile phones creates more opportunities to learn a new language as these have mobile educational apps that make the learning process easier than the traditional way of learning from classrooms. Many studies have been done about how the use of mobile phones influences positively in the way of improving English language skills.

We have witnessed the boom these have had in the last decade and according to our own experience, they have become a vital part of the educational context since it is normal that every EFL/ESL learner can have a mobile phone and it is common to see now that more learners prefer a mobile phone instead of another portable device and this is because of the advantages they convey such as being autonomous and independent of their learning since all their need is to have a cell phone where they can download the Educational English App they want for the specific needs they could have. For instance, if they want to practice more listening, they can have related apps where they can improve that concrete skill or they just need to have an app where the grammar or reading skill can be improved. Besides, our own experience tells us that EFL/ESL learners do everything from their mobile phones more and more frequently since the portability is easier than having a laptop or another similar device.

There are many advantages about using mobiles. For example, portability, the facility to use, the content interactions someone can possess by only having a phone. Also, the cost of some mobiles are barely low since the boom of smartphones. And if we talk about foreign languages their role has increased more

in the last decade and using a smartphone increases the possibilities to increase and improve different skills such as vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation. For instance, in our experience as educationalists, we have noticed how EFL learners practice every day all these skills just by having a smartphone in their hands and most of the time they do not even have a laptop and the results are positive at the end. Now we have a vast collection of Educational English Apps where EFL learners can take advantage of all of them. Those apps help a person to learn easier a foreign language just by downloading an app to improve pronunciation or listening skills.

A study by Thornton's and Houser's (2005) revealed that 71% of Japanese learners prefer having English lessons on their mobile phones to having an English lesson on their computers and it is normal to see this nowadays. EFL/ESL learners prefer having a smartphone where it can be more flexible and where they can have a bunch of English Apps or Educational English Apps to use to improve every skill. For instance, it is more convenient to carry a smartphone now than carrying a laptop where the size is bigger and the cost also increases compared to a mobile phone.

Another research was done by Chen, Hsieh, and Kinshuk (2008) where they found that mobile phones have a great influence on learning a new language and it was demonstrated when a group of Taiwanese learners liked more the easy access they had when they wanted to search for different resources for their learning and it was better because the time was not a problem since they could search for information anytime.

It is remarkable what this study mentions because now EFL/ESL learners have the opportunity or the access to search for whatever they want whenever they

want and in other words what we are trying to say is that just by tapping in their online dictionaries they can know the meaning, the pronunciation of a specific word, synonyms, idiomatic expressions and so on. And, it gets better because as we mentioned before there exists a vast collection of apps created for the purpose to improve every English skill.

RESEARCH STUDY: MOBILE PHONES AS EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

In this research, the author wanted to know how the use of mobile phones can become essential or applied to the learning process. A total of 151 Libyan EFL learners (138 females and 13 males aged between 18 to 27) studying at the College of Arts in Sebha, Libya were part of the sample for the study. The students were selected from different semesters and courses. They had been studying the language a long time ago for about 5 or 10 years. The researcher wanted to explore the efficiency of mobile phones in learning English.

For this study, the researcher used of some questionnaires and focus groups. The questionnaire was applied to examine the Libyan EFL learner's perceptions about the effectiveness of mobile phones to learn English. Moreover, which can be the purposes or benefits of using them in the educational field as a learning tool.

The questionnaire used in the study consisted of 17 items with four sections. The first section contained the participants' demographic information. The second one was about the types of mobile phones the participants use. While the third section focused on the effectiveness of the use of mobile phones for learning

English. And the last but not the least section, it was about the purposes of using mobile phones by Libyan students in learning English. The focus group discussions were done to gather the participants´ perceptions about the effectiveness of using mobile phones in the learning process. Having collected the data about the questionnaire, the researcher selected randomly 18 students out of the total participants for the group discussions. There were three focus groups with six students in each group making a total of 18 students.

Furthermore, for this study, the researcher used a mixed-method such as qualitative and quantitative approach. We can evidence in this study that students feel comfortable and think that the use of this device can be helpful for them to improve their English skills. Taking into account the results about what the participants expressed about the use of mobiles, the study shows that most of the students (96%) say that mobile phones are effective tools in learning English. The students´ answers revealed that they agreed that phone increases the quality of English education. They also consider that the use of smartphones allows them to have more chances to practice the language outside the classrooms. They can be everywhere with their mobile devices and through different apps, they can learn more and improve their skills.

The researcher noticed that the participants make use of their devices to check educational apps to practice their English skills. The most relevant purposes that we can evidence when students use the device are for instance when they check the meaning of English words that are considered difficult to pronounce, and they do this via online dictionaries or English apps. Also, 96% of the participants, use the

smartphone to develop reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Moreover, they listen to English songs and visit websites that are designed for teaching English. The majority of the Libyan EFL learners consider that the use of mobile phones can be an integral part of language learning as they can be applied to achieve several learning purposes and activities.

Through the focus group discussions, the researcher could identify which perceptions of the participants were about the use of mobile phones in English language learning. For example, when they were interviewed if mobile phones should be integrated into the educational contexts, all of them strongly agreed that these devices must be incorporated into the educational context since they consider that it can make both the learning and teaching process easy, fast, and effective. Likewise, students use mobile phones to translate new words, to download different educational materials, to gain new information, and also to take photos of some important points from the board. In our experience, we can also assure that we have made use of smartphones to do educational tasks or activities related to the English context. Having said this, it also considers that mobile devices can be important if they are correctly implemented in the educational field.

Another question presented in the focus group was if they believe that mobile phones can be used as a tool to learn English effectively and if they can facilitate the learning process. All of the participants from the three focus groups expressed that the mobile phone is a highly useful and helpful tool to learn English effectively because they think it offers a wide variety of applications that make their study easier. Also, students argue that with the use of mobile phones they can do different

academic activities such as downloading PDF books, taking English tests online, and doing research. We can say that mobile phones can enhance and improve learners´ speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. And, according to this research, all the focus groups students reported that the use of mobile phones can develop and improve the four skills of the English language. For example, if students would like to practice their listening skills, they easily can go to the web and listen to an audio of a lecture or listen to English songs. Regarding speaking skills, learners can watch English movies with or without subtitles or they can watch some educational videos like native speakers teaching English grammar. Besides, students can also download English apps to chat with English native speakers.

Through mobile phones, we know that students can get easy access to numerous learning resources, check the meaning of new words via an electronic dictionary, record a lecture and search for any topic. We can realize that a smartphone is a valuable tool when used for educational purposes. Many students rate the use of technology in the classroom as something important as they believe that the learning can be easier to learn compared to the traditional way of teaching and learning where they only use a book and repeat what the teacher says and they do not have a new way to learn or a new method of teaching that can make them feel excited and motivated to learn.

The participants of the focus group discussions emphasized that the use of smartphones motivates students during the learning. They express that technology plays a huge role because through it, students can have fun and more interactive classes. Thus, using mobile phone technology increases students' attention and

helps them comprehend their lessons so easily because they can use any educational app or go to the web and search for any answer they want to clarify about the class.

Another question was presented by the researcher asking if they agree with the following statement: ¨There is a group of students that claim that the use of mobile phones is not a helpful tool to enhance the English learning process¨.regarding that question students answered that they are no in agreement with that opinion because they are extremely sure that the use of mobile phones is hugely important and make students feel motivated in their study. Likewise, they say that mobile phones have many programs and applications which can improve learners' four language skills and provide them with different beneficial materials. Thus, it is also considered that mobile phones can offer better opportunities for EFL learners, and they can make the learning, interesting, and fast.

Based on these results, we can evidence that the Libyan students consider the use of mobile devices essential in language learning. Furthermore, they expressed the purposes they achieved when using the mobiles like checking the meaning of words through the web or any educational app, listening to English songs, and also developing writing, reading, and speaking skills.

We can say that the use of mobile phones can have a great impact on English learners. In this study, we could notice that the participants from Libya experienced a new way of learning the language. All of them agree that the use of these devices has a positive and effective influence and they are indispensable tools that should

be integrated into educational settings to make the learning process easy, funny, and interesting for those students who want to learn.

Findings in the study: Even when there are some benefits that the use of mobile phones can provide to the learners, there are some negative aspects as well. researchers state that the constant use of these devices in the classrooms cannot be good because some students get distracted and do not pay attention to what the teacher is doing or saying. Sometimes, most of them use the smartphone to cheat on exams or they use them to find inappropriate websites. Also, they get distracted with social media and in the end, they are just wasting their time instead of investing it in educational purposes. Therefore, they consider that teachers must be aware of the correct use of these devices if they are implemented in the educational field.

Studies Based on The Use of Mobiles.

The usage of mobile phones to learn a language has increased and got several benefits for the learners. According to one study conducted by Chen, Chung & Yen (2012), "Cell phones are flexible tools which have the potential to be exploited to cater to the needs of language learning students". Learners with this device can develop their skills like building up new vocabulary items, enhance their knowledge of grammar, improve communication, and develop other language skills. The learners can watch videos related to the lessons taught in the classrooms, and they also can record the teachers' classes and repeat them during their day at home. The learners also go through some online sources to understand some relevant topics.

Based on one report made by a market company, Newzoo (2018), the total number of smartphone users in 2016 was 2,491 million. In 2017 it was 2,741 million, and in 2018 it has reached the mark of almost 3 billion (2,995 million). The report also says that the number of users that own a smartphone is 3,513 million by 2020, and it will pass 3.8 billion by 2021. The statistics show how people's dependency on smartphones increases year by year.

There is no doubt that these smartphones help learners, at any level, in their learning process. Learners can have more interactive learning by using apps related to education and also by videos with easy access to helpful content and information.

Moreover, another report conducted in America by the Pew Internet, and American Life Project claims in its report, "89% of American adults currently have a cell phone, and 47% of American adults own a smartphone. In addition, more than half of all cell owners use their phones to surf the internet, and three-quarters of users use maps to find their way around.

Millennial-aged between 18 and 24 years is the 86% and they say that smartphones are valuable for them whereas 93% of them even said that smartphones are more significant than toothbrushes and deodorant. According to a survey conducted by the Bank of America (2016), claims that individual American checks his/her smartphone every 6.5 minutes.

Last but not least, study was carried out across two schools in 2012 in England on how students from each school use their mobile devices during their class time. The study claims that most of the students rely on their mobile phones to keep them organized. Frequently, students use features such as cameras, alarms, and calendars on their mobile phones. Generally, they use the camera to take pictures

or to save notes given by the teachers. Concerning this, the study recommends that phones are a helpful learning tool for the classroom.

There is clear evidence that many pupils feel that they are taking advantage of the educational benefits of using these devices. Also, they are using many of the features of their devices and often finding creative ways to use these features in their homework assignments, not only at home but also at school. From primary level to graduation level, smartphones are used in the classrooms of the American education experience as teaching tools.

Another survey conducted by Pew Research Center found that 58% of American teachers have smartphones, whereas the national adults have an average of 48% of smartphones. It shows that most American teachers have smartphones to encourage BYOD (bring-your-own-device) policies. The report also says that nearly 25% of US schools had BYOD policies in place, and it is sound to accept that these numbers have increased in the last two years. Walker, R. (2013)

This report further says that 73% of the teachers use mobile technology either for teaching lessons or for letting students finish their assignments. The report also says that English teachers use these mobile devices more than mathematics teachers.

One more survey conducted by PBS Kids in partnership with the US Department of Education found kids between three and seven years old improved their vocabulary up to 31% when they play the mobile app called *Martha Speaks*. Moreover, it found that the kids were highly motivated to complete their lessons on

mobile devices than the learning they have done through traditional textbooks and workbooks. Leslie Young (2014)

In another two entirely different studies conducted by Project, Tomorrow and Kajeet in 2013, students from fifth and eighth grade used tablets for learning both in class and at home. They found that the students' learning experiences improved a lot. The report shows that 35% of students of the 8th grade express that their teachers' activities or lessons seem to be more engaging when they are allowed to use their phones in the classroom. Based on the researchers, having access to a phone or computer changed the learning environment for the 5th-grade students, both in school and at home.

This report mentions that there are positive characteristics in the learners as they have greater access to learning resources outside of school, and they also exceeded the expectations of their teachers in using these devices. Likewise, the communication between students and teachers has increased, and the teachers creatively use the tablets to engage their students in the learning process. Also, there is a change in the students´ behavior as for having the devices with them. The study also reveals that the students have never engaged the devices for any bad behavior even though they are using them at home. Evans; Comparan; Kreditor (2013).

The previous reports show that technology in the classroom is helpful to the improvement of the learners' learning skills, and the teachers have to play a vital role in the implementation of these technological devices.

According to a case study on the use of smartphone apps to learn English by four Japanese university students, a case method was allowed. Here, the author

wanted to have a better understanding, a deep comprehension, and a reasonable result of these four students using apps for English learning; Knowing that they belonged to a Japanese university and having a case study would allow in a detailed manner to answered How and Why these four students used a bunch of apps and what their reasons were for choosing certain apps.

This study presents some cases about the experiences of four Japanese university students using different apps to learn and improve the English language. In the first case, we have Akira, a third-year English-major student who scored 560 on his TOEIC examination. He wanted to be able to improve the language and communicate better with foreign people. That is why he majored in English and learned the language in his free time. He stayed for three months in San Francisco and six months in Toronto to study English in 2013. Akira used his smartphone to access social networks, but he used his smartphone most of the time for educational purposes. He used some apps to learn English such as the following: TED, Metro, WhatsApp, and Facebook.

This student found a different way to improve and continue learning the language. His English teacher did recommend using that app to learn more about English. He used TED to watch videos about interesting topics. He found this very helpful because he could learn more vocabulary and also learn different English accents from people that are giving the conferences in the video. He usually watches each video about three times. He never used subtitles in the first viewing and only turned them on for the second viewing if he had difficulty understanding the content. This student found that using Ted improved his listening comprehension. This way of learning English is also helpful because they can check or listen to native English

speakers through videos like this student used to do with TED. Likewise, there are videos on the internet; for instance, sitcoms that you can use subtitles to learn more vocabulary or listen to the way different actors or actresses pronounce some words. Some students like watching videos on the internet to clarify some vocabulary pronunciation or learn more about some grammar structures. It can be noticed that the use of educational videos in the English learning process can help to improve different skills like the way it did to the student mentioned above.

Another app that Akira used was the Metro app to read news in English. When he was in Toronto, he heard about Metro from advertisements in the *Metro* newspaper. Then, he decided to download the app because it allowed him to read news from Canadian cities, to keep up with events in Toronto. He usually read news with that app when he was at a cafe, or whenever he had the chance to. He liked the app. After all, he did not need to consult a dictionary because he found the news easy to read. He was asked if using this app did help him as a language learner, he said "it helped me with my reading ability and improved my vocabulary and grammar".

Other apps that this student used to keep learning English were two social networking apps that nowadays are very popular in society like Facebook and WhatsApp. He used to use the apps every day whenever he had free time. He had those apps to keep in touch with his English-speaking friends. He mainly used Facebook to send and receive messages from his friends. The last app was WhatsApp, he used to chat or send audio messages.

In the second case, we have another student named Aiko living in the U.S for four years. She was in her third year majoring in Nutrition. She wanted to improve

her English fluency because she found it frustrating that she could not express herself clearly to her English-speaking friends. She stayed in New Zealand for six months as part of the school's special English program but for her, it was difficult to make friends because she had problems to express well. Aiko found a way to improve her English through the use of different smartphone apps. She realized that the apps were convenient for her since it was easy for her the way to learn English through mobile apps. Some of the apps she used for her learning were TED, Zite, Instagram, and Bible. This student also liked to use TED because she could have the opportunity to watch videos about different topics, and she used to watch them without subtitles to practice her listening comprehension. She used Ted about 2 or 3 days a week. Aiko liked to read, and she found an app called Zite in which she could read interesting English articles. She used to use it about 10 to 15 minutes and once or twice a day. Aiko said that it helped her with reading comprehension, grammar, and spelling.

Another app she used for her learning was the Umano app. This app did use to listen to different audio content, and aside from that this app helped her to improve her listening comprehension. It helped her to learn about things she found interesting. Instagram was another app she used the most to communicate with her friends in English. The student said that using social networking apps helped her to learn more about new vocabulary, especially slang words. When she encountered new words, she used to find their definitions using the Internet. Also, the bible app was another interesting app for her as she could read the bible in English and increase the vocabulary.

In the third case, we have another Japanese student named Jun. He was an English major student. He decided to major in English as he considered it was his best subject in high school as he wanted to get a job that required English ability. He used to study a lot to get better prepared for the TOIEC test. He scored a total of 730 points allowing him to receive many job´s offers. To improve his speaking ability, he used some apps such as HelloTalk, Line, and YouTube. HelloTalk is a brilliant app where the users can interact with many people literally around the world depending on the language they choose to learn in the app. Jun used the app to find people who spoke English and wanted to learn Japanese. This app helped him to improve his reading and writing skills. The line was an app similar to HelloTalk, he used it to communicate with his friend. He also considered the app helps to better his writing ability. In the YouTube app, he watched videos about American TV shows for example Glee and Icarly. He expresses that by watching American TV shows he could learn natural expressions, not like the ones that we study from textbooks.

Last but not least important is Kenji, a fourth-year university student who was majoring in social studies. This student got a score of 830 out of 990 points on the TOEIC test, a surprising and high score. This was an advantage for him because most Japanese companies required people who could speak English, and thanks to his score, he could apply for the job. He used different apps to communicate and learn more about the English language. Kenji used the Facebook app almost every day to get in touch with his English-speaking friends. This app helped him to improve his writing skills. To improve his vocabulary and listening skills, he used an app called NHK World in which he could read, listen and watch the news in English. He also used the YouTube app to watch English videos because he considered it helped him

to improve his listening skill. At the same time, it was gratifying for him to learn more vocabulary because he used to watch videos of songs with their lyrics, and when he did not know the meaning of any word, he used to look it up.

In these four cases of university students, it can be noticed how valuable are the English mobile apps when learning a language, in this case, the English language. The experiences of these students say that mobile apps can have a considerable impact on those who want to improve their English skills. By using any app, EFL/ ESL learners can interact with many people around the world and exchange language meanings. They can improve their writing skills or learn more vocabulary from those people they are communicating with. When the YouTube app is used by learners, they can practice their listening comprehension by watching TV shows with or without subtitles or watch TED videos about different topics from American people. In this way, they can listen to different American accents. Also, they can search for educational videos that can help them to clarify any doubts about the English language. Learners can find teachers that explain grammar, spelling, and writing skills. Apps like HelloTalk, Facebook, Line, Skype, and others can help students to improve their writing, listening, or vocabulary. In those apps, they can meet many people and practice their English. The idea of these apps is to use them for a good purpose when they are learning and practicing the English language to continue gaining more confidence at the moment of speaking.

Based on the previous English mobile apps mentioned, it emerged a question; for instance, what mobile markets are more visited for Japanese university students to download apps that can help them to improve their English skills? There is plenty of apps available on the market, and it also depends on the specific English skill that

the learner wishes to improve. Google store and iTunes are the most known. Both App Stores provide categories, which sections are done to enable comparisons between the types of apps that are in the market and the types of apps that learners want to use. This can be of great use because provides insights to developers who want to create language-learning apps. Likewise, for educators who wish to incorporate them into their lessons. It could also provide more information for future research on why language learners tend to use apps from some categories. Akira, Aiko, and Jun use the iTunes App Store to download their apps, while Kenji downloads from the Google Play store. In the application from Google Play, Kenji can identify categories like education, games, news, photos, videos, social networking, and reference categories. Since iTunes categories do not give information on the purpose of language learners for downloading apps. It was generated a new grouping based on their function, containing three classes emerged:

1. Content apps: give access to various content such as lectures, talks, news, etc. to the user.

2. Game apps: used for learning English through gameplay.

3. Social networking apps: connect users to people within the network via personal relationships or common interests that usually include photo sharing, messaging, etc. The most common types of apps among the participants in this study are content applications.

Also, participants had to give the reasons why they use smartphone apps to learn English. The first one is to get information. Second for entertainment, the third one; for communication purposes, and the last one for language learning. Thus,

participants were asked to express what aspects of English they improved by using these apps. They mentioned the four principal language skills, listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Moreover, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling.

This section will describe some examples of apps used: for Aiko, for Akira, for Jun, and for Kenji. The first point is where they use the apps, at home, in commuting locations, and anywhere. At home, mostly in students' rooms, commuting-related on trains, buses or while walking, anywhere pubs, school field, inside of a store, etc. When students need silence, and or privacy they generally use these apps for commuting social networking apps. The participants in this study have different ways of using apps when it comes to location. Akira uses Ted when he is in a crowd or public places, Charades when he is at home, and Metro plus two SMS apps in various places. Aiko uses content apps on buses, trains, and when he walks. She uses Ted and Bible apps at home and social network apps in various locations. Jun watches YouTube videos on the train, HelloTalk both on the train and at home, talks with a language-exchange partner only at home, and uses Line in various locations. Kenji watches NHK World news and YouTube videos at home and uses Facebook in different places. In this study, the majority of the apps are used daily, weekly.

On the other hand, this research based on these four Japanese students shows a relevant characteristic. All the participants were self-motivated learners. They had a similar English-learning background and had limited authentic l2 opportunities in Japan. Nevertheless, they were motivated to learn English because they wanted to be able to express themselves as well as they could be. So, they could make friends, read information, or share ideas. They keep in mind that English will be helpful in their future job, education, or travel. According to the study, all of

them have taken the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). But Jun does not have experience living in or traveling to an English-speaking country. Since students have 5different goals, the Apps have been chosen based on students' interests.

The interviews show a limited variety of apps based on iTunes App Store classification. The participants downloaded six out of 23 categories, with social networking apps being the most popular. There is a lack of language dictionaries, language program apps, test/quiz apps, and apps for vocabulary acquisition, which have been reported as popular among l2 learners. One explanation for this absence is the difference in language proficiency among study participants; previous studies mostly had beginner to lower intermediate learners. While this study had intermediate learners with TOEIC scores ranging from 560 to 830 points. It is astonishing that out of 15 mobile apps, only one, Hello Talk, was specifically designed for language. It seems that current language-learning apps do not address the needs of intermediate language learners. The six categories can be narrowed down to three when apps are grouped according to function (Content, social networking, and Games). All participants have at least one content app that provides access to interesting materials for them. It would seem that participants' intermediate language proficiency allows them to focus on understanding the content without worrying about individual words or grammar. The popularity of social apps among the participants could be attributed to two factors; desire to improve communicative ability and the experience of living in an English-speaking country. Akira, Aiko, and Kenji, who have used these apps because they enjoy keeping in touch with their friends. However, Jun, who has never been to an English-speaking country, uses

these apps the most because this is the only way for him to interact with English speakers. Social network apps enable these students to have authentic communication in English. Also, Jun uses the YouTube app because it allows him to watch a show that is both entertaining and helpful for getting out of "textbook English." Otherwise, Kenji uses YouTube to be exposed to English but mainly for entertainment. The reasons given by the participants on why they deleted apps is because they did not find them interesting, and not convenient anymore, no longer relevant. Another common characteristic among apps used is the "fun factor." These apps help learners get what they want in a fun way. Enjoyment seems to be crucial in the continued use of an app for language learning. The students continue using apps because these tools, allow them to engage in activities that are relevant to them. The participants cited listening, reading, speaking, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling as areas that are helped by using apps. This is similar to previous studies that reported improving language skills and knowledge of language components as the main reasons for using mobile devices for language learning. It is interesting to note that when asked why they use apps, most of the reasons given by the participants had more to do with getting information, communicating and entertainment rather than language-learning benefits. Some apps are used even though the participants do not perceive language-learning benefits from them, for example, Kenji: YouTube, and Akira: Facebook and WhatsApp. It would seem that language learning comes secondary to other purposes.

We as researchers know most of these apps because we have used them to learn English during our stage of learning. Also, we consider that using smartphone apps can facilitate the English learning process as this is a different way to learn and

practice the language. For teachers, it is even better because they can use any app in their classroom to make the teaching process funnier and more interesting for their students. Sometimes, students feel bored when there is no use of media in their classes. Moreover, they express that some teachers do not find a different way to catch their attention to practice the English language in a different way. We must be aware that there is a modernized world where technology has had more attention, and everyone is immersing in the technological world. That is why using any educational app can make learning easier and funnier to learn but if it is well used for educational purposes.

Applications for smartphones to practice Pronunciation

Many students now own at least a smartphone and have the slightest idea of what exactly an application is. And also, almost every business on the market offers an application to be downloaded to call people attention in the media. This research details some apps that can help students to reach a better level of pronunciation. Some of the applications are the following:

The Pronunciation APP Sounds: This app features both American and British English pronunciation with over 650 words in the wordlist. It has an interactive phonemic chart that shows all the sounds of English, divided into three sections: vowels, diphthongs, and consonants. The students can tap on a symbol to hear the sound, or tap and hold to hear the sound plus an example word. This is brilliant and

is available for iPod, iPad touch, iPhone, and Android devices and it provides free download as well.

English File Pronunciation: This one has been developed by Oxford University Press. This app lets students practice their pronunciation either in American or British English. It gives the students the option to record and playback their voices. It is available for Android, iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad.

Duolingo: This worldwide application is free for everyone who wants to learn a new language, for example, Spanish, German, Italian, French, Portuguese, and even English. The students not only learn but also have fun because it has levels to earn points to reach more advanced lessons. It also has a wealth of pronunciation practice.

Factors that affect pronunciation

This research paper listed some factors that probably can stop learners to get a great pronunciation. It is remarkable that to download an app and practice it even now and then is not enough. H. Douglas Brown (2001). These main factors are a challenge to those students who practice pronunciation. And these are the following:

Native Language

As human beings' students have a native language, and in our case, it is Spanish. Therefore, it affects and influences the students' pronunciation. One of the

most noticeable challenges is the articulation and production of sound in English. The positions of the lips, tongue, mouth and vocal cords movement need to be adapted for English pronunciation. Otherwise, the mother tongue can influence the pronunciation (Brown) 2001.

Age

It is said that a child who practice pronunciation has more advantages to reach a better level of pronunciation skill like a native speaker because the child has not developed the physical parts of the mouth. And, an adult has more difficulties improving his pronunciation. However, if daily an adult has contact with the language, and shows an effort to overcome that barrier, he or she will gain improvement in that skill. Also, age should not be an obstacle for using a gadget or device such as a smartphone to practice pronunciation to overcome this general belief. The younger, the better when acquiring a new language, and the more accurate the students' pronunciation will be in the target language. (Brown) 2001.

Exposure

Another factor that may affect pronunciation is the lack of exposure to the language. In a certain way, it is being said that the more students' exposure to the real world of speaking and pronunciation, the better pronunciation they have. Nowadays, it is not necessary to go abroad to practice pronunciation. Students can access anytime and everywhere a mobile device to have plenty of practice, and it will be a matter of dedication and desire. Because the more they spend their time listening and speaking English, the better their pronunciation will be. According to

Krashen (1988), learners of a new language acquire it primarily from the input. The student receives a large amount of comprehensive input before speaking and pronouncing accurately. H. Douglas Brown (2001).

Motivation and concern for good pronunciation

Motivation is another factor that may also affect language learning. It can happen when someone needs to practice any skill, and some learners are not entirely motivated about their pronunciation because only a few students feel motivated. Motivation is a key point and should be encouraged in the classroom so that pronunciation practice outside the class will be enjoyable. The accuracy of speech has to be a meaningful goal for all the students, as a daily motivation like practicing a sport to become a winner in the Olympic Games. (Brown) 2001.

STUDY ABOUT THE USE OF SMARTPHONES AS A TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCE TO IMPROVE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

There is a study about how smartphones applications can influence students' pronunciation. The research paper took place in a public University in El Salvador in 2017 and took into account three ranges of ages 16-20, 21-25, and 26 or more. The information was divided into three stages: General information about smartphones, types of smartphones and specifications, and educational purposes.

The main reason for this study was the lack of this specific skill. Sometimes, students do not have the opportunity to be involved in class participation due to

the limited time teacher has to teach. So, having good pronunciation is highly important because it is a part of successful communication. **Rodney H. Jones** (2002). As we know, English is not their native language and, it is complicated for them to understand what is being said and how to imitate that sound. According to the study and researchers, practice is the only way to improve. Therefore, to listen and repeat technique is one of the best options.

Most of the time, activities outside the class can be more meaningful than being inside the classroom. Mobile learning offers an incredible way to study because the students will have a chance to practice pronunciation at home in their free time. Based on the researchers, it is expected that students have more access to their smartphones in their free time to practice pronunciation as much time as possible outside the classroom in the green areas of the University. Of course, this can be possible because most of them have plenty of time to practice pronunciation when they wait for the next class or at the moment they get early at home.

Most of the applications now are very creative with their design as students can drill ready-made lists of a word, engage in activities such as dictation, games, and quizzes. Students can also record their pronunciation until they get a reasonable high accuracy. It is just like having fun; therefore, those applications are an excellent way to practice pronunciation inside and outside the classroom. Shelley Ann Vernon (2012)

Likewise, listening exercises that include reading can be worthy of productive skills and can be taken as an advantage to improve pronunciation. While working on

listening, teachers can work on individual sounds and make students aware of speech properties such as rhythm, stress, and intonation (Liangguang, 2010).

In this investigation, the approach carried out was a quantitative study that aimed to collect information about concepts descriptively to find out through a non-experimental transactional design if students used smartphones to improve pronunciation. The data was gathered just once using a survey as a technique for this methodology. Questionnaires were used as instruments to obtain the required information to fulfill the objectives. To carry out the research, participants, strategies, and processes were taken into account.

The target population taken for this research was the sophomore students from the English teaching major at the University of El Salvador. From a population of 500 students, 169 students were selected in a simple random sample method to respond to a survey.

In this descriptive research, the instrument that fits the expectations was a survey. This survey included a certain number of questions about the use of smartphones, devoted time spent, specifications, and their experience with it. The survey consisted of four parts with a total of 36 items.

The purpose of this instrument was to demonstrate that a smartphone can be used not only to communicate but also to practice pronunciation. Also, another fact was to bring evidence that all the students can run an application for practicing pronunciation.

The only limitation encountered during the study was collecting the sample students who would answer the survey. There was no access to gather names because it was also too risky to have personal information such as cell phone

numbers, Facebook, or e-mail addresses. As we know, nowadays, we cannot share personal information easily. So, researchers decided to contact students in classes while having the instrument at hand to collect only the data needed for the analysis. Luckily, there were no more limitations. Everything turned out pretty well.

The results demonstrated that using smartphones in an academic context is not good enough to exploit this tool as a technological resource in the preliminary results. Researchers analyzed the questions of the survey to describe whether or not the students can download applications. Also, what applications are tendency for them and which they can use for mobile learning purposes. There are plenty of educational applications that can help to practice English pronunciation on the Internet from the Google Store and Apple Store. Most of them are at no cost whatsoever.

This study described how much time the students spend on their mobile devices, the brands of the phones they use, how much time they are on the Internet, and the capacity of the random-access memory to run those applications. The results confirmed that many students own this technological resource; moreover, it is remarkable the time students spend on their smartphones; hence, teachers can realize that the applications in which they spend the most time are not related to educational purposes. A total of 114 students of this research stated that they have downloaded applications to enhance pronunciation and that it is valuable for them to practice pronunciation on their smartphones. But there is a small number of older students who are not interested in practicing that skill. Therefore, extracurricular activities should be given to those students.

As it could be noticed the role of pronunciation is essential when learning a second language and it was demonstrated in the study discussed above. But despite improving pronunciation, other English skills can be developed through the use of other mobile apps among them:

British Council's English Club acts as an expert tutor and it is a useful app for the learners to read and write English and it has 50 levels and each level is designed with stories, flashcards, games, and animations. With this app, the learners develop their English comprehension, writing, and reading skills enormously. There are many apps designed by the British Council that help learners' English language skills.

These apps are user-friendly, and learners can use them at home or even on their move.

- Learn English Grammar (UK ed.)
- My Word Book 2
- Learn English Audio and Video
- Learn English GREAT Videos
- Johnny Grammar's Word Challenge
- Learning Time with Timmy
- Learn English Kids: Phonics Stories
- Learn English Kids: Playtime
- Learn English Elementary Podcasts
- Premier Skills

Some other apps develop the learners' learning skills.

- **Grammar Up:** is another app that the learners can improve their grammar skills from different sections of this app.
- **English Listening and Speaking:** is an app that develops learners' vocabulary by *playing word chain games.*
- *Busuu:* is another interactive app that helps learners spoken English.
- *Lingual.ly:* is one more app that develops learners' language skills through fun games.
- **Memrise:** is another app that helps learners to expand their vocabulary by effectively learning words*.*
- **Sentence Master Pro**: is very useful for the learners to build sentences on their own in a game environment.
- **Babbel:** is an appropriate app to develop learners' basic conversational skills,
- **Speak Well**: the pronunciation of American speech practice including voice recognition is emphasized in Speak Well app. Taken from Rao, 2019.

Duolingo effectiveness study

Duolingo is a free app created by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker in November 2011. Its slogan is "Free language education for the world." Duolingo is presented as a very modern-looking gaming app, in reality, most of the activities necessary to complete the lessons are very traditional and are heavily based on

translation, dictation, and pronunciation according to its website (www.duolingo.com)

The authors Vesselinov, R., and Grego, J. (2012) described that they conducted their study using the Duolingo app to see the effectiveness of mobile technology in teaching a language. In this study, they focused on Spanish, which was carried out from September to November of 2012. "The study lasted for approximately eight weeks. They selected a random representative sample from Duolingo users who studied Spanish. The participants were at least 18 years of age, native speakers of English, not of the Hispanic origin and not advanced users of Spanish, and all of the participants resided in the United States". The researchers measured the progress, and they described any single improvement. They created a different way to test participants. The participants took one college placement Spanish language test at the beginning of the study and one test at the end of the study. The test results were measured in points (the higher the better). They measured the improvement of language abilities as the difference between the final and the initial language test results. The effectiveness of Duolingo was measured as language improvement per one hour of study". Vesselinov, R. and Grego, J. (2012) found that "the people, who studied Spanish to travel, had the greatest improvement than people who studied mainly for personal interest.

On the other hand, some questions were answered in this study. As well as, how long is going to take for participants to improve their Spanish knowledge using this app? Based on these findings, we can say that for a complete novice user of Spanish, it would take on average 26 to 49 hours of study with Duolingo to cover the material for the first college semester of Spanish". Grego, J. (2012)

Nevertheless, the authors experienced some limitations for their study: They (2012) explained that "as expected many people had difficulties keeping up with the study and their use of Duolingo for the two months of study was very complicated. Many people dropped out of the study or spent less than two hours studying Spanish. Although researchers informed the participants twice a week of their study time, this was not enough for many of them. Moreover, if they spend less than two hours studying for two months, their expectations for improvement cannot be very high".

STUDY TO SEE HOW DUOLINGO APP CAN IMPROVE ANOTHER LANGUAGE

There was a project carried out to evaluate how Duolingo can influence learning and improve another language; moreover, the advantages and disadvantages that students face when they use them. In a public university in El Salvador, a group of researchers decided to test how a learning application can help a language skill in 2016. This study was done to see whether Duolingo App can be used efficiently as part of a language course, with the idea that students can practice anywhere and anytime, based on their level and needs of a group of students. The researchers realized that most of the students begin studying French without any single idea of the language. Therefore, students struggle in the first course, which's more complicated when they take the second course since they do not have an appropriate French to face the new challenges. Therefore, researchers consider it highly important to analyze the use of a multilingual application and how this can influence students´ learning.

The target population of this research was students in their first year who have taken different courses related to the French language, and through their studies, they are expected to reach a C1 performance level. However, this is not what happens at the end of the major, due to the lack of extracurricular tools that could help them to improve their performance level. That is why it emerged the necessity to evaluate what would be the impact of the implementation of a technological tool such as the Duolingo App.

In this study, the data were analyzed with a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The main points of the researchers were to generate more information and analyze some data with statistics and graphics. The researchers exposed the experimental group to a lot of French lessons provided by the Duolingo App to determine whether they improved or not their French performance level in Grammar, Vocabulary, and Listening skills as well as their motivation.

One of the dependent variables, which was the French performance level in Grammar, Vocabulary, and Listening skills were measured with a test divided into those skills. So that the data was analyzed using descriptive procedures. Besides, the other dependent variable "motivation" was evaluated through a survey and the data gathered was analyzed through statistics and graphics.

The experimental study was carried out in this research. Besides, for this type of study, the researchers played an active role as they participated in the implementation of the app.

To conduct this part of the investigation, the researchers took into account some important elements for the research as follows: setting, participants, measurement instruments, and procedure.

This study took place on the main campus in a public University of El Salvador, located in the San Salvador department. The tests and surveys were conducted in the classrooms where the students attend classes. Besides, the implementation of the Duolingo App was done outside the classrooms according to the needs and convenience of each student.

The students of the Intensive French II from the first year of the Modern Languages Major were taken into account for the research. For the sampling, the researchers carried out a non-random selection in the category of the purposive sample. First, the selection of the participants was based on the results obtained from the administration of a proficiency test, divided into three parts were Grammar, Vocabulary, and Listening. The Grammar test consisted of seven parts doing a total of 55 items. This test aimed to evaluate the students´ performance in the French grammar language. On the other hand, the vocabulary part had three parts with a total of 39 items. This test was measured to see how much knowledge students had about the words in the French language.

However, due to the students' denial and rejection of this project, researchers decided to take count only on those who voluntarily agreed to participate using the app. It means that the sample became random by convenience, and the total of participants was 16 students. At first, it was considered the sample to be two groups of different schedules. But, one group was unwilling for the experiment. So,

researchers decided to choose the other group who showed more enthusiasm and collaboration using the Duolingo app for their learning performance. The population was women at about 81.25% and, men were by 18.75%. The participants were young adults from 17 to 30 years old.

The instruments used for this study were some proficiency tests like surveys, and a pilot test. The researchers divided the proficiency test into three parts. Grammar accounted for 40 percent, Vocabulary 30 percent, and Listening 30 percent of the final grade evaluated the skills mentioned. The students who got the lowest scores had to use the Duolingo app with the aim that they could practice their French. However, due to the lack of participation from those students, researchers asked students to participate voluntarily to use the app.

It was supposed that the participants had to use the app for three months. However, due to the time limitations, the time is lower to eight weeks. Seven days after the end of the experiment using the app, the researchers gave students the same tests to check their French performance level. An important fact was that students did not realize that they had to do the same exams again. Finally, the last survey was administered to know if students who were part of the study increased their motivation in the process of learning French.

Researchers decided first to pilot the instruments to recognize possible problems students may have when answering the surveys and exams. Fortunately, thanks to the pilot test, researchers could create a final version of the instruments.

To administer the pilot test took only two days. And, the data collection instrument was administered around three days.

On the first day, the researchers administered a survey to know which mobile applications students used, and then a Grammar test was given. Second, students were provided with the Vocabulary and Listening tests. The time limit to complete the tests was about one hour and a half each of the days. During the eight experimental weeks, volunteer students were asked to create an account in the Duolingo App. Also, Volunteer students were requested to use the app for thirty minutes every day, completing the lessons according to their needs and then share their progress in a group of Duolingo created by the researchers to check how much the students were learning more about the language.

During the experiment, researchers scheduled meetings every fifteen days with the students involved in the study to motivate them to continue using the Duolingo App and answering their questions and doubts. The experiment finished from October 30th until November 8th. Due to this study, there is evidence that the use of this English application "Duolingo" can be helpful to improve any language skill to ESL/ EFL learners.

CAKE ENGLISH LEARNING MOBILE APPLICATION

Nowadays, it is well-known that mobile technology has marked a before and after when talking about the acquisition of new languages. Some educators certify that mobile applications have a great way to facilitate vocabulary learning rather than the usual printed texts and memorization techniques. According to Kukulska-Hulme (2019), there is a positive tendency in the educational field when using mobile apps

focused on the teaching and learning process. In the same way, Sharples and Pea (2014) express that mobile education has been expanded everywhere. Undoubtedly, mobile devices have become a part of our daily life, because it is in every possible situation. So, this research project aimed to investigate the influence of the Cake - English mobile application in the development of English language vocabulary.

The Cake mobile application is a modern tool that provides different expressions such as slang, idioms, phrases, and daily expressions from YouTube videos. This application has different tags divided into different categories based on students' levels, needs, and interests. For example, the app provides various topics such as travel, family, food, business, technology, and others divided into beginners, intermediate, and expert groups.

According to the TESOL Magazine (2000), ESL technology includes vocabulary apps, digital tools, software, and Internet resources that focus on helping students acquire words, multiword units, phrases, expressions, and others, in the target language. Therefore, the Cake application is a mobile digital application that tries to facilitate and develop students' English vocabulary using short English videos updated daily. This application is based on real daily situations spoken by native speakers like reality shows, and their favorite TV shows. This English mobile application motivates students to practice their English pronunciation and vocabulary by using communicative expressions presented in the app.

Students who use computer programs and mobile applications to facilitate vocabulary learning have better results than those students who use printed text and memorization techniques to study vocabulary, Kovac (2017). Cake mobile

application offers students three elementary tools: online dictionary, online treasures dictionary, and online vocabulary quizzes. Also, this English app is completely free, and the last version was updated on January 28, 2021, and it is compatible with android, iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch. Thus, Gangaiamaran and Pasupathi (2017) state that a group of the global population between 18 and 24 years old spends 3 hours per day using smartphone apps to develop their English language skills.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING SKILL

According to Rai (2010), communication represents the essential part of everything that we want to do. Communication is more than sending messages or talking to someone else. It requires that all our thoughts have been fully understood without any problem. A more accurate definition of communication is when a person can transmit its ideas, expecting others can interpret and answer them. All this process will depend on the level of speaking that the person has. Harmer (2007), claims that students should be aware of the importance of speaking skills in the development of the English language. Every possible situation for speaking English in class must be taken. In this way, learners will have the opportunity to increase their confidence in the language and speak English more fluently. He also mentions that at first, it will be difficult trying to build self-consciousness in students. However, there are helpful techniques, strategies, and activities such as repetition work, pair work, role plays, and others, in which learners have the chance to practice their speaking.

Boonkit (2010) mentioned that many undergraduate students do not feel the necessary confidence of speaking in English, especially with English native speakers because they do not have a good range of vocabulary to face a real-life English conversation. In addition, Oradee (2013) stated that this common issue can be generated by the lack of exposure to authentic English language in the classroom.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY

When we think about the definition of vocabulary, most of our answers have something to do with the words of a language. Probably this is correct because vocabulary has to deal with everything related to words. However, vocabulary is much more than just simple words, phrases, or expressions. Rai (2010) claims that vocabulary involves the stock of words used by a person. It is significant to say that vocabulary is one of the sub-skills. He also mentions that there are two groups of vocabulary lists based on different purposes: active and passive vocabulary. Passive vocabulary refers to all the words that a person can understand by reading or listening. And, active vocabulary is related to all the words that a person can use to write or speak.

Harmer (2007) states that the more words we learn and acquire, the more precise we can be to communicate our thoughts, ideas, or expressions to others. Also, vocabulary is more important than grammar rules for communication aims. Students are motivated to add and expand their vocabulary range, to understand the meanings of unknown words, or to become more proficient at the moment of choosing words and expressions. Rai (2010) argues that an effective way to improve vocabulary is by using the dictionary and thesaurus. Dictionaries can contribute with

important information about the meaning of usage, and collocations. A thesaurus dictionary is useful for synonyms and antonyms. This kind of dictionary helps learners to find new words and expand their vocabulary stock to express ideas or thoughts in a more effective way avoiding repetition.

STUDY USING CAKE LEARNING ENGLISH APPLICATION

This study was carried out in a university in Ecuador, and the researchers decided to choose 32 students. Those students were taking English classes from level II. This research project lasted three weeks in which all the participants attended a class by using the Zoom platform. The class lasted 20 minutes per session and finished with a summary of the content provided.

During the study, the whole group was divided into two groups. There were administer different instruments such as:

1. A pre-test to determine students' English vocabulary knowledge focusing on specific English phrases and daily expressions. This instrument was adapted from the Preliminary English Test that offers Cambridge.

2. A practice test provided from Cambridge English exams included units 1, 2, and 5 from the Top Notch II book. They applied this evaluation to both groups in the first session using Google forms and the zoom platform.

3. A post-test to measure students' level of improvement to compare the results obtained in the pre-test. This test was applied to both groups via the zoom platform and using Google forms.

4. Thus, there were two surveys, the first one, to know the way students study and what kind of tools they used, and the second survey, to check which type of exercises from the Cake app is more effective for vocabulary learning. This instrument was applied to students via Google forms.

This study took place from April to September 2020, and due to the pandemic situation that affected that year, the research was carried out online, during three weeks, every week students were asked to participate in a 20 minutes' class finishing every class with a review of the content provided.

In the first session, the researcher delivered the pre-test exam to students to determine their English vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, students had to complete the first survey about strategies and technological tools they used to learn new vocabulary. In the second session, the researcher divided all the participants into two groups: a standard group, and the experimental group. Then, the researcher gave them clear instructions for each group about how to work on the vocabulary exercises. For this, the researcher used a tutorial video about the Cake mobile application. Thus, each format contained three vocabulary exercises related to units 1, 2, and 5 from The Top Notch Book II. The researcher created two formats, the first one for the experimental group, and a second format for the standard group. Both groups had to complete the vocabulary exercise N°1 focus on English phrases and daily conversations about greetings. In the third session, students worked on the vocabulary exercise N°2 related to emotions such as apologies, regret, and surprise. In the fourth session, students worked on the vocabulary exercise N°3

about personal care and appearance. Finally, in the last intervention, the researcher applied the post-test to both groups and the survey N°2 just to the experimental group.

The researcher does not clarify in the study how exactly he divided this session into the three weeks that lasted the course. As well as if they checked any homework assigned or if they had any separate session for any student that may have a question with the material provided.

In this research project, the author decided to use quasi-experimental research. According to Ary (2012), this design allows researchers to get reasonable conclusions in which is not used random assignment to treatment groups. This research design was used with 32 students from the second semester of "Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros" program at the Technical University of Ambato.

For this study, the researcher divided all the participants into two groups; one experimental group with 16 students and the control group with 16 students. The two groups were assigned three types of vocabulary exercises with emphasis on daily conversations, English phrases about greetings, personal appearance topics, and emotions for about three weeks. Likewise, these vocabulary exercises were divided into two formats. For example, the first one was about Cake English vocabulary exercises and PET vocabulary exercises. Each design contained three vocabulary exercises. However, both groups worked on different formats of vocabulary exercises using varied materials and technological resources.

To work on these exercises, the first group, used the Cake-English app to complete format 1 of vocabulary exercises. On the other hand, the control group used their texts (Top Notch II) and dictionaries to work on the vocabulary exercises format 2.

Also, the researcher used bibliographic and field research intending to reach better results about the topic being investigated. The bibliographic research because all the information was based on sources of scientific articles, projects, web-educational journals, and other academic works. The field research because the researcher worked with a group of students from the University of Ambato that allowed to to analyze the problem of the university course and collect the necessary data.

Moreover, this study used a mixed approach, quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative because the researcher considered that there were some quantitative techniques used to get as better results as possible. The qualitative approach because it expressed the way on how students used the cake-mobile app to improve their vocabulary.

Analyzing some results from the survey it can be noticed that they consider it is necessary the use of language mobile applications in the EFL classroom because it can facilitate the improvement of any language skill such as the case described above.

Some students rate the app tools as very helpful and efficient to learn and practice new vocabulary. they consider that the app fits well with any topic of their interests and needs. It catches their attention, and the exercises that the app offers are accurate for them to learn and improve the language.

There exists a noticeable change about the score got from the experimental group by using Cake- mobile app. At the beginning, a pre-test was done to both groups the experimental and the control group, as a result both groups had the same score 8.31 points over 20. It means that both groups had a low level of vocabulary knowledge. However, in the post-test the experimental group average was 11.75 points over 20, while the control group was 8.62 points. As it can be noticed, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test. The difference between both groups was 3.13 points. We can consider that the use of mobile apps for educational purposes can be quite helpful for those who need to improve in their skills and, we can certify that in this study the use of the app made a change in the students´ vocabulary acquisition over those students who use the traditional way of learning through texts or books.

Students who experimented with the use of the app had an improvement in their vocabulary knowledge, emphasized fixed phrases and different daily expressions. In contrast, we can realize that the students who used the traditional way to learn through different resources such as books, dictionaries, and websites did not have a significant improvement in their level of vocabulary as we could notice in the results obtained from the surveys made to them.

This app (Cake) can be used in the educational field to find a different way to teach the English language. That is why some students in this study express those teachers must use more technological tools in their classes to motivate their students and make classes more interactive as nowadays we have emerged into a technological world.

Investigating EFL learners' perspectives on vocabulary learning experiences through smartphone applications

According to the study, Investigating EFL learners' perspectives on vocabulary learning experiences through smartphone applications, it noticed the perspective that students have to different smartphones applications when learning a foreign language. This study tried to find out which are the best ways to learn vocabulary considering the smartphones applications that are used nowadays knowing that get vocabulary in a non-English context might be sort of hard. Gui (2015).

In this study, we can notice the application the author used for enriching vocabulary to EFL learners. This is called Vocabulary Flashcards 2016. For doing this, the author used a mixed-method approach and qualitative and quantitative methods.

To obtain the information required, the author used a demographic questionnaire. As well, a diagnostic test called Dialang was applied. It is vital to know the application that in this study was applied since the perspective that EFL learners might have about smartphone applications is highly important because it can help them to enrich and expand their foreign language.

Vocabulary Flashcard was the application destined to be used in this study. Also, it was installed on participants' smartphones. The app was used for a month to see the results and perceptions learners had. However, this is a very important point because it was surprising that the app was used just for one month knowing

that the results may not be meaningful as it is supposed to be because one month is a short period for seeing the improvements of participants in the app. if there would be the chance to test a group of EFL learners with an application such as vocabulary Flashcard or another similar app, it would be possible to do it for at least two months considering that it might be a favorable time for us as researchers and also for the participants involved. It is true that sometimes testing an app could be extremely hard because people get bored with applications if they do not give what they are looking for.

Moreover, it also considered some risks that it implies if we use an app for improvements in the English language; some of them are Learners may get bored in a couple of weeks with the application if the application is not considered to be of their interest and if the app´s interface is not the most attractive for them. Second, the lack of motivation in using the app might be another factor. Therefore, we believe that if we motivate learners and we change their mindset, and tell them that in the end, the results could be positive if they give the chance in using the app. So, they could end up changing their perception but it is not easy to get on board a group of participants to use an app since most of the time they lose interest they start the app and they spend an amount of time using the app but that is just the beginning; however, a couple of days later they stop using the app. So, it is so important they get engaged in using it no matter what they must use it for the established period that it has been assigned.

In this study, an online demographic questionnaire was used for a group of 50 EFL learners. They were recruited from a language teaching channel in Telegram

messenger. They were taken to test the Vocabulary flashcard app 2016 for one month. They were the participants who underwent this study. And a group of learners shared in the interview information about the time they spent using the app around 1 and 7 hours depending on the time they had. As a result, the author obtained the following details which are practically positive and negative results. According to the usage of this app, EFL learners found it favorable, and the time applied using the app was useful since they spread out more their vocabulary.

Based on the findings of this study had an exceptional significance since the app tried to focus both on form and meaning. For instance, the app tried to present every single word and tried to give its synonyms and antonyms which from our viewpoint is interesting because in those ways EFL learners could retain more than vocabulary they were learning. For example, when you have a word in a foreign language and you do not know exactly the meaning something that might help you is to have synonyms which help to create the mental image about that word or expression and also the retention is better since if you do not remember the word, you could remember the synonym or antonym.

However, some learners thought that the app was not fulfilling their needs, and therefore at the moment of evaluating the study they remarked on this aspect and the results were shown at the moment of collecting the data. We believe that learners were not so engaged in using the app based on the content itself. When you have an Educational English Application you hope to satisfy your necessities and your language goals. If we are talking about learning a new language the main

goal is to improve every day and get fluency in that language. However, if the app does not meet our goal, we tend not to use the app anymore.

Apart from that, it is markable that students found that the authenticity of the app was not presenting real-life activities. Hence, it was not so real, meaning that the activities EFL learners did during the period of using the app were not the most enjoyable time. The problem here is that when you do not have real-life activities in an educational language app, it might be sort of hard to use since learners do not see the point in using it because they want to have an application where they can use the content and apply it to real-life. After all, if learners are doing something that is not worthy, they might lose interest in that since it is not going to be useful on their daily basis.

But not everything was so negative about this study since apparently, this app led the participants to search other similar apps, and besides it helped them to increase the desire to enrich their vocabulary ability.

Besides the results that the author found when collecting the data, also, it was quite noticeable that the app did not need any kind of specialization and therefore, it was easy to use and they could use it offline. Here, we can give extra points to the app which somehow is nice when an app can work offline and almost all its functions work perfectly.

Moreover, aspects to remark and highlight about this study are the following: Number one, we find remarkable that the app shows the words with sentences which somehow, we find it not original but useful in some ways. First of all, having a word

in context is easier to remember since you have more context where you can retain it better. Second of all, having a sentence can increase vocabulary ability because you do not have just one unknown word instead you have more words and your language curiosity for looking up words increases.

Also, contextualizing the words in the app makes much easier for EFL learners. Number two, this app does not need a connection therefore it can be used without the internet.

Number three, exams were included in this app which for us is awesome because in that way you can see how much learners have progressed or how far they have used the app. Once learners have done the exams, feedback is followed which is good; nevertheless, feedback was not clear at all and that made it difficult in order to know the improvement that students have had in the app.

Number four, some experiences in using this app (vocabulary flashcard) according to one participant using it is that the traditional method of getting vocabulary was not the best for this participant; however, the perception of this participant changed completely once using the app because the way that the app helps to retain the vocabulary is different and it makes it easy. In our own experience, we also believe that the old traditional way of having the vocabulary and its meaning or equivalent in the first language is not the most appropriate since it can be sort of frustrating to have so many pages full of vocabulary and sometimes you cannot even find the word you are looking up and at the end, it ends up overwhelming not having the word you need at that moment because of having so much. However, the app tries to eradicate this problem put in these flashcards in a organize way

We came up to the conclusion that this app (Vocabulary Flashcard 2016) tries to do a good job in giving vocabulary as its name suggests but it lacks in many aspects. And it is nice that an app such as this can have good points according to its interface and everything related to the way of showing the vocabulary which is in flashcards as its name is. But we also think that it is complicating to memorize all words it presents especially if the app does not have the best way to do it with its quizzes, and if we talk about the vocabulary which somehow is hard to memorize even for basic levels and all of this is according to the experiences of the participants that the study used and they claimed about it.

Therefore, according to our experience and viewpoint, the best way to learn vocabulary is by having a natural presentation what it means learners must be exposed to the target language by having a good input. For example, as teachers, we believe that something helps is to start watching a tv show or a cartoon that can be of interest to EFL learners where they can have fun and at the same time, they can learn everything. Since the best way to learn a new language is or has to be similar to the way babies learn or acquire their mother tongue because babies spend a considerable amount of time listening to their relatives and when a considerable time has passed, they begin saying some words.

However, that happens until they have spent a qualitative time listening by doing this is what we might call a natural method since it is the natural way to learn a language in other words we learn better a language, we just have to see how babies learn their mother tongue and we have to do it in the same way and by saying this, we mean being exposure every day to the target language. In the end, the

results are remarkably positive. For example, in our viewpoint that helps a lot since we have seen how learners learn and every day, they are improving more and more.

Students´ Perceptions About the Use of Telegram App in English Learning

It can truly say that the advent of new technology has changed considerably students´ lives, making them easier as they can develop different tasks through smart devices like smartphones, tablets, iPods, laptops, and others. We can say that there are many benefits in all fields of life, work and education. In the last one, the educational field, we can take advantage of the new mobile technology to learn and improve the English language.

There has been a huge growth of mobile technology and new mobile device applications such as the one taken for this study, this is Telegram App. Based on this research, this mobile app has created new opportunities for EFL students. The current study investigated the EFL students' perceptions of using Telegram for English language learning. The researchers took some participants from the present study, they were 300 EFL college students; 200 females and 100 males were selected randomly from the department of English and Translation at Tibah University in AL-Medina AL-Manwarah in Saudi Arabia.

This study carried out a quantitative approach in which a survey questionnaire was utilized for data collection. At the end of this research, it was expected to see what the students´ perceptions were about the use of Telegram as a tool for learning English and what the advantages this app could provide

The current generation of students is perceiving a huge change with the technology of these days. The use of mobile devices has become an enormous part of their daily experience outside educational situations. They communicate with their friends through smart devices to share pictures, files, music, and videos. If this can be taken for good to learn a language, we can be certainly sure that there would be a great change in the educational field.

There are mobile apps that we can find on the web that can help to learn different languages. And the one in this study is "Telegram", which is an online messaging app that is similar to popular apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook messenger because it allows users to exchange videos, pictures, files, and audio. (Abbasi & Behjat, 2016). According to Telegram Company, in 2018 this app reached 200 million users monthly using the app. (www.telegram.org). So, this tells us that the app is also very popular and can be used for many purposes, and in the educational field can be an excellent option.

Different studies express the argument of whether the telegram app develops or reduces the teaching and learning English language process. Also, it is important to take into account that the student's perceptions about the use of the app play a huge role in this study, since they rate the application based on how useful has been for them.

The researchers of this study consider that this investigation may contribute to developing the process of improving the learning techniques in students of higher education in Saudi Arabia through the use of the Telegram app. Moreover, it may

provide students' awareness of the importance of EFL mobile applications in the process of the English language.

We can also take advantage of this study because this would help us to know how we can apply the use of mobile applications in EFL classrooms. In this way, students will feel comfortable and enthusiastic to learn the language in a new way leaving aside the traditional way of learning. Furthermore, many teachers can be benefited from the use of any mobile app, in this case, the Telegram app because through this, they can share different educational files or communicate with their pupils.

It can be mentioned some studies where researchers consider the Telegram app as a useful tool for learning and improving English skills. The following are some previous studies about using the app. For example, based on a study of Akobirov and Vokhidova (2018) they investigated the significance of mobile learning applied on teaching and learning the English language. They focused on using the mobile application "Telegram." Their study showed that using the Telegram app in teaching language skills can be very promising and useful in the educational field. They found that the Telegram app has an impact on improving English language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Another study by Naderi and Akrami (2018) showed that the app can improve English skills. The researchers say that using Telegram groups in instruction has a significant effect on the learners' reading comprehension ability. They affirmed that it improved the learners' ability in reading comprehension.

Moreover, in the same context of implementing the use of the Telegram app in the educational process of English skills, we can mention the study about Abbasi & Behjat, 2016, which focused on improving speaking ability. This study did investigate the effect of storytelling with Telegram on EFL students 'speaking complexity. According to that study, the results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group regarding their speaking complexity.

Furthermore, based on research conducted by Setiawan and Wahyuni (2017), they examined the usage of Telegram applied on teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. The findings showed that the use of Telegram did contribute significantly to the participants' pronunciation. The researchers indicated that teaching the English language using Telegram can be a promising and very useful tool in the educational field.

Taking into account these previous studies made by different researchers, we could certify in a way that the use of Telegram can provide many advantages in the improvement of the English skills but just if it is used or applied correctly.

Moving on to the methodology chosen for this type of research, the descriptive study was applied since quantitative data was gathered. The descriptive study is non-experimental research since the variables are not controlled or manipulated by the researchers. (Ethridge, 2004.) Regarding the population, 1609 subjects participated in this research project. 1161 were female and 448 were male. Continuing with the sample, 300 EFL college students were selected from the Department of English and Translation at Tibah University in Al-Medina, AL-Manwarah in Saudi Arabia. 200 (67%) participants were female and 100 (33 %) male

who was selected through the random sampling strategy. Concerning the participants' usage of Telegram, (83%) of students used Telegram whilst 17% of students did not use it (ZA Abu-Ayfah, 2020.)

When it comes to data collection procedures, instruments are chosen depending on the research's purpose and research antecedents consulted. The questionnaire is a data collection instrument that allows the students to respond comfortably and it offers the possibility to gather so much information from many subjects in a short period. It is recommended to design the questionnaire's sections by taking into account the study's goal. For example, a questionnaire should have a demographic section to gather general data from the participants such as gender, age, course; however, specific information that is not related to the study must not be asked. Participants' data results must be confidential and be used for the research project only. The others questionnaire's sections can contain any rating scales as the Likert scale that measures attitudes directly. According to McLeod (2019), the Likert is a five (or seven) point scale that is used to allow the individual to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement.

A questionnaire is a flexible tool since it can be administered through many means like emails, online platforms, printed, and so forth. Moreover, the questionnaire facilitates and accelerates data collection to reach all the participants whenever they have time to fill it out. To illustrate this point, in this telegram app study, the researcher administered the questionnaire by using Google survey, an online free form.

It is necessary to have the questionnaire reviewed by the research advisor or any other professional with experience in the matter of study. When the questionnaire is modified with any professionals' feedback, it can be verified the validity of the instrument. Therefore, a pilot study should be done to test the questionnaire's reliability. This previous test will ensure the appropriate information gathering and its accurate processing through the chosen data analysis method. For instance, a Google survey was used to administer the questionnaire to 50 subjects of study from this telegram app research. After that, the validity of this instrument was evaluated by a jury that suggested modifications for the final form.

In this telegram research, the questionnaire consisted of participants' demographic questions, the subjects' actual use of Telegram App and a second section included twenty-four statements related to the research question. The statements were divided into six dimensions, each of them related to one of the four English skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Also, the Likert scaled was used and specific English features such as grammar and vocabulary were added as well. As it was explained earlier, this questionnaire was backed up with previous literature (Abdu & Ramani, 2011; Ahn, 2018; Heidari-shahreza & Khodarahmi, 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2016; Martin, 2013; Yinka & Queendarline, 2018.)

Now, let's talk about the methods of data analysis. Many software tools can be used to process the data collected through a data-gathering instrument. Two popular data analysis software is Excel and IBM SPSS where the questionnaire's questions can be pre-coded and the software transforms the data entered into statics. A good example of this is the use of Excel and SPSS statistical software in

this Telegram app research project. The data gathered through the Google survey was stored in an Excel file; then, a frequency count and average of the participant's answers were carried out on this data collected. A descriptive and analytical method was applied to find out the study subject's perceptions of using the Telegram app. The results were presented through tables and charts to draw easy conclusions about the students' attitudes towards Telegram app usage

The next step after analyzing the data is to show the findings. This Telegram app study found out that the majority of participants 264 (82%) use Telegram, this 82% use it 3-4 times/ a week that means 33% of the subjects. Followed by 30.7% of the students use Telegram once a week, while 21.7% of students use it every day. Only a small number of students (14.7%) use it occasionally.

Regarding the reason students use Telegram, the majority of them (35%) use telegram for both language skills improvement and entertainment, while (29%) of participants use it for language skills improvement. About (26%) of subjects use it for other purposes and the last portion (10%) of participants use it for entertainment.

Another significant finding was that students use the Telegram app for vocabulary learning (66%). The vocabulary learning aspect was followed by the reading skill that 192 participants (64%) stated Telegram appropriate for reading skill, it was ranked as the second finding in this study and its mean (14.8). Concerning grammar learning (62.9%), this came in the third rank and the mean was (14.7). For listening skills, the mean was (14.3) and it was ranked as fourth. Regarding speaking skills (56.8%), the mean was (14.28) and it was ranked as fifth

from six dimensions. The smallest part of the study subjects 170 (56.7%) perceived that Telegram was suitable for writing skills and their mean was (14.25.)

English language teacher´s perspectives about the use of a mobile app to learn English technical vocabulary

In this study, the researchers pursued to examine the English language teachers´ perspectives about the use of a mobile app to learn technical vocabulary for students in University Malaysia Pahang. This study carried out a qualitative approach involving four language teachers as its samples. They were interviewed via e-mails, where the questions were uploaded in Google Docs. The app that was used in the study is known as Voc. Blast; The app allows the learner to learn not only specialized vocabulary but also its definition and application. Also, it provides learners an opportunity to learn in an interactive and fun environment. According to the research the Voc. Blast app contains about 10 interesting games that enable students to enrich and enhance their technical vocabulary.

We all know that to learn whatever language we want; the fundamental part of the language is vocabulary acquisition. Without the necessary vocabulary knowledge, we have less probability to perform the language, but today with the new technology, there exist higher possibilities to learn many languages through the use of mobile phones that contains several educational apps that help to improve all English skills.

According to Bracke (2013), he argues that mobile apps such as Word reference, which is a dictionary app, Quizlet, a vocabulary flashcards app and, some

others enable learners to learn vocabulary in English. Students can learn easily not only English vocabulary but also improve all their English skills through the use of mobile apps like the one mentioned for this study (Voc. Blast).

Some studies present how the use of vocabulary apps helped their students to learn more vocabulary. The following are some examples; we have the study conducted by Steel (2012) that involved 134 students as the sample for the research. The investigation revealed that some students did make use of a dictionary app to check and refer to words they did not understand. The dictionary app enabled them to check and refer to words whenever and wherever they found convenience. Also, vocabulary memorization was improved with the use of mobile apps. Furthermore, in another study, the results of a previous investigation by the Department of Education in the United States of America related to young learners using an educational gaming app were analyzed by Wylie (2013). Martha Speaks Dog Party was the name of the app used by young learners. Based on what the article mentions, the results revealed that the use of the app improved approximately 31 percent of young learners' vocabulary development. The article says that the participants were between three to seven years old and they were required to make use of the app every day for about two weeks. Another interesting point about that study reported that games and quizzes were also integrated into the app to assist the young learners in learning new vocabulary.

Moreover, Shih, Lee, and Cheng (2015) claimed that there was a positive learning attitude in college students about vocabulary performance by using a mobile app such as Line App. They mention that the vocabulary list applied in the app was taken

from a test known as TOEIC. In their study, they express that students' level of confidence increased to a certain degree when using the app. In learning English vocabulary, the app provided a listening aid in which they were able to listen to the correct use of vowels, consonants, and syllables.

These few studies give us a brief description of how the use of mobile apps for English learning can be useful for students to improve their skills like in this case is vocabulary learning. However, it can seem that in those studies, there is no description about what is the teacher´s point of view about using an app to enrich students´ vocabulary. It is important to consider that the teacher´s opinions play an important role as they are the ones who take into consideration what kind of materials, they need to use to teach their students. So, their opinions are essential to analyze whether one app meets their learners' learning needs or otherwise. (Walker, 2011).

Regarding the methodology of the study, four female teachers with smartphones and mobile apps experience on a daily based were selected. The teaching experience ranges among the participants was from a year up to 15 years. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured through the use of codes. Their participation included assisting a student to learn vocabulary in the Blast app. Students had the opportunity to play the different games as a group during class hours, but they also could complete the games outside if it was necessary. Moreover, teachers, as students, had to play all the games in the app to get a perspective of the effectiveness of the game and its usage, as if it was difficult to navigate through the app or not.

The researchers made use of one research instrument which was an interview protocol that included two parts, the first one questioned the teachers' demographic information, and the second one three open-ended questions about the use of Blast. Validity and reliability were ensured by the performance of an audit trail that required the researchers to explain in detail that the findings are based on the participants' narratives.

The research material was the technical-based vocabulary app Voc Blast. Each of the 10 games that the app offers were analyzed.

• The first game has the purpose to tests the spelling ability and knowledge of the players within 30 seconds. In this game players have to complete two levels, each of them consists of 15 words which all must be answered correctly to move on. Each question is structure as multiple-choice, learners have to choose the one that has the correct spelling.

• The second game is based on a matching exercise in which learners have to match the correct definition with its correct word. This game has three levels and each of them contains 6 words to match with the definition. Even though, it seems to be the kind where learners have to pay careful attention since the options given may look pretty similar. Five out of six answers must be correct to move to the next level.

• The third game is focused on the acquisition of vocabulary and spelling knowledge. This game has three levels and six questions per one. This game

consists of unscrambling letters that appear at the top of the page, and in the given space the answer must be written as well as the definition.

•   The fourth game requires dragging letters into boxes to complete the correct word that matches the definition given.

•   The fifth game provides a definition and the learners have to guess the word based on the definition. To facilitate the completion of this section some letters are shown at the bottom of the page so the learners can drag them to the correct spaces to form the word.

•   The sixth game is about making connections between an image and the background knowledge that the learner may have, for that they have to guess the correct letters to fill in the blanks to complete the name of the object in the picture.

•   The seventh game is about completing a puzzle based on the clues provided for each word. For this game, they have twenty minutes to complete since the puzzle has twenty questions in total.

•   The eighth game, pretty similar to games 4 and 5, asks the participants to define each word given, they have to select among the three options that are given in less than sixty seconds, otherwise, another set of six questions will be provided.

•   The ninth game makes use of the (MCQ) multiple-choice questions. Fifteen sentences are provided and for each of them, learners need to select among 5 words the one better fills in the blank so the sentence is correct.

• The tenth game is about Word searching, definitions are shown to the learners and they must find the words in the word searching table. This game does not have a limited time, it instead shows the time spent while completing it.

The procedure used in this research was electronic email. It was chosen primarily because emails enable interviewees to reflect on responses and modify their answers when needed. Firstly, an email was sent to the participants to invite them to be part of the research, subsequently, they receive another email with the link to a Google docs file in which they found the interview questions. In less than a week all the questions were answered.

Since the findings of the research were based on the analysis of the teachers' responses sent through the Email four themes were generated. Being the first one: The hints are helpful to students. It indicates that the hints are an important element that can function as a guide for learners. The second one: Voc Blast enlivens students' learning, since most of the games are arranged to have a limited time to complete them, students are challenged to prove and improve their vocabulary knowledge. The third one: Voc Blast can serve as supplementary learning material. The language teachers concluded that the app is a technical-based vocabulary app that can help students learning English for specific purposes (ESP). The fourth one: VocBlast can be an indirect vocabulary learning tool. The app shows to be a useful tool because it required learners to use their deductive and inductive thinking at the time of answering each section of the games,

IV GENERAL TERMS

V TYPE OF STUDY: Documentary research

The type of study that is going to be used in this research project is Documentary analysis that is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; see also Rapley, 2007)

VI RESEARCH DESIGN: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

Bibliographic research is the background reading. This is the literature-based reading and thinking essential to the development and elaboration of your research question and hypothesis. This background preparation allows you to formulate and test your hypothesis. One of your chief tasks is to get a thorough knowledge of the literature relevant to your research problem. A responsible exploration of a research topic means that you must understand others' investigations as they appear in the relevant literature. Bibliographical research is the process of using the library and bibliographic resources to locate information relevant to your topic.

VII POPULATION AND SAMPLE

15 articles and 10 graduation work projects

The researchers were interested in analyzing several types of articles to enrich the research project mostly because it was documentary research and these articles helped them to know more about the topic. They took several of them as the population.

First, they already did exhausting research through the web to gather the most relevant digital articles.

Second, they decided which articles contain the most useful information for the project and they became the sample for the research. In total 15 articles were taken for this work.

Third, besides taking articles, the research added some graduation works from different universities and they would be the population. A total of 10 graduation works were added. And the researchers followed the same process above where the 10-graduation works became the sample.

Articles and graduation works were taken as population and samples instead of people since the overall research is documentary research.

FINDINGS

GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION:

To what extent does the use of learning English applications influence ESL learners?

Based on the previous researches, it shows a positive effect of digital technologies in enabling students to be more proficient in English language learning. The focus of the study was to find approaches to motivate students who face difficulties in mastering English as a foreign language and sometimes, are unmotivated to learn. The results indicate that learning English as a foreign language utilizing learning English applications on smartphones and iPhones can help students improving language learning. The study reveals that they had a considerable improvement in the following areas: writing, and listening skills, which are the skills that they use the most when they use these applications.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1) **Which English educational applications can have a great impact on students´ performance?**

Most of the application presented in this study had a great impact on students but it is important to clarify that all learners learn better when they engage with the material in multiple ways, it seems that the implementation of mobile apps can help students to improve, but all of these applications have different features, as an example, some applications do not need an internet connection to work. On the other hand, they are

other apps that use internet and they provide more example and pictures to clarify the topic. Thus, some applications focus on specific English skills such as reading, listening, grammar, etc. Therefore, it will depend on what is the specific goal that students want to reach and how much time they invest when they use them.

2. **How the use of English applications can help students' skills and subskills such as vocabulary, writing, listening, speaking, and reading?**
As it was explained in the research the learning process is very different in each individual, not everybody learns the same way, now in the app market are different English learning applications that have a main purpose, for example, the application cake focused on improving students´ vocabulary and speaking skill, the application BBC learning English focused on active listening skill. Therefore, it will depend on the skill that learners would like to improve and how they learn. Because a specific application could be very user-friendly for someone, but for someone else that has a different learning style, it cannot be the same.

3. **Does English application enable the learner to communicate effectively and appropriately in a real-life situation?** According to the research, students were able to communicate using vocabulary and phrases provided by the app in different daily scenarios. However, when they were in scenarios that were not discussed in classroom they struggled, since in real life native speakers use slang, and a lot of language contraction and these topics are not provide by all English applications such as Duolingo.

4. **Which benefits can students have when they use English applications?**

   Using learning English application in a classroom or out of the classroom has some benefits such as seeing a different point of view when the application is use by different user and can share their opinion, save time since the information is organize and concise, the opportunity to keep studying outside classroom and have extra content than a traditional book does not have, also; they can be exposed to real English when you can join to room where people is practicing English in real time.

5. **Which English Educational apps could be a great support for ESL learners?**

   They are different factors that teachers take into account before they choose an educational learning English application such as the skill that they need to improve in their student, learners´ performance. Nevertheless, based on the result, the most useful application used in this investigation were application that help students with vocabulary and pronunciation tips.

CONCLUSION

As a result, for the Analysis of the influence of English learning Apps on ESL learners. It was found out how these English learning apps can help to learn and improve English as a second language. It is known that all the previous researches demonstrated that all these apps play a great role in learning English. These English learning apps have helped EFL learners, and they will keep supporting them in their English skills and they will facilitate the learning process. Some of those apps are doing it since a couple of years ago as it is the case for the Duolingo app which was already discussed above.

Based on the information obtained through the researcher´s instruments such as graduation projects, articles, online books, journals about the topic being studied, it can be said that the implementation of English learning apps in the educational field as a tool for improving the English language it provides great expectations and advantages for those students who want to learn and master all the English skills. They feel comfortable when technology is applied in the classroom because it creates a great environment, and they also feel motivated to learn more about the language. As nowadays technology is being an essential part of human beings, the educational field cannot be led aside. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to use their mobile phones in the classroom for educational purposes only. They can ask students to use apps related to the English language. Also, teachers must be more familiar with all the advents of technology, and this includes English learning apps since it is essential for them as educationalists to know more about all the apps that are being launched every year in this globalized world.

Furthermore, they must try beforehand every app for learning English that they pretend to use with their ESL learners to avoid any misunderstanding or any issue learners might have. As well, ESL learners should search for different English learning apps where they can improve more their English skills. and learners must be disciplined once they start using a new app. As far as it was investigated all the previous work before pointed out that English can be learned as it has normally been learned inside the classroom and in a conventional way. However, with all the spread of technology and the advent of smartphones, now it is easier to learn another language since all these apps for learning English serve as support for ESL learners when they are beginning and even when they are in intermediate levels. Furthermore, it can be said that all the research gathered in this graduation work was a glimpse that gave to this documentary research a better understanding of how this apps work and all the positive insights they might have when learners use them properly. For all of these, the influence of apps for learning English came up as an answer that ESL learners have and how these can facilitate the progress of a new language.

LIMITATIONS

During this process there were some limitations that the researchers had:

1. Time:

- Some of the researchers had inconvenient in meeting the days scheduled because they had not enough time due to their jobs.

-Two of the researchers had work commitments aside from the research project and that limited the researchers to dedicate the necessary time to meet and work on the project.

2. The sample

-Researchers faced some problems in finding the necessary and right documents concerning the topic of the use of mobile apps in English learning.

-As this was a bibliographic study, we did a general investigation about what different students and teachers around the world say about the experience of using mobile apps to improve their English skills. It means that we could not consult the student´s perspectives from the University of El Salvador, in this case, Intermediate English students from the foreign department.

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