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# THE USE OF MOBILE ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (MALL)TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

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## **ABSTRACT**

Due to the advert of the innovative technology, there have been tremendous changes in almost all fields throughout the world for the last seventy years. It has also resulted in for the changes that have been taking place in the field of education. The introduction of technology in education has given a new shape for learning and concept of learning has entirely taken a new shape. As a result,

there is no room for old-fashioned concepts of teacher-centered learning and traditional teaching methods. Instead, the concept of learner-centered learning and the use of innovative techniques and approaches have been developing very fast. Eventually, the learners are encouraged to learn on their own. In the field of ELT also, the teachers have been utilizing the state-of-the-art technology in order to motivate the learners learn the language skills efficaciously. The present generation learners have been widely using technology to learn English on their own. At this juncture, the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has become very useful for them in learning the new contracts and it has also showed them a way towards learner autonomy. With the usage of mobile technology in the English classrooms, the learners have been developing their language learning skills enormously even in and outside their classrooms. Hence, the teachers of English should always encourage their learners to make use of the available mobile technology in the classroom so that their burden will be reduced since the learning takes place in a learnerfriendly environment. This paper unveils the use of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) technology in teaching and learning in English classrooms. So, this paper firstly brings out the importance of the latest technological innovations in various fields. Later, it focuses on the changes that have taken place in education. Later, this paper explores the effects of using technological devices, specifically, mobile technology. This paper enlightens the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in teaching and learning in English classrooms and also explores the ways of utilizing it in a proper way to enhance the learners'

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learning skills. Finally, this paper gives some valuable suggestions to the teachers as well as learners of English in improving their styles of teaching and learning skills abundantly.

**Key words:** autonomy, learners, MALL, teaching and learning, teachers, technology.

## Introduction

The twenty-first century has unfasteneddoorways for many spectacular vicissitudes all around the globe. The technological innovations have brought drastic changes in the lives of human beings. Due to the technological advantages, there is a prodigious advancement in all major fields such as science, medicine, research, engineering and technology, education, pharmacy, business, information technology and communication, international trade and commerce, software and hardware, travel and tourism, fashion technology and designing, transport and so on. Human beings are now enjoying each and every second of their lives because of the advancement of science and technology.

# The Advantages of Modern Technology in Various Fields

With the introduction of technology, there has been a great progress in the field of science and it has brought about numerous outstanding advantages to mankind. The enormous enhancements happed in the field of medical sciences have helped in lengthening the lives of human beings' expectancy and reducing the infant mortality rate. While performing many critical major operations also, the doctors can take advice online from experts all over the world. It has helped human beings to establish their lives in other planets. It has also abetted them not only to revive their life styles but also to improve their physical environment in which they live in. It has also helped mankind to have faster transportation on land, in sea and air by saving more time for them. Furthermore, people can reach any place with the help of GPS using through the internet and also people can do online bank transactions, online interviews and online shopping and many international companies established their branches in foreign countries and know the status and progress of the company through the internet. People can search for everything and can get detailed information about it. Man has advanced in the field of agriculture using the latest technology. Due to the latest discoveries and inventions of new mechanization, novel techniques of irrigation, better seeds and pest control, has resulted in the increase of the productivity levels on farms.

The invention of computers hasbeen a great boon for mankind and they are widely used in all fields today in order to achieve mind-boggling achievement. People can send and receive messages, letters, files, documents, photos, videos, audio clippings within a fraction of seconds to people who live all around the globe. Due to the modern technology, engineers are able to construct huge and tall buildings, long bridges over the seas and oceans. Even the tourists can book their tickets online and reserve hotel rooms. Moreover, people can watch the latest released movies online and also watch news. People can also communicate online using the existing technology internationally. They can have video conferencing to attend

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international and national seminars, arrange meetings with the managements of different companies, give training courses for the employees, interviews, communicate well with the family members and friends and even to clarify some doubts. People also can read newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals online. With the introduction of robots in large scale industries, the burden of labour has been reduced and it has led to the saving of time and money. Cybercrime has been under control and even the normal crime rate has drastically come down. In the field of education also, there are tremendous changes with the introduction of technology and the concept of teaching and learning have taken a new dimension. The modern classrooms are well equipped with the latest technology and they help both teachers and learners in improving their teaching as well as learning skills. Let us examine how the modern technology is useful in the present education system.

# The Advantages of Technology in the Present Education System

Technology has resulted in remarkable changes in the field of education. Due to the dawn of innovations of technology, there have been latest developments in the teaching and learning styles of both teachers and learners. The traditional concept of chalk and board has been changed and the modern classrooms are equipped with the latest digital boards or smart boards. Also, the normal textbooks have been replaced by e-books. Even a majority of classrooms are provided with computers, OHPs, DVD players, scanners and so on along with Wi-Fi connection. The teachers of the present generation have been utilizing these modern technological devices to create new and innovative materials, design tests and examinations, teach lessons using PowerPoint presentations and slides, download the necessary materials useful for their teaching, send assignments to the learners, send the progress of their learners to the management and parents, refresh their knowledge and discuss with the teacher community all around the world to clarify their doubts and so on. Since the concept of learning has been changed, the modern teachers have been implementing the latest techniques and approaches in their teaching in order to motivate the learners towards their teaching.

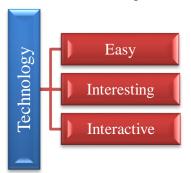


Fig.: The Impact of Technology on Learning

Due to the impact of technology, learning has become so easy, interesting and interactive. The learning of any subject has become more convenient for the learners because of the available technology and there is no need to go to the library or to ask anyone for any kinds of doubts. The learners can easily access the internet and get the information instantly.

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Furthermore, learning has become so interesting for the learners because they can access the internet and learn the subject on their own and at their own convenient time. Then the technology has also made them interact with their peers and teachers and learn the concepts well. They can clarify their doubts and enhance their knowledge of the subject vastly.

Teaching has been done in the learner-centered approach and there is no room for teacher-centeredness. The whole teaching and learning have been taking place with full of activities, tasks and discussions and the learners are given an opportunity to work in groups or pairs to perform the given tasks. Therefore, the learners take this opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers and do their tasks by sharing information among the members of the group and the teachers assist them as facilitators whenever they find some difficulty in solving the problems. By implementing collaborative approach in performing the given tasks, the learners will be able to work on their own and even the average learners can learn many things and contribute something to finish their tasks successfully. The present teachers are also using their mobile phones in their classrooms in order to retrieve information from the internet and make their lessons lively and attractive for the learners to pay more attention on the concept they are teaching.

Since there is a lot of information available on the internet, the teachers have been utilizing this opportunity of downloading some interesting and needful material to motivate the learners. Ever since the teachers have been using the latest technologies in their classrooms, the learners are very active and dynamic in their learning. Therefore, technology plays a vital role in learning environment and it is obvious in learning a second or foreign language like English. Moreover, the teachers are also welcoming the learners to bring their mobile devises into the classrooms to learn the things on their own, try to solve their own problems, learn more new things, do assignments and homework at their leisure time and continue their learning in and outside of their classrooms that make their learning a productive one.

# The introduction of Mobile Technology in Education

With the advent of mobile technology, the entire system of education has taken new avenues and teaching and learning has become more learner-centered and it has led the learners to become more autonomous. Furthermore, the burden of the teachers has been reduced since the learners use mobile technology on their own and learn the new things on their own. According to the Horizon Report (Johnson, Smith, Willis, Levine & Haywood: 2011), "M-learning would finally become part of mainstream higher education". Furthermore, Ally (2009) states, "Mobile learning is the process of using a mobile device to access and study learning materials to communicate with fellow students, instructors or institution". Levy (2005) asserts, "Archetypal examples of the devices used for mobile learning include cell phones, smartphones, palmtops and handheld computers, tablet PCs, laptops and personal media players. M-learning is already popular in some subjects such as languages". The concept of using mobile devices in the classrooms not only enhances the learners' learning but also leads them to be independent learners. With the use of mobile technology, the learners can work on their won to know the needed information and develop their learning

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skills both in and outside of the classrooms whenever they want. The latest mobile technology is more useful not only for the teachers to teach the learners in an innovative way but also for the learners to learn some new concepts that are not taught by the teachers and to learn some additional information that is taught in the classrooms. The learners widely use of their mobile devices in and outside their classroom to learn new things, perform tasks, do assignments, improve language skills, enrich vocabulary and grammar, send and receive messages, play language games and so on. The teachers should inform the students to make use of their mobile devices only to improve their learning and not for some other purposes. Moreover, the learners can make use of their mobile devices to download some useful apps related to language games, vocabulary, general knowledge, short stories, comics, subjects they study and so on that are useful for developing their learning skills. There are many educational institutions that allow students their own mobile devices and they also proved that learners' learning skills developed enormously and attained the best results.

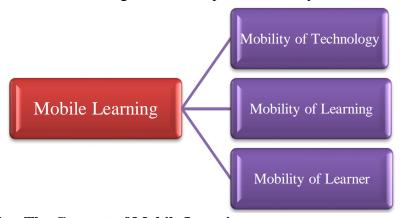


Fig.: The Concept of Mobile Learning

With the introduction of mobile technology in education, there have been wonderful advantages in the field of education. With the concept of mobile learning, the entire learning system has taken many new directions. Mobile learning has paved a new path to mobility of technology, mobility of learning and mobility of learner. There have been constant changes in technology and these technological changes serve the teachers and learners greatly in their teaching and learning. Furthermore, the concept of learning from the teachers has entirely changed into self-learning and the learning takes place not only in the classroom but also outside of the classroom. Similarly, mobile has also given a new direction for the learners to learn the concepts on their own and it leads them to become independent learners. Mobile learning also encourages the learners to learn the desired information or topic anywhere and anytime.

# Studies on Mobile or Smart phone Users

Based on the report given by Newzoo (2018), people total number of smartphone users were 2,491 million in 2016 and 2,741 million in 2017 and nearly 3 billion (2,995 million) in 2018, with the Asia-Pacific region accounting for more than half of that number. The report further says, "In addition to telephony, 2000s-era mobile phones support a variety of other services,

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such as text messaging, MMS, email, Internet access, short-range wireless communications (infrared, Bluetooth), business applications, video games and digital photography. Mobile phones offering only those capabilities are known as feature phones; mobile phones which offer greatly advanced computing capabilities are referred to as smartphones". The report unveils that the number of smartphone users has been increasing year by year. Another survey conducted by American Life Project and Pew Internet indicates in their report, "89% of American adults currently have a cell phone, and 47% of American adults own a smart phone. Furthermore, more than half of all cell owners use their phones to go online, and three-quarters of smart-phone users use location-based services, such as maps to find their way around, or Foursquare to check in".It shows that the Americans use smartphones abundantly to access the information from restaurant reviews to social media.

According to another survey organized by the Bank of America (2016), nearly 50% of the US people have their own smartphones and among them, 96% of the millennial aged youth from 18 to 24 years pronounced that smartphones are very important for them. The survey also discloses that the smartphones are frequently checked by the individual Americans for every 6.5 minutes. All these studies reveal that the use of smartphone technology has been used all over the world and all the people around the globe have been benefitted a lot from it.

# The Concept of Introducing BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) into the Classrooms



Fig.: Introducing the Concept of BOYD into the Classrooms

Countries like the United States, allow the learners to bring their devices by introducing the concept of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) and the learners work on the given tasks using their own devices and getting better results in their studies. A study conducted by Pew Research Center reveals that the American teachers use smartphones more than that of the average American adults. A majority of smartphones are used by the American teachers to build tech-savviness into their lesson plans by embracing BYOD (bring-your-own-device) policies which resulted in having an iPad for every student. The report also asserts that most of the American schools are getting better results only because they have been implementing

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BOYD policies. The use of the latest technology in the classrooms not only promotes the learners' learning skills but also gives proper encouragement for the learners to learn new concepts on their own. Therefore, the teachers should always encourage the learners to bring their devices and utilize them properly in their classroom in order to make their teaching and learning in a more learner-centered environment.

## Studies on the Use of Mobile Phones in the Classrooms

Several studies have been done on the use of mobile phones in the classrooms. In a corporate study held in England in 2012 on how the students from each school use their mobile devices are used during the classroom hours. The study reveals, "Most of the students rely on their mobile phones to keep them organized. The students frequently use their mobile phones for the features such as camera, alarms and calendar. The camera is generally used to take pictures of the notes given by the teachers". Finally, the study recommends from its findings that mobile devices are very much suitable learning tools to learn the subjects in the classrooms. The report further says, "There is clear evidence that many pupils feel that they are deriving educational benefit from the use of their devices. They are using many of the features of their devices and often finding creative ways to employ these features in their schoolwork, both at home and at school". Therefore, it is understood that there are several benefitsfor learners by using the mobile phones in the classrooms.

Another study conducted by Abilene Christian University reveals that the learners were highly motivated in completing their lessons on mobile devices than the learning that they normally do through the traditional textbooks and workbooks. There was one more survey done by PBS Kids in partnership with the US Department of Education and the reports of the survey unveils that the kids of three to seven age group have improved their vocabulary nearly 31% when they use Martha Speaks mobile app effectively. Since these studies reveal that the use of mobile phones in the classrooms enhances the learners' learning skills enormously, it is more appropriate for the teachers to allow the learners to bring their mobile devices into the classrooms. It also results in attaining good results as the learners participate in the classroom activities with more interest and proper motivation.

# The Advantages of MALL in Teaching and Learning English

Since mobile devices are so useful for the learners to learn the language in a systematic way, the teachers should always encourage their learners to use the mobile phones in the classrooms to involve the learners in the learning process with more interest and higher level of motivation. It also leads them to be independent learners so that the teachers can only facilitate their leaning styles and needs. Stockwell and Hubbard (2013: 11) claim, "Mobile-assisted language learning is quickly to securing its place in language learning contexts, and the availability of the powerful tools that learners possess makes it an attractive supplement to other forms of teaching and learning a second language". A study by Chen, Chung & Yen (2012) shows that cell phones are flexible tools which have the potential to be exploited to cater to the needs of language learning students". Furthermore, Georgiev, Gerogeiva and Smrikarov (2004: 28) claim, "Mobile learning is the process of using a mobile device to

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access ad study learning materials and to communicate with fellow students, instructors or institution". While learning English, the learners have to practise the language as often as possible and they have to keep up with the real-world use of the language by using the mobile phones in a smart way.

Using the mobile phones, the learners can download as many e-books as possible to their mobile phones in an easy way. The young ESL/EFL learners can download some children's books and story books as these books are easy for the learners to read and they also help the learners with their rudimentary level of English. As their learning process progresses steadily, they can shift to the advanced level and finally to more advanced level. At this point, the learners are suggested to read more interesting stories and other books according to their own choices. Initially, the teachers should help the learners in choosing the right book to improve their reading as well as comprehension skills. Moreover, the learners can also download some important and useful newspapers as well as magazines that are more useful for them in developing their reading skills.

Mobile phones are more useful in practising speaking skills also. The learners who cannot speak English with their friends and family members can use the mobile phones to text and call their friends, especially with English speaking friends or read posts. This really helpsthe learners to boost their understanding of how the language is used outside of the classrooms and they can also develop their vocabulary as well as grammar well. Another way of encouraging the learners to use their mobile phones is to ask their teachers some questions on Twitter throughout the lesson as there will be some shy or timid learners who cannot participate in the direct classroom interaction. It also encourages the learners and to ensure that they don't forget or miss some important questions. So learners of English can also make use of social media to improve their standards of English.

Furthermore, there are several apps that are more useful for both teachers as well as learners to develop their teaching and learning skills efficaciously. The teachers of English can use these apps to teach their learners in an entirely different way and the learners can understand the content easily. Also, the learners can get an opportunity to make use of the available learners' apps and practise more on the topic taught by doing more tasks related to it. In this regard, the teachers should encourage the learners to use their mobile phones not only in the classrooms but also out of the classrooms where the learners can access them anywhere and anytime. Indeed, this kind of practice encourages the learners to read more and more and it leads them to be independent learners. The English language learners use mobile apps to enhance their language skills, vocabulary, language games, thesauruses, dictionaries, reading comprehension, grammar, idioms and phrases and so on. Furthermore, the learners also can use these apps at their convenient time and use them wherever they want to learn the language in a more convenient and easy way.

Mobile phones are also used in the classrooms for quick reference. For example, Merriam-Webster Dictionary App and Webster's Thesaurus App help the learners to find the word definitions, spelling and alternative word choices in a short time. There are some apps to look

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up news articles online using mobile phones such as News-O-Matic App which covers relevant news of the day through games, videos, maps and images. These articles create interest among the learners since all the articles are written by children with a wide range of topics. As there are options for individual learners to login, they can get a chance of working at their own pace by taking their convenient time in the areas of their interests.

The teachers of English can use various apps to improve the learners English. Among them, 'Hello English' is one among them that covers various aspects of language learning, including grammar, vocabulary, spellings, translation, reading and speaking skills. This app is useful for the learners

With the dawn of the internet technology, there are e-books and the traditional textbooks have become outdated. E-books reach the readers very fast and they are always available online and many among them are free to access. They allow real-time updates so these are very useful both to the teachers as well as the learners to use them with the use of internet. Through internet, teachers can send assignments or homework or text questions to the learners via text and then they ask the learners to send the given tasks. This allows the teachers to do in an effective and interactive approach to learning. With internet technology, the students get immediate and real-time feedback on their responses to the given assignments and this promotes the learners to learn from their own mistakes. Pew Research found in their survey that 60 text messages are sent by the American teens per day that makes this an effective way to reach the learners in a medium that is very close to universally used. In another study, The OneVille Project has tracked teachers and their experiences with texting high school students. The study says that the students are motivated in attending the school and completing their work on time while using access to the mobile phones and the learners have text message access to their teachers. Furthermore, the learners can have transition from working in their regular classrooms to working at anywhere outside of the classrooms by taking the advantage of the internet. With this seamless cloud learning, the learners can have the access to their mobile phones, computers, laptops, tablets and so on. This seamless cloud learning not only saves the learners' time but also improves their organizational skills. Mobile learning helps the learners learn many more new things and comprehend that knowledge to make it a meaningful learning. Mobile devices are useful for the learners to sync information between school and home and they will stay on task and the learners will get significant progress in their academic achievement. Since mobile devices are not silver bullets, in this age of information and technology, the teachers of English should balance the educational advantages of mobile phones with needful and healthy teachinginteraction so that there will be a right key to maximize the worth of both.

The use of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) technology in the English classrooms has given a new shape and meaning to teaching and learning the English language. Since there are many advantages of mobile devices, the teachers as well as the learners should use them purely for their teaching and learning purposes and achieve greater results in their

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sincere and honest efforts and make their teaching and learning in learner-friendly environment.

#### Conclusion

In this paper, an attempt has been made to demonstrate the use of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) technology in teaching and learning in English classrooms. So, this paper has firstly brought out the importance of the latest technological innovations in various fields. Later, it has focused on the changes that have taken place in education. Later, this paper has also explored the effects of using technological devices, specifically, mobile technology. This paper has mainly aimed at the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in teaching and learning in English classrooms and also explored the ways of utilizing it in a proper way to enhance the learners' learning skills. Finally, this paper has given some valuable suggestions to the teachers as well as learners of English in improving their styles of teaching and learning skills abundantly.

Information and communication technology has brought radicalchanges in the present education system. The traditional teaching methods such as lecture method andteachercentered approach have been completely replaced by the latest methods of interactive method and student-centered approach. Even there are many new technological innovations, the learners have been learning their subject with a lot of interest and paying more attention towards learning the language in an entirely different style. With the introduction of mobile phones in the classrooms, both the teachers and learners have benefitted a lot in their teaching as well as learning English language skills. Since the learners can use the mobile devices in and outside of their classrooms anytime and anywhere, they can learn the subjects on their own. Since mobile phones are user-friendly, the teachers of English are advised to make use of them for their teaching and download the materials that are useful to teach in their classrooms. Furthermore, the teachers should motivate the learners to utilize the mobile devices in a proper way to learn the language skills of English systematically. And the learners are also advised to use the mobile phones only for their academic purposes and not to misuse them for any other purposes that damage their future career. Hence, the learners have to utilize the mobile phones in a right way to enhance their language skills. Once the learners use their mobile phones or mobile devices properly and the teachers use them effectively in their classrooms, the purpose of introducing mobile assisted language learning (MALL) technology will be a great success in teaching and learning in English classrooms.

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