

MALL TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

The article is aimed at studying the benefits of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) in a foreign language educational setting, as well as at analyzing the peculiarities of teachers' using different mobile devices (tablets, smart phones) in the process of foreign language learning. Also, studied in the article are various possibilities of using MALL to develop all language skills. The issues of enhancing learners' autonomy by means of MALL have been considered. Applying MALL technology in traditional and modern teaching approaches have been compared. Modern challenges that teachers face when working with MALL technology have been analyzed, thus proving the growing need for increasing teachers' and students' motivation to exploit Mobile Assisted Language Learning.

Regarding the pressing issue of increasing learner autonomy, it has been proved that MALL technology provides students with new ways to experience active learning and to explore other forms of academic cooperation, owing to the current demand for more individual activity of students in view of new opportunities made available by the digital progress. As for its teaching potential, MALL is viewed as a means to improve teaching skills, expand classroom boundaries and revitalize language curricula. Thus, the notion of MALL has been studied in the light of teaching needs.

The following benefits of using MALL in a foreign-language educational setting have been identified: portability; social interactivity; context sensitivity; connectivity; individuality; motivation in extensive learning, etc. Furthermore, it has been stated that working with MALL technology is regarded as an activity which can be used to encourage both independent and collaborative learning experiences, helps to combat resistance to the use of ICT, as well helps learners to remain focused for longer periods, etc. On the other hand, Mobile Assisted Language Learning as a young discipline needs more scientific investigation and experiments.

Key words: MALL, t-MALL, mobile technology, language skills, foreign language teaching.

The cooperative nature of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) stimulates its participants to communication and interchange of thoughts, ideas, etc. This, in turn, leads to the development of peer assessment among learners, which is one of the ultimate aims of modern language education. The promotion of autonomy by means of MALL has been acknowledged by a vast number of researchers [1; 2; 5; 8] and is hardly worth questioning. While its specific features are still being investigated in scientific circles, its main focus on enhancing interaction and active learning has been accepted by both teachers and learners as a significant part of the educational setting.

MALL is a subfield of computer assisted language learning and a relatively young discipline, which explains the lack of fundamental theoretical research and common understanding of its conceptual framework, though teachers' attention is being increasingly focused on implementing MALL in their practical day-to-day work. As MALL is becoming a regular tool for language education, the gap between theory and practice encourages scientists all around the globe to initiate studies and conduct experiments as to MALL's pros and cons, as well as the roles of its participants on a big scale.

The focus of the present paper is on the study of MALL technology in the foreign-language educational environment and the implementation of mobile learning in the language teaching process.

The definition that reveals the meaning of MALL to the fullest was suggested by L. Shield and A. Kukulska-Hulme and is still an authoritative opinion in the doctrine of MALL: «MALL uses a wide range of devices, often with internet connectivity, from ultra portable laptops and handhelds to mobile phones, digital voice recorders, MP3 and MP4 players, digital cameras and video recorders. In other words, MALL devices are not necessarily computers, although a computer, whether desktop, laptop or handheld is usually involved at some point, if only to connect to the internet. Furthermore, MALL has the potential to assist learners at the exact point of need and in ways that are congruent with learners' increasingly mobile always connected lifestyles» [5, p. 249].

E. Klopfer suggests the following benefits of using mobile phones in an English speaking classroom:

- Portability – device is taken to different places due to a small size and weight.
- Social interactivity – exchanging data and collaboration with other learners.
- Context sensitivity – the data on the mobile phone / device can be gathered in and responded uniquely to the current location and time.

– Connectivity – mobile devices can be connected to other devices, data collection devices or a common network by creating a shared network.

– Individuality – activity platforms can be customized for individual learners [4].

While discussing the advantages of using MALL in ESL classrooms, researchers [9] distinguish the following benefits of mobile learning in education:

– it can be used to encourage both independent and collaborative learning experiences;

– it helps students to identify the areas where they need assistance and support;

– mobile learning helps to combat resistance to the use of ICT and can help bridge the gap between mobile phone literacy and ICT literacy;

– it helps to remove some of the formality from the learning experience and engages reluctant learners;

– mobile learning helps learners to remain focused for longer periods;

– mobile learning helps to raise self-esteem;

– it helps to raise self-confidence [9, p. 25].

MALL promotes modern approaches to teaching (collaborative and constructivist activities), as well as traditional approaches (content transmission, etc.) [6, p. 317]. This causes new challenges to teachers nowadays in terms of their readiness and ability to embrace the new technology and successfully implement it. So far, the research of MALL has been mostly focused on how language learning can benefit from it, while language teaching has not yet enjoyed the same amount of attention.

It is absolutely clear from the pedagogical point of view that effective introduction and exploitation of MALL and language learning setting hugely depend on the skills, motivation and willingness of teachers to do so. As T. Read and A. Kukulska correctly state: «if the students are left alone to practise, they are unlikely to continue over a sustained period of time. This is particularly true for the students working at a distance who are prone to abandon learning activities if they do not feel them completely relevant to their overall goals» [8, p. 1329]. Being a highly creative process, MALL pushes educators to shift their view of the learning process and accept their new role in a teacher-student relationship. That is why today's teachers need to question themselves whether they are up to the task to understand and use MALL within and beyond a language classroom on a daily basis.

The researchers distinguish three major areas of issues that have been concerning language learning participants from the start: technical, pedagogical and attitudinal [6, p. 316]. The technical side concerns disadvantages inherent in hand-held devices before the advent of tablets (limited-size screens, problems with visual perusal of the devices, limited data capacity). The pedagogical concerns refer to the role of teachers and challenges they have to face in the present situation. The attitudinal issues mostly deal with motivation of the participants to work with MALL resources and independently select the necessary tools to meet their educational needs.

The introduction of t-MALL (tablet MALL) has successfully resolved the previous technical problems and widened the horizons of mobile learning: «Tablet Mobile Assisted Language Learning expands MALL to include learning languages with tablet computers. T-MALL recognizes the similarities and the differences in learning potentials between tablet computers and smart phones» [3, p. 254].

The question remains if MALL is as successful with learners' experience as it is with the teaching process. To answer this question, we will need to study various effects of mobile learning on teaching experience during a larger set of experiments. Meanwhile, there has been suggested a list of MALL benefits [9] that improve teaching quality:

– revitalizing the curriculum, rethinking teaching methods and implementing improved feedback to learners;

– turning geographically dispersed learners into a valuable teaching resource by enabling them to contribute their local knowledge and research data more easily;

– supporting learner retention, progression and transition [9, p. 26].

If talking about the actual curriculum with mobile learning implemented within it, some scientists express a concern that «developing curriculum for mobile phones requires understanding of both the delivery platform and good instructional practices. At present, the technology supports mostly static, non-interactive content. Viewers can listen and view content, but not do much more» [1, p. 402]. This relates to the teaching side of MALL exploitation and for the time being calls for teachers' pedagogical potential to seamlessly apply it, but with the development of modern technology we can expect a more flexible and interactive content in the near future.

The problem of utilization of MALL in class still requires further research, though several attempts have been undertaken to determine whether mobile assisted learning is applicable to all areas of foreign language learning. The authors M. Park and T. Slater carefully examined in their experiment how the development of different language skills can benefit from mobile learning. For instance, with reading learners have the possibility to read a text on/offline, read news, articles, novels, look up vocabulary, browse websites, read Internet polls, etc. In developing listening skills participants can watch news, listen to music, watch or listen to podcasts and radio, watch YouTube, listen to pronunciation, listen to voice messages, watch class lectures, etc. To improve learners' speaking we can use formal phone calls, video chatting, record voicemails and notes, voice search. In developing writing skills, there are a great number of possibilities how to implement MALL: writing SMS, taking notes, writing e-mails, online chatting, posting on social networking sites, writing essays or reports

using online sources [7, p. 105]. As we can see, MALL possibilities are adaptable to any foreign language skills and their number will most probably grow within the next few years.

MALL technology diversifies learning foreign languages in an attempt to adapt language education to the fast-paced generation of students prone to use mobile devices. It's a perfect tool to engage even most reluctant students to create a unique learning experience. At the same time, mobile devices require a new approach from teachers as well as their willingness to work with MALL.

Further research will focus on various kinds of MALL and the peculiarities of their implementation in a foreign language setting.

References

1. Collins T. G. English Class on the Air: Mobile Language Learning with Cell Phones / Timothy G. Collins // Proceedings of the Fifth IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies (ICALT'05). – 2005. – P. 402–403.
2. Dudoladova A. V. Using podcasts in developing foreign language listening skills / A. V. Dudoladova // Вісник ЧНПУ (Серія: педагогічні науки) – Вип. 141. – Чернівці: ЧНПУ, 2016. – С. 63–65.
3. Gabarre C. T-Mall-Integrated model of engagement for student-driven learning / Gabarre C., Gabarre S., Din R. // Student-driven learning strategies for the 21st century classroom / Ed. by N. A. Alias, J. E. Luaran. – Hershey, PA : IGI Global, 2017. – P. 239-254.
4. Klopfer E. Environmental Detectives: PDAs as a window into a virtual simulated world / Klopfer E., Squire K., Jenkins H. // Proceedings of IEEE International Workshop on Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Education. – Vaxjo, Sweden : IEEE Computer Society, 2002. – P. 95–98.
5. Kukulska-Hulme A. An overview of mobile-assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction / Kukulska-Hulme A., Shield L. // ReCALL. – 20(3). – 2008. – P. 249–252.
6. Liu H. Investigating Mobile Assisted English Foreign Language Learning and Teaching in China: Issues, Attitudes and Perceptions / H. Liu, W. Tao, W. Cain // Handbook of Research on Foreign Language Education in the Digital Age / C. Wang, L. Winstead (Eds.). – Hershey, PA. : IGI Global, 2016. – P. 315–334.
7. Park M. A Typology of Tasks for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning: Recommendations from a Small-Scale Needs Analysis / Moonyoung Park, Tammy Slater // TESL CANADA JOURNAL / REVUE TESL DU CANADA 93. – Vol. 31, Special Issue 8. – 2014. – P. 93–115.
8. Read T. The Role of a Mobile App for Listening Comprehension Training in Distance Learning to Sustain Student Motivation / Read T., Kukulska-Hulme A. // Journal of Universal Computer Science. – Vol. 21. – No. 10. – 2015. – P. 1327–1338.
9. Vishwakarma A. Benefits and challenges of mobile learning in Education / Vishwakarma A. // Promoting active learning through the integration of mobile and ubiquitous technologies / Ed. by J. Keengwe. – Hershey, PA. : IGI Global, 2015. – P. 24–36.

Дудолодова А. В., Дудолодова Л. В.

РОЛЬ МОБІЛЬНИХ ЗАСОБІВ НАВЧАННЯ У ПРОЦЕСІ ВИВЧЕННЯ ТА ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

Стаття присвячена дослідженню переваг і недоліків використання мобільних засобів навчання в ініомовній освіті та, серед іншого, розгляду можливостей їхнього застосування у професійній діяльності викладачів. Висвітлено питання посилення значущості учнівської автономії та активного навчання, що вимагає застосування нових технічних засобів. Порівнюється застосування мобільних засобів навчання в межах традиційного та сучасного підходів до організації навчального процесу в ініомовній освіті.

Ключові слова: викладання іноземних мов, мобільні засоби навчання, мобільні технології, мовленнєві навички, планшет як мобільний засіб навчання.

Дудолодова А. В., Дудолодова Л. В.

РОЛЬ МОБІЛЬНИХ СРЕДСТВ ОБУЧЕНИЯ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ И ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ

Статья посвящена изучению преимуществ и недостатков применения мобильных средств обучения в иноязычном образовании, а также рассмотрению возможностей их использования в профессиональной деятельности преподавателей. Освещается вопрос возрастания значимости понятия учебной автономии, что обуславливает необходимость применения новых технических средств. Сравняется использование мобильных средств обучения в рамках традиционного и современного подходов к организации учебного процесса.

Ключевые слова: мобильные средства обучения, мобильные технологии, речевые навыки, планшет как мобильное средство обучения, преподавание иностранных языков.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 16.10.2018.