

**MOBILE APPS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH AS A MEANS OF
ORGANIZATION INDEPENDENT WORK OF STUDENTS**

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Kaharova Shahlo Shaydilloevna

*Lecturer at Bukhara state university,
Bukhara, UZBEKISTAN*

Jo'rayeva Zarina Kuntugdiyevna

*Student of Bukhara State University,
Bukhara, UZBEKISTAN*

Annotation: *The article is devoted to the actual problem of the possibilities of using information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language. The author reveals the concept of mobile learning and considers its advantages in teaching foreign languages. The article provides a brief overview of mobile applications for teaching English and the experience of using them in students' independent work.*

Key words: *information and communication technologies; mobile learning; educational mobile applications; independent work of students.*

Foreign language education is currently becoming one of the basic components in the structure of the competence-based model of specialist training. In this regard, the role of a foreign language in the training of specialists in educational institutions of higher education, in which the course of a foreign language is communicative-pragmatic and professionally oriented, is significantly increasing. Currently, higher education is faced with the task of not only modernizing the content of training courses, but also introducing new technologies for the formation of foreign language communicative competence of future specialists.

An analysis of recent research in the field of innovations in teaching foreign languages has shown that one of the relevant areas is the introduction of modern information and communication technologies into the educational process, in particular technologies related to mobile learning, which ensure the optimization of the educational process, the availability and effectiveness of learning, the integration of students to the information society. This is expressed, in particular, in the gradual introduction of applications for mobile phones based on various platforms into the learning process: Android, iOS, etc. The use of tablet computers, smartphones, mobile phones, iPad, iPhone and other technological innovations for educational purposes has led to the formation within the framework of the concept of electronic learning (e-Learning - Electronic learning) of a new direction - mobile learning of a foreign language (M-Learning - Mobile learning). Many scientists and educators are sure that the future of learning with the support of information and computer technologies is connected precisely with the spread of mobile communications, the emergence of a large number of educational applications and programs, new technologies that expand the possibilities and quality of education.

Mobile learning today is a new, developing direction in education, the hallmark of which is the creation of a new learning environment. Due to the prevalence of mobile technologies and the constant growth of the functionality of mobile devices, UNESCO experts in the field of education suggest using their potential to increase quality and accessibility of education, as well as building an individual learning trajectory. The theory and practice of using mobile devices and rich educational resources is actively discussed at scientific conferences and forums. Since 2002, a number of conferences and seminars have been held annually in Europe and the United States to discuss the use of mobile educational technologies or resources. Since 2002, the International Conference "MLearnCon" has been held on the problems of integrating mobile technologies into learning, creating and using mobile learning content. International Conference on Mobile Learning «The International Conference of Mobile Learning» (pro-conducted since 2005) is a platform for discussing the results of research in the field of mobile learning and achievements in this area. Of interest are the results of the project «Mobile Technologies in Life-long Learning: best practices». Within the framework of this project, research is being carried out on the impact of mobile technologies on increasing access to education, regardless of social and economic status, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and physical disabilities. In Europe and the United States, there are periodicals devoted to the problems of mobile training, in particular, the International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (since 2009) and the International Journal of Mobile Learning and Organization (since 2007). There are a number of major foreign projects aimed at creating a new virtual learning environment using mobile technologies. In general, most domestic and foreign researchers, in particular come to the conclusion that the uniqueness of mobile learning compared to traditional learning methods and modern methods such as e-learning and blended learning lies in the fact that students First of all, they are not tied to a specific time and place, having access to educational material always, at any convenient time.

Thus, the fundamental difference between mobile learning is two points:

- the informal nature of learning, in which the share of independent work of students, in essence, controlled or controlled self-learning, increases;
- a constant learning process, blurring the boundaries between training sessions and extracurricular time, work in the classroom and beyond.

Mobile devices are successfully used in the study of various academic disciplines, and a foreign language is no exception. The expediency of using mobile devices in the process of learning a foreign language and teaching a language is beyond doubt, based on the fact that the current generation of students, especially teenagers and young people, perceives mobile devices with their attractive interface, interactivity, and a customized approach to user needs as an integral part of your life.

Currently, users of mobile devices have access to a huge number of applications for learning foreign languages, especially English. In our opinion, training in the use of applications for mobile electronic devices at the moment is particularly relevant.

Currently, students, for all their education in the field of digital technologies, it seems to us, are not sufficiently oriented in the market of the services offered. The task of the teacher is to help students choose the necessary and appropriate products that can

maximize language learning, thereby individualizing the learning process. To date, there are mobile applications and programs focused on various aspects of teaching a foreign language.

The study of scientific literature, the market of mobile applications of foreign languages, as well as the systematization of the experience of using applications for learning a foreign language showed that they can be divided into the following main groups:

- 1) mobile applications aimed primarily at improving a certain speech skill;
- 2) mobile applications designed to develop language skills, such as vocabulary or grammar;
- 3) universal mobile applications designed for the integrated development of foreign language communicative competence.

Of course, this division is very conditional, since most of the applications are not limited to working on one of the types of speech activity or a specific skill. So, for example, applications in which learning to listen is the dominant goal, one way or another, combine listening comprehension with learning to read, speak, and develop lexical skills.

From the point of view of practical application in the process of teaching a foreign language, specialized mobile applications interested us as a means of optimizing and intensifying the educational process, as well as a resource base for development of teaching materials for the discipline "English language". From our point of view, the practical application of mobile applications has a huge potential, but at the same time, the integration of working with applications into the structure of a practical lesson presents certain problems and can be used quite limitedly. At the same time, the introduction of interactive technologies in the learning process with the aim of organizing and intensifying the independent work of students (mainly extracurricular) seems to us very promising direction. Thus, mobile applications can be quite effectively used to develop listening skills, due to the fact that modern mobile devices offer rich technical capabilities for watching videos, listening to audio fragments, recording speech fragments and video clips. Developers present programs for those who want to improve pronunciation skills, recognizing sounds by ear, correlating the sound and visual image of a word.

The most successful products include Sounds Right (British Council), as well as the Sounds app:

Pronunciation App (Macmillan Education). These applications include interactive phonetic tables for British and American English, exercises, game tasks, tests. From the point of view of developing the skills of perception and understanding of speech by ear, BBC applications are extremely valuable, using which students can access authentic audio, video and text materials, for example, Learning English for BBC, 6 Minute British English. These applications can also be used to develop other linguistic and linguocultural competencies, as they include specialized sections dedicated to the study of vocabulary, grammar, the development of communication skills and speaking skills. In free applications developed as part of the British Council educational programs - Learn English Audio & Video, Learn English Great Videos, Learn English Elementary Podcasts - The best podcasts and videos for learning English. Applications are provided with a number of

additional functionalities, such as interactive texts of audio recordings, interactive glossaries of keywords, exercises to understand each part of the information material. They present materials of different levels of complexity, allowing you to improve your listening comprehension skills, as well as replenish your vocabulary.

Mobile applications Two Minute English, Real English, Puzzle English, built on teaching listening comprehension, are also of considerable interest to English language teachers and students, since they contain a huge amount of resources and tasks for working on this highly demanded and often underdeveloped speech skill for students. In general, all the mentioned applications have a high motivational potential due to the wide variety of topics and forms, therefore, they can be used for independent work of students. Next, we will consider a number of applications designed for the formation and development of grammatical skills, which can be used both for classroom work and for independent work of students. Among mobile applications designed to work on the development of grammatical skills, one should first of all name the Learn English Grammar application (British Council).

It contains four levels of grammar exercises. The training tasks use 10 types of exercises, such as filling in the blanks, multiple choices, matching questions and answers. It should be noted that the Learn English Grammar app is ranked #1 in the iTunes Education category in 9 countries around the world, and is also in the top 10 in more than 40 countries. Another British Council app, Johnny Grammar's Word Challenge, is a quiz for English learners that will test not only general grammar skills, but also spelling and vocabulary used in everyday English. Tests are divided into categories (Words, Grammar, Spelling) within three difficulty levels. Pearson's free MyGrammarLab course app contains mobile interactive exercises at various levels. The application gives the user the opportunity to choose topics and questions that interest him and create his own collections of exercises and tests.

This course is suitable for both self-study and for use as part of a group English course. Another handy application for checking English grammar knowledge is English Grammar Test. The application contains 60 tests, each of which is devoted to a separate grammatical topic. After completing the test, the application provides a list of correct and incorrect answers, as well as a simple and understandable explanation of the errors.

Next, we would like to focus on applications that are designed to develop lexical skills and expand the vocabulary of students. Many of these electronic applications are designed for self-study of foreign languages and are built on a game basis. The MyWordBook application, available on the British Council website, is designed as an interactive notebook for English learners. Vocabulary in the application is presented in the form of sets of interactive flash cards, organized both in random order and in the form of thematic groups, distributed by difficulty levels.

Each flashcard comes with a definition and usage example from the Cambridge University Press Dictionary, translation, note pads, audio example, and image. The "Practice" section contains five types of tasks, after which the user can move the word to the list of learned vocabulary. Other applications popular with users designed to work on expanding vocabulary through exciting activities in a playful way include English with

Words, Easy ten, Polyglot. English words, Memorize. These applications are distinguished by an individualized approach to the needs of the user, in particular, they include such features as the ability to create individual word lists, voiced words and contexts of use, individual learning schedules, various types of training tasks, interactive and game components (for example, user success statistics, cards for repeating the material covered, a point reward system).

Sections for the development of lexical skills are also included in other applications that we considered above (Johnny Grammar's Word Challenge, Learning English for BBC, Puzzle English and many others).

In our opinion, many applications for vocabulary replenishment can be used, first of all, for independent work of students, for the activation and development of lexical skills within the framework of the topics studied, for self-testing. However, it should be noted that not all applications have high-quality language content, various types of tasks and do not fully use the technical capabilities that modern mobile devices are endowed with. A single review allows us to conclude that today a significant number of mobile applications and programs for learning a foreign language have been developed, aimed both at the formation of various skills and abilities, and at the development of various types of speech activity. A sufficiently wide range and variety of existing mobile learning resources allow you to choose applications in accordance with the individual needs, interests and level of language training of the student.

Almost all mobile applications that were described above can be used quite effectively for independent work. From our point of view, the practical application of mobile applications has a huge potential to increase the effectiveness of the process of learning foreign languages and can significantly improve the process of foreign language training of students, open up new aspects of it and turn it from a serious labor-intensive process into an exciting activity. Practice shows that they have a considerable advantage over traditional teaching methods: intensification of independent activity, individualization of learning, increased cognitive activity and learning motivation.

At the same time, the use of mobile technologies in the learning process contributes not only to the enrichment of the educational process, but also to the acquisition by students of skills and abilities, the formation and development of which on the basis of traditional teaching aids seems to be quite laborious. Thus, the use of mobile technologies in the educational process contributes to the improvement of the process of formation of foreign language skills and abilities of students, ensures effective independent work, increases the motivation and cognitive activity of students, interest in the subject, helps to intensify and individualize learning.

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