

Lecturer : Israa Eibead Ajaj Specialization: Methods of Teaching English Language The scientific title: Lecturer University: Tikrit College – Medicine Department: Pharmaceutical E-Mail : <u>xd425057@tu.edu.iq</u>



أهمية استخدام الهواتف الذكية والأجهزة اللوحية في دعم تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية في العراق

> م. إسراء عبيد عجاج جامعة تكريت – كلية الطب العام البريد الالكتروني : <u>xd425057@tu.edu.iq</u>



#### Abstract:

The study aimed to discuss the importance of using smartphone and tablets in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq. This study employed qualitative research through the investigation of the literature, a technique meant to first determine the present situation surrounding an event before attempting to explain it. The potential advantages of mobile learning are thoroughly discussed in the literature review, with special attention to how it can support a range of learning styles, meet a variety of needs, and improve student engagement and interaction. The study highlights prior research that highlights the favorable reception and acceptance of mobile-assisted language learning among students, teachers, and institutions. This indicates the potential of these devices to enhance language acquisition and teaching approaches. The recommendations call for a thorough investigation into the use of mobile devices in the classroom. They place a strong emphasis on contrasting traditional teaching methods with tablet/smartphone approaches, looking into specialized teacher training for technology-assisted language learning, analyzing inclusivity features for students with disabilities, examining the effects of culture and society on language instruction, investigating community and parental involvement, and conducting a cross-cultural analysis outside of Iraq to comprehend the effectiveness of mobile devices in a variety of educational settings worldwide. Keywords: Smartphone; Tablets; English Language; Learning; Students; Mobile Learning; Secondary School; Iraq.

الملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى مناقشة أهمية استخدام الهواتف الذكية والأجهزة اللوحية في دعم تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية في العراق. استخدمت هذه الدراسة البحث النوعي من خلال دراسة الأدبيات، وهي تقنية تهدف أولاً إلى تحديد الوضع الحالي المحيط بالحدث قبل محاولة تفسيره. كما تمت مناقشة المزايا المحتملة للتعلم المتنقل بشكل شامل في مراجعة الأدبيات، مع إيلاء اهتمام خاص لكيفية دعم مجموعة متنوعة من أساليب التعلم، وتلبية مجموعة متنوعة من الاحتياجات، وتحسين مشاركة الطلاب وتفاعلهم. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على الأبحاث المانبية التي تسلط الضوء على الاستقبال والقبول الإيجابي لتعلم اللغة بمساعدة الهاتف المحمول بين الطلاب والمعلمين والمؤسسات. ويشير هذا إلى قدرة هذه الأجهزة على تعزيز اكتساب اللغة وأساليب التدريس. وتدعو المعلمين والمؤسسات. ويشير هذا إلى قدرة هذه الأجهزة على تعزيز اكتساب اللغة وأساليب التدريس. وتدعو مقارنة أساليب التدريس التقليدية مع مناهج الكمبيوتر اللوحي/الهاتف الذكي، والنظر في تدريب المعلمين مقارنة أساليب التدريس التقليدية مع مناهج الكمبيوتر اللوحي/الهاتف الذكي، والنظر في تدريب المعلمين والمجمع على تعليم اللغة بمساعدة التكنولوجيا، وتحليل ميزات الشمولية للطلاب ذوي الإعاقة، ودراسة آثار الثقافة والمجمع على تعليم اللغة، والتحقيق في المجتمع و مشاركة أولياء الأمور، وإجراء تحليل متعدد الثقافات خارج المانية النيب التدريس التقليدية مع مناهج الكمبيوتر اللوحي/الهاتف الذكي، والنظر في تدريب المعلمين المؤرية أساليب الندريس التقليدية مع مناهج الكمبيوتر اللوحي/الهاتف الذكي، والنظر في تدريب المعلمين المؤرية والينية اللغة بمساعدة التكنولوجيا، وتحليل ميزات الشمولية للطلاب ذوي الإعاقة، ودراسة آثار الثقافة والمجتمع على تعليم اللغة، والتحقيق في المجتمع و مشاركة أولياء الأمور، وإجراء تحليل متعدد الثقافات خارج العراق لفهم فعالية الأجهزة المحمولة في مجموعة من البيئات التعليمية في جميع أندا الثقافة العراق الفهم فعالية الأخبين المحقية المختمع و مشاركة أولياء الأمور، وإجراء تحليل متعدد الثقافات خارج العراق الفهم فعالية الأخبي المونة في مجموعة متنوعة من البيئات التعليمية في جميع أنحاء العالم.

## **1. Introduction**

In a global university, the use of mobile applications and technology resources is still in its infancy. To ensure successful integration, new models, methods, systems, and applications must be developed and implemented. To create a more effective and efficient learning environment, university instructors must reorganize the current curriculum. Universities, educators, and administrators must recognize and comprehend the shifts in the attitudes that today's students have toward learning. Learning materials should be created with learners' needs and daily lives in mind (Farrah and Abu-Dawood, 2018; P:13).

Since mobile applications speed up a multidisciplinary view of learning and present new opportunities, they allow students to have a thorough understanding of the classroom language learning process. Positive concepts and advantages that come from using smartphones in teaching and learning inspire students to study more and comprehend concepts more thoroughly (Prensky, 2005; P:3). The younger generation of learners welcomes and enjoys using technology. Typically, they show a clear willingness to use mobile learning applications (Wang, 2017; P:279).

According to Tohara (2021; P:3351), students maintain peer connections through SMS, cell phones, Facebook, Skype, online forms, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace, blogs, and other platforms. They are a part of the modern mobile digital world. However,

many educators and teachers are still hesitant to use mobile phones in particular for teaching and learning purposes; in fact, some of them even think that these tools could distract students from their studies. They continue to disagree about using mobile devices, particularly phones, in the classroom.

For these reasons, universities ought to provide teachers with training on these kinds of mobile learning environments and technologies, and they ought to motivate students to use them and incorporate them into the curriculum. If they follow through on this, the learning environment will be suitable for the learner's lifestyle, enhance their access to learning materials, and foster a creative, collaborative, and demanding learning process (Farrah and Abu-Dawood, 2018; P:62). It's time for educators and educational institutions to redesign curricula to better reflect the dynamically shifting lives of students. This will help to address a number of pressing issues, like the high rate of first-year dropouts at universities. Universities may be at the forefront of pedagogical practice when mobile learning technologies are applied, meeting students' needs for portability and flexibility (Farrah and Abu-Dawood, 2018; P:63).

#### **1.1 Research problem and questions**

Since English is a universal language and lingua franca, education in Iraq has included instruction in the language. English is being incorporated into practically every tool that people use daily. One field where English is widely used is technology, which has a significant impact on teaching and learning English, particularly in nations where English is a second language. Iraq is currently among the nations where the use of technology and the English language is widespread and has a significant influence on education. In both daily life and school, people typically use technology, such as smartphones and tablets, to learn English.

According to the research problem the research will answer these questions:

- 1. What is the importance of Smartphone in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq?
- 2. What is the importance of tablets in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq?

## **1.2 Research objectives**

The main objective of the study is to discuss the importance of using smartphone and tablets in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq.

The problem of the current study can be summarized in the following sub-objectives:

- Discuss the importance of Smartphone in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq.
- 2. Discuss the importance of tablets in supporting English language learning among secondary school students in Iraq.

## **1.3 Research importance**

This research holds considerable importance for several reasons. Firstly, the research addresses the use of technology, specifically smartphones and tablets, in the English language learning process for Iraqi secondary school students, focusing on an important facet of contemporary education. Technology is used in many aspects of daily life, so using it for education makes sense in order to meet the ever-changing needs of students. Moreover, it's critical to recognize and accommodate the preferences of modern students. The younger generations tend to be more tech-savvy and interested in online education. Understanding this tendency and modifying instruction to fit can greatly improve student engagement and

objectives. Furthermore, the research learning suggests redesigning curricula to take into account mobile learning technologies, which would represent a change in educational approaches. This modification attempts to improve the overall learning experience and lower dropout rates while also fitting in with students' lifestyles. Additionally, the survey admits that teachers are skeptical about using mobile devices in the classroom. It tries to address these issues and highlight the potential advantages these devices can bring to the learning environment by exploring the benefits and overcoming potential distractions. Finally, since English is still widely spoken, the study's emphasis on learning it with contemporary technology is applicable outside of Iraq. It offers knowledge that can be modified and used in a variety of international educational contexts.

#### 2. Research methodology

One objective of qualitative research is to gain insight into the experience and significance of people's lives and social environments (Fossey et al., 2002; P:722). Through the literature review, this research uses qualitative research, which is an approach that aims to ascertain the current circumstances surrounding a specific event prior to attempting to describe it. As such, it is concerned with accurately portraying the event and is dependent upon the study of reality or the event as it actually occurs (Creswell, 2003; P:165).

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Since it is considered a fundamental component of scientific investigation and is typically thought to be the only approach suitable for studying numerous human domains, the qualitative method is significant in research. The precise definition and quantitative and qualitative communication of the phenomenon are the main goals of the qualitative method. By definition, this entails addressing the phenomenon as it truly exists (Williams, 2007; P67).

Through a review of the literature, the research used a qualitative methodology to evaluate the mechanisms underlying the use of open source software in libraries.

### 3. Literature review and previous studies

## 3.1 Smartphone learning

The term "mobile learning," or "m-learning," refers to the way that formal and informal learning occur outside of the classroom and replaces traditional classroom-based teaching and learning methods. According to Sharples et al., (2010; P:90) study, mobile learning is an approach that deviates significantly from the theories currently in use in classrooms. It takes into account learners' mobility, covers both formal and informal learning, and examines learning as a social and constructive process as well as a personal activity driven by technology.

M-learning, according to O'Connell and Smith (2007; P:3), is defined as learning that is made easier and more convenient by the

use of portable, digital mobile devices. M-learning is defined as "any knowledge and skill acquired anywhere, anytime, through the use of mobile technology, which results in an alteration in behavior (Geddes, 2004; P:219). As the definitions above make clear, 'anywhere and anytime' access to formal or informal learning activities is what defines m-learning.

According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007; P:71), e-learning refers to a collection of technological tools that can affect language learning, such as laptops, MP3 players, and smartphones. According to Binin and Ziden (2013; P:726) and Viberg and P:176), m-learning provides Grönlund (2013;unique support learners, such competencies that self-study. as independence, information sharing, mobility, and fostering teacher-student interaction. Kukulska-Hulme et al. (2004; P:2) claim that a multitude of learning opportunities have been made possible by mobile devices, all of which are in line with the mobile lifestyle. Quick feedback or reinforcement can be provided by mobile technology; immersive experiences like mobile games or research put learning in a real-world setting where record-keeping and information exchange are important components of informal and lifetime learning.

#### **3.2 Using tablets in learning**

Teachers are better equipped to meet the diverse learning needs of their students when they have tablets in the classroom. For example, it caters to the needs of visual learners by offering instructional videos and pictures related to the subject matter being studied. It satisfies auditory learners' needs for learning. For example, it offers auditory learners audio resources (voice recording, for example) (Schnackenberg, 2013; P:47). It should be mentioned that teaching impaired students with tablets can be done successfully. Students with disabilities will be more actively involved in the teaching-learning process when this use is made. According to Wiley et al. (2014; P:34), it will boost the independence of students with disabilities in the classroom. It will improve the organization of learning. It will encourage student independence. It will encourage a learning strategy with a purpose. To enhance the learning process, though, the obstacles to this kind of use need to be removed. Technical obstacles are one type of such barrier (Butcher, 2014; P:212).

Students will be able to take charge of their own education by using tablets. They'll get better at efficiently managing their time. With a tablet in hand, students can assess what they already know and learn new things. By removing the barriers of space, it allows students to engage with teachers and peers across borders (Algoufi, 2016; P:116).

The traditional blackboard will no longer be necessary for teachers and students when mobile technologies, such as tablets, are used in the classroom. Teachers and students' efforts will be spared because of that. Students can edit, copy, and paste texts as well as organize files in the classroom by using mobile technologies. It makes it possible for teachers to conduct a variety of educational activities in the classroom. With the help of it, educators and students can create maps and diagrams and model the real world. Students are more involved in the learning process as a result. This is due to the abundance of educational games available to students on mobile devices, which are designed to expand their knowledge and enhance their skills. It satisfies students' educational requirements and gives them access to the necessary content and wherever they choose. It makes student whenever collaboration easier (Hashim et al., 2016; P:19).

When mobile technologies, such as tablets, are used in the classroom, students can move around freely and find information quickly. Students can access graphs, pictures, scientific designs, audio files, and tables thanks to it (Hashim et al., 2016; P:23). Students can use it to record audio files, play games, snap pictures, send messages, and search the internet for particular information. It motivates pupils to speak up in front of others in the classroom. Students' 21st century skills can be improved by using it.

According to Wilden (2017; P:56), these abilities include cooperation, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.

The use of tablets and other mobile technologies in the classroom can raise students' level of digital literacy. The level of social and personal skills required to operate a variety of digital devices is referred to as digital literacy. Enhancing students' digital literacy will enhance their ability to conduct internet research. Students' factual knowledge is enhanced when mobile technologies, such as tablets, are used in the classroom. Students can share and store their work with it. It makes it easier to provide students with educational materials, such as worksheets and corrected tests. For example, the instructor can store a worksheet on iCloud or Dropbox so that every student in the class can access it on their devices (Wilden, 2017; P:67).

When mobile technologies, such as tablets, are used in the classroom, students' real-world communication skills improve and they have more opportunities to practice their language skills. Students can evaluate their own language proficiency thanks to it. It forces students to take charge of and oversee their own education. Students can use electronic books and visual dictionaries thanks to it. Teachers can implement a digital storytelling strategy in the classroom by utilizing mobile technologies, such as tablets. The term "digital storytelling" describes the use of digital devices for text, image, audio, and other

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media display in addition to narrative telling. Because it gives them the chance to work in groups, it raises student engagement and enhances their understanding of narrative tenses. Students can use it to share their thoughts and pick up knowledge from their peers (Wilden, 2017; P:72).

Learning medical sciences in the classroom is enhanced by the use of mobile technologies, such as tablets. It contributes to the enhancement of students' theoretical understanding. Students become more clinically competent and confident as a result. Students' abilities are enhanced, and it has a good impact on their values, attitudes, and areas of interest. According to Koohestani et al. (2018; P: 4), it raises students' satisfaction with the caliber of the educational process. It is possible to use mobile technologies for evaluation. Students' attitudes and performance levels are positively impacted by this kind of use. Students are encouraged to give their best effort (Nikou and Economides, 2018; P:110). It should be mentioned that people with learning disabilities, such as slow learners, can benefit greatly from tablet instruction. This kind of use can encourage cooperation among slow learners and inspire them to learn. It can help slow learners pay more attention, feel more confident, and enjoy learning (Amer, 2020; P: 92).

#### 3.3 Smart devices application learning

College students happily express their ideas and thoughts while conversing with others in English through specific mobile applications, continuously overcoming their language barriers. According to (Gilski and Stefanski, 2015; P: 117), mobile apps are computer programs intended to run on smartphones, iPads, and other mobile devices. The owner of the mobile operating system usually runs these apps, which are easily accessible through the App Market application distribution platform. Examples of these owners are the Apple App Store, Google Play, Windows Phone Store, and BlackBerry App World. Google Play for Android and the Apple App Store for iOS are the two primary app stores (Hamza and Saadalla, 2021; P:3508).

An application software intended to operate on a mobile device, like a smartphone or tablet computer, is called a mobile application, or simply an app. Users can usually get comparable services from mobile apps that they can access on PCs. An app, web app, online app, iPhone app, or smartphone app are other names for a mobile application. Apps are typically discrete, small software packages with a single purpose. These English learning apps can now combine various media, such as text, images, animation, audio, and video, to create multimedia teaching materials and pique students' interest in learning. This is made possible by the advancement of app technologies. College students

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are encouraged to willingly speak up and participate in discussions by using communication apps like QQ, WeChat, and Skype to speak with others in English (Shih, 2011; P:831)

A multitude of applications are available for use in education. According to Rana (2014; P:2766), mobile applications for Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, SMS, GPS, cameras, browsing, downloading, voice calls, and gaming can all be used as instructional tools. Additionally, Ferry (2008; P:297) has shown that mobile apps encourage collaboration among students and facilitate access to and modification of web-based content.

According to Khaddage et al., (2011; P:2549), students can focus on their areas of weakness, clear up misunderstandings, and reinforce their learning by using mobile applications. They also assist teachers in identifying the challenges and misconceptions of their students. Teachers can also modify exercises, rehearse their lessons, and emphasize evaluation and feedback. According to Huang et al. (2010; P:2), mobile applications make it easier for students to study the course materials. They also facilitate their interaction with one another at all times and locations.

In summary, mastering English entails controlling your speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. To do that, numerous apps produce multimedia teaching materials. These are highly beneficial in creating an English-speaking environment for students who are learning the language not just through text but

also through audio and video (Başal and Education, 2013; P:11). Additionally, learning English is aided by the use of mobile apps. It may encourage students to learn through self-regulation (Conroy, 2010; P:866).

### **3.4 Previous studies**

Tayan (2017; P:77) discusses his research, which looks into how instructors and students alike perceive mobile-assisted language learning. The study's sample consists of eleven students enrolled in Middle Eastern University's first phase of the Business English program. English teachers were questioned and interviewed for the study in order to gather data. According to the study, people are accepting of and responsive to this device. Ahn (2018; P:14) investigates how this gadget helps Korean college students pick up a language. 675 EFL college students make up the study's sample. A questionnaire is used to collect study data. According to the findings, over 82% of Korean students use mobile devices for learning. In order to demonstrate the usefulness of mobile phones for English language learning, Chakir (2018; P:64) conducted research. This study's sample consists of sixty high school students from Morocco. Pre- and post-tests are administered to two groups in order to demonstrate the study's findings. The two tests are very different from one another.

### 4. Conclusion

There is a great deal of significance and potential for improving education associated with the use of smartphones and tablets to assist English language learning among Iraqi secondary school students. This research thoroughly examines these gadgets' potential and clarifies how they can change conventional learning paradigms. The incorporation of mobile applications and technology resources not only recognizes how education is changing but also adjusts to the needs and preferences of modern learners, who are becoming more tech-savvy and drawn to online learning environments.

The research emphasizes how reluctant teachers are to use mobile devices in the classroom due to worries about possible distractions. It does, however, stress the necessity of educating educators on how to use these tools and push educational institutions to incorporate them into the curriculum. By doing this, the learning environment can be completely transformed and brought into better harmony with the lives of students. Many benefits come with this, such as improved access to learning resources, the encouragement of creativity and teamwork, and the ability to accommodate a diverse student body.

The research explores the many advantages of smartphones and tablets for learning English. It looks at how mobile technology bridges the gap between formal and informal learning

environments to enable anytime, anywhere learning. These gadgets act as catalysts for a more engaging, dynamic, and customized learning experience by fostering teacher-student interaction and augmenting self-study capabilities. Additionally, they can support students with disabilities and cater to different learning styles, fostering inclusivity in the educational setting.

Tablets can meet a variety of learning needs, including those of visual and auditory learners, as the discussion of their use makes clear. It describes how these gadgets empower students to take command of their education, promoting self-reliance, better organization, and cooperative learning. Tablets are also portrayed as tools that go beyond conventional teaching strategies to create a more dynamic and interesting learning environment.

The importance of mobile apps for English language learning is also covered in the paper, with examples of how these tools support multimedia instruction and foster immersive learning environments. It highlights how important it is for them to support student involvement, communication, and self-control in order to create an environment that is favorable to language learning.

Finally, this thorough investigation highlights how mobile apps, tablets, and smartphones can revolutionize the way that English language learners learn the language. It also provides a path for teachers and other educational institutions to adopt technology-

driven teaching methods that will meet the changing needs and preferences of learners in Iraq and elsewhere.

#### 5. Recommendations and future studies

This paper offers an exploration of the use of smartphones and tablets to enhance English language acquisition among Iraqi secondary school students is provided in this paper. To further this investigation and provide ideas for additional research or improvements to the current work, take into account these recommendations and future studies:

- 1. Compare the instructional strategies used in traditional classrooms with those that make use of tablets and smartphones. This could make it easier to comprehend how these approaches differ in terms of learning outcomes, engagement, and retention.
- 2. Examine the effects of providing specialized training to teachers on how to use mobile devices for language learning. Examine the effects that providing teachers with technology expertise and instructional techniques has on the learning experiences and results of their students.
- Examine in more detail how these gadgets meet the needs of a variety of students, particularly those who are disabled. Examine particular programs or features that enhance inclusive education for students with different learning styles and capacities.

- Examine the wider cultural and social effects of incorporating technology into language instruction. Examine the effects it has on students' social interactions, communication styles, and cultural awareness.
- 5. Examine how community support and parental involvement can help integrate mobile devices into the educational process. Recognize the ways in which cooperation among families, schools, and the community can improve this strategy's efficacy.
- 6. Extend the investigation beyond Iraq and carry out a comparative analysis between cultures. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of using mobile devices for language learning in various nations or areas with differing technological accessibility and educational settings.

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