USING MOBILE APPS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS OF UZBEK STUDENTS

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Abstract: *In the modern digital era, mobile apps are becoming a powerful tool in foreign language learning, especially in developing listening skills. This article analyzes the effectiveness of mobile apps in improving English listening skills among Uzbek students. It examines the types of apps that are widely used, their pedagogical advantages, and the problems users face. Mobile apps significantly improve listening comprehension, especially when they are effectively integrated into the educational process.*

Keywords: *English; listening skills; mobile apps; foreign-language learning; Uzbek students; mobile-assisted language learning (MALL); constructivist approach; learner autonomy; digital literacy; authentic materials; ubiquitous learning; interactive exercises; podcasts; pronunciation; blended learning*

Listening is one of the four basic language skills in English learning and plays an important role in developing communicative competence. In Uzbekistan, developing this skill is particularly important for students learning English as a second language. Traditional classroom instruction often does not provide adequate listening experience. However, the widespread use of smartphones and the development of mobile technologies have opened up new, interactive, and convenient learning opportunities for students. These tools make it possible to simulate real-life communication outside the classroom, thereby extending learning time beyond timetabled lessons.

According to constructivist and communicative language teaching theories, the use of authentic materials, a learner-centered approach, and independent learning are important in the language learning process. Mobile applications meet these principles. For example, applications such as BBC Learning English, Duolingo, Listenwise, ELLLO, and Voice of America allow users to approach real-life speech through various types of texts - conversations, news, podcasts. Many of the applications are enriched with tools such as subtitles, questions and answers, and dictionary explanations. Gamification elements (points, streaks, badges) further sustain motivation and encourage regular practice, which is critical for perceptual fluency.

For this article, a survey was conducted among 100 undergraduate English language students studying at two universities in Uzbekistan. The survey measured the frequency of mobile app use, how students perceived positive changes in their learning, and their overall satisfaction. In addition, focus group interviews were conducted to explore

students' experiences and challenges in more depth. Descriptive statistics were combined with thematic coding of interview transcripts to triangulate quantitative and qualitative findings.

According to the survey results, 78% of respondents use mobile apps at least 3 times a week to improve their English listening skills. Most of them reported that their pronunciation, accent, and comprehension of fast speech improved by listening to conversations in a non-native language. Apps with interactive exercises were found to be more effective. However, some students noted the lack of internet access, difficulties in understanding informal (slang) language, and distractions (advertising, social media) as challenges. Participants also emphasized that push-notification reminders helped them build a regular study routine, while offline-download features mitigated connectivity problems.

The results of the study show that mobile apps are an important tool, especially for those learning English in a non-native language environment. They provide independent learning, motivation, self-paced learning, and access to authentic content. However, their effectiveness depends on students' digital literacy, consistency, and purposeful use of the selected apps. Teachers also play an important role in showing how to use apps effectively and integrating them into the curriculum. Therefore, teacher-training workshops on MALL and the inclusion of app-based tasks in syllabi are recommended to ensure alignment with learning outcomes.

Mobile apps play a significant role in developing Uzbek students' English listening skills. They help students improve their listening skills freely, anytime, anywhere. In the future, it is important to integrate mobile technologies into English lessons, train teachers in this regard, and develop a list of recommended apps for students. Further longitudinal research could measure actual proficiency gains over an academic year and explore how app analytics correlate with listening-comprehension test scores.

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