

METHODOLOGY FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH M-LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract. This paper analyzes the influence of M-learning (mobile learning) technology in boosting students' communicative ability in English language acquisition. The emphasis is on mobile-based tactics that facilitate the growth of fundamental communication abilities, such as linguistic, pragmatic, and cross-cultural elements. The approach outlined uses gamified learning, online interaction, and mobile applications to increase student engagement and communication efficacy. To demonstrate the influence of these tools, real-world examples and findings from an experiment conducted at a university are also provided.

Keywords: M-learning, communicative competence, mobile applications, English language teaching, digital education, language learning methodology

Introduction

In the current digital era, technology is becoming more and more significant in the classroom. M-learning, or mobile learning, is one of the most successful breakthroughs. With mobile devices like smartphones and tablets, m-learning enables students to access educational content at any time and from any location. This adaptability encourages lifelong learning outside of the conventional classroom.

M-learning presents fresh chances for language learners to improve their communication abilities. Because English is a global language, learners must acquire not only vocabulary and grammar but also the capacity to communicate in everyday contexts. Traditional approaches, however, frequently fall short in offering adequate practice in authentic communication. This causes a disconnect between language proficiency and real-world application.

A variety of skills, including linguistic, pragmatic, social, and strategic ones, are part of communicative competence. Students require engaging and participatory language experiences in order to develop these abilities. Access to audio, video, and interactive exercises that mimic actual communication is made possible by m-learning. Students are encouraged to respond, talk, and listen in genuine ways.

Additionally, self-paced and customized learning is supported by smartphone apps like Duolingo, Memrise, and BBC Learning English. These tools encourage students and monitor their development through gamification and real-time feedback. Collaboration via phone messaging, virtual meetings, and online chats is also made possible by m-learning. As a result, students are exposed to the language more often and become more comfortable using it.

Students' communicative competency can be greatly enhanced in higher education by incorporating M-learning into English instruction. The purpose of this essay is to examine efficient methods for helping university students improve their English communication abilities through the use of M-learning resources.

What is Communicative Competence?

A key idea in the subject of teaching and studying languages is communicative competency. It describes the capacity to employ a language in a variety of communicative circumstances in an acceptable and correct manner. Communicative competence encompasses the social, pragmatic, and strategic facets of language use, in contrast to linguistic competence, which is solely concerned with grammar and vocabulary. In the 1970s, Dell Hymes coined the phrase in reaction to Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence.

According to Hymes, mastering a language entails more than just understanding its structure; it also entails understanding how to communicate in everyday situations. In any language, effective communication is necessary for meaningful connection. It enables students to successfully communicate their own thoughts, needs, and feelings in addition to understanding others. The development of communicative competence is seen as the ultimate goal in language education.

Over time, a number of academics have expanded on the idea. In 1980, Merrill Swain and Michael Canale put forth one generally recognized model. Grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence are the four primary components of communicative competence, according to their framework. In communication, each of these has a distinct and complementary function.

Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, word formation, sentence structure, and linguistic rules. It is the foundation of language proficiency and allows learners to construct correct sentences. However, grammatical accuracy alone is not enough for effective communication.

Sociolinguistic competence involves understanding the social context in which language is used. This includes knowledge of cultural norms, politeness strategies, levels of formality, and appropriateness. For example, the way one speaks to a teacher is different from how one speaks to a friend. Failing to recognize these differences can lead to miscommunication or even offense.

Discourse competence is the ability to connect sentences and ideas in a coherent and cohesive way. It allows speakers and writers to produce and understand longer stretches of text. This includes the use of connectors, transitions, paragraph structure, and the overall organization of speech or writing. Discourse competence enables learners to engage in conversations, give presentations, or write essays that make sense.

Strategic competence refers to the ability to overcome communication problems when they arise. This includes using gestures, rephrasing, asking for

clarification, or switching topics to keep the conversation flowing. It is especially important for language learners who may not yet have full control over grammar or vocabulary.

These four elements work together to offer a thorough understanding of what it means to be communicatively competent. To communicate effectively in the target language, learners need to cultivate each of them.

Another dimension to consider is intercultural communicative competence, which emphasizes the importance of understanding different cultures and worldviews. In a globalized world, language users often interact with people from diverse backgrounds. This requires sensitivity, openness, and awareness of cultural differences in communication styles. Intercultural competence allows learners to avoid misunderstandings and build positive relationships across cultures.

Teaching communicative competence requires a shift from traditional, teacher-centered methods to more interactive, student-centered approaches. The communicative language teaching (CLT) method is based on this principle. It emphasizes meaningful communication, task-based learning, and the use of authentic materials. Activities such as role-plays, group discussions, interviews, and problem-solving tasks are commonly used to promote communicative skills.

Assessment of communicative competence is also more complex than testing grammar or vocabulary. It involves evaluating how well a student can perform in real-life communication scenarios. This may include oral exams, presentations, writing assignments, and peer interactions. Rubrics often consider fluency, coherence, appropriateness, pronunciation, and interaction skills.

Technology, especially M-learning tools, offers valuable support for developing communicative competence. Mobile applications can provide real-time feedback, authentic language input, and opportunities for speaking and listening practice. Tools like voice recorders, video calls, and interactive exercises can simulate real-world communication.

In addition, learners can access online communities, participate in forums, or join virtual exchange programs to interact with native speakers or fellow learners. These experiences help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life communication. Digital tools also support autonomy, allowing learners to set their own goals and monitor their progress. Motivation plays a key role in developing communicative competence. When students see that they can successfully communicate in the target language, they become more confident and motivated. This positive cycle leads to greater engagement and better learning outcomes. Teachers can support this by creating a safe and supportive environment where learners feel encouraged to speak and make mistakes.

The Role of M-learning in Language Teaching

Mobile learning (M-learning) is becoming increasingly important in modern language education. It involves using mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets for learning purposes. In language teaching, M-learning

offers flexibility, accessibility, and personalization. Students can learn anytime and anywhere, beyond the limits of the classroom.

Students with hectic schedules or restricted access to conventional resources benefit from this flexibility. With m-learning, students can review difficult subjects and study at their own speed. Interactive content including games, films, and quizzes are available through mobile apps.

These characteristics maintain students' motivation and engagement. Gamification is used by language programs like BBC Learning English and Duolingo to make learning enjoyable. Students finish stages, get points, and get immediate feedback. Additionally, m-learning helps the growth of speaking and listening abilities. Students' pronunciation and comprehension are enhanced with audio workouts and speech recognition software.

Learners are exposed to real language and cultural context through video-based curriculum. Real communication is supported by m-learning tools like video calls, forums, and messaging apps. Real-time English practice with peers or native speakers is available to students.

Their ability to communicate is strengthened as a result. Teachers can exchange resources, set assignments, and monitor student progress using mobile applications. M-learning adds more practice chances to classroom training. Additionally, it promotes digital literacy and self-directed learning. Pupils are more accountable for their own development.

M-learning can lower expenses and expand access to high-quality education in environments with limited resources. However, effective planning and teacher preparation are necessary for M-learning to be used successfully. Teachers need to select the right resources that align with the learning goals. Without supervision, pupils could abuse the technology or get sidetracked. M-learning is especially helpful for enhancing communication skills. It produces meaningful and engaging language experiences. Students improve their motivation, confidence, and fluency with regular use. In conclusion, by improving communication, engagement, and accessibility, m-learning contributes significantly to language instruction.

Examples of widely used M-learning tools include:

- Duolingo, Memrise, BBC Learning English – for vocabulary and listening;
- Quizlet, Anki – for flashcard-based learning;
- Telegram/WhatsApp – for group discussions and real-time communication;
- Zoom, Google Meet – for video speaking practice.

Methodological Framework to effectively enhance communicative competence using M-learning, the following methods are recommended:

- Mobile-assisted language activities Listening to audio dialogues, practicing pronunciation, and completing grammar tasks through mobile apps.

- Gamified learning Use of language games and achievement systems in apps to motivate learners and reinforce language patterns.
- Online communication tasks Participation in real-time conversations via messaging platforms or video calls helps build fluency and confidence.
- Role-playing and simulations Students record or perform scenarios such as “at the airport” or “job interview” using mobile devices.
- Autonomous learning and assessment M-learning allows students to evaluate their progress using in-app assessments and personalized learning paths.

Practical Example: University-Based Application

At the university level, M-learning can be effectively integrated into English language courses. One practical example is using mobile apps to support communicative language practice outside of class. Instructors can assign tasks such as recording short dialogues or completing vocabulary quizzes via apps like Quizlet or Kahoot. Students can also use voice recording tools to submit speaking assignments through messaging platforms.

During lessons, teachers can project mobile-based exercises or conduct live polls using platforms such as Mentimeter. These tools increase student participation and allow for immediate feedback. Mobile apps such as BBC Learning English and EWA English provide learners with authentic videos, idioms, and interactive grammar lessons. This content enriches their exposure to real-life English usage.

Universities may also create Telegram or WhatsApp groups for ongoing communication in English. In these groups, students share audio messages, discuss topics, and even play language games collaboratively. This fosters peer-to-peer interaction and practical language use beyond the classroom. In blended learning formats, M-learning bridges the gap between in-class lessons and self-study.

Teachers can monitor student engagement through app analytics or by collecting digital portfolios. These methods provide insights into students’ progress and areas of difficulty. In some universities, M-learning is integrated into the curriculum through dedicated language modules. These modules combine face-to-face instruction with app-based learning tasks.

Surveys show that students often feel more motivated and confident when using mobile tools for English practice. The convenience of accessing learning materials anytime boosts their consistency. Instructors report that students become more active and willing to communicate. This method is especially beneficial for shy or passive learners.

Conclusion

The use of M-learning technologies has transformed language education in meaningful ways. It offers students flexible access to learning materials anytime and anywhere. M-learning encourages learner autonomy and increases motivation through interactive and engaging content. By using mobile apps,

learners can improve their communicative competence in all four language skills. Authentic materials and real-time practice help students build confidence and fluency. In university settings, M-learning complements classroom instruction and supports blended learning. Teachers can assign mobile-based tasks that enhance student interaction and participation. Tools such as voice messages, video responses, and online discussions promote practical language use.

Despite some limitations, such as the need for digital literacy and proper guidance, M-learning remains highly effective. With thoughtful implementation, it can significantly improve language learning outcomes. Students become more responsible, engaged, and confident in their communication. Teachers also benefit from the ability to track progress and personalize instruction.

In the digital age, integrating M-learning into language teaching is not only beneficial but essential. It supports the development of communicative competence in innovative and efficient ways. Therefore, universities should embrace M-learning as a key component of modern language education.

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