

Exploring Smartphone Applications for Enhancing Second Language Vocabulary Learning

Authors : Abdulmajeed Almansour

Abstract : Learning a foreign language with the assistant of technological tools has become an interest of learners and educators. Increased use of smartphones among undergraduate students has made them popular for not only social communication but also for entertainment and educational purposes. Smartphones have provided remarkable advantages in language learning process. Learning vocabulary is an important part of learning a language. The use of smartphone applications for English vocabulary learning provides an opportunity for learners to improve vocabulary knowledge beyond the classroom wall anytime anywhere. Recently, various smartphone applications were created specifically for vocabulary learning. This paper aims to explore the use of smartphone application Memrise designed for vocabulary learning to enhance academic vocabulary among undergraduate students. It examines whether the use of a Memrise smartphone application designed course enhances the academic vocabulary learning among ESL learners. The research paradigm used in this paper followed a mixed research model combining quantitative and qualitative research. The study included two hundred undergraduate students randomly assigned to the experimental and controlled group during the first academic year at the Faculty of English Language, Imam University. The research instruments included an attitudinal questionnaire and an English vocabulary pre-test administered to students at the beginning of the semester whereas post-test and semi-structured interviews administered at the end of the semester. The findings of the attitudinal questionnaire revealed a positive attitude towards using smartphones in learning vocabulary. The post-test scores showed a significant difference in the experimental group performance. The results from the semi-structure interviews showed that there were positive attitudes towards Memrise smartphone application. The students found the application enjoyable, convenient and efficient learning tool. From the study, the use of the Memrise application is seen to have long-term and motivational benefits to students. For this reason, there is a need for further research to identify the long-term optimal effects of learning a language using smartphone applications.

Keywords : second language vocabulary learning, academic vocabulary, mobile learning technologies, smartphone applications

Conference Title : ICPPSLA 2018 : International Conference on Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : April 24-25, 2018