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THE USE OF MOBILE – ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING TAMIL GRAMMAR

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ABSTRACT

The rapid increase of mobile technology provides easy access for learner's regardless of place and time. Numerous apps are developed and utilized for learning grammar. This paper focuses on the achievement of students in Tamil grammar after using the mobile application. The objective of the study is to identify the effectiveness of teaching Tamil grammar through mobile technology. A total of 10 secondary school students in the study used the application for five weeks. Data collected from the “Tamil Grammar APP” using pre test and post test which comprises questions on Tamil grammar. Quantitative analysis was used to study the data. The findings obtained from the quantitative data showed the improvement of the students in gaining Tamil grammar knowledge through the use of the mobile app. The result emphasized the importance of providing Tamil language learners with resources to assist their grammar learning. Furthermore, the result showed the continuous positive attitude of the participants towards learning Tamil grammar using mobile technology. The finding of the research corroborates that mobile application assisted learning proves to be efficient. This research provides guidelines to the educators to vary their pedagogy strategy due to the technology growth especially in Tamil language grammar learning which is often executed with the same text books and exercise books. The study will also help to increase the design and development of Tamil grammar based educational apps since there are only few apps that serve the purpose. Despite its growing utilization, mobile app learning is still not viewed as

the main source for grammar learning compared to personal computers. Hence, an in-depth analysis on this aspect is needed as a future research to contribute to a better mobile app learning environment.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile orientated devices are rapidly growing. They have tremendous potential in which it expands into all fields of human life. Mobile devices are not replacement for actual learning materials, but they officiate as prolongation for learning in a new phase having new efficiency. (John Traxler 2005) specified that there is noticeable evidence to suggest that mobile learning is growing in visibility and significance. Some learning subjects and activities are fitting mobile application assisted learning. One to be widely used is in language learning.

Language is considered as one of the most substantial elements of education and literacy. It encompasses the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. In fact, younger generations are keen to use mobile devices to improve their language skills since they learn new vocabulary and grammatical structures (Parupalli, 2019). Extensive use of mobile has fetched many mobile applications in language teaching and learning. This paper focuses on the efficiency of mobile application in teaching Tamil grammar.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the beginning of the 2000s, Mobile -Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has been an intensively researched field of study (Husem Korkmaz;2010). Many studies have been conducted that prove that students are deriving educational benefits from mobile devices. A study which was conducted in 2012 across two schools in England discloses that mobile phones keeps the students organized (Cherian, 2008). The features help them to engage in creative ways to get their homework done.

A study by (Chen, Chung & Yen 2012) found that mobile devices cater the need of language learning students. The study shows that learners can develop their skills in building up new vocabulary items, enhance their knowledge on grammar, improve communication skills and develop the other language skills.

Another study by (Parupalli, 2019, Ponniah, K 2017) revealed that mobile applications prove to be a better experience for both the teachers and students to make their work effective and achieve the best results. He added that it influences the methods, approaches and techniques of language teaching and learning and makes it more productive and successful.

Betsy Redd proved the efficiency of an app in improving the vocabulary development of the high school student in her experiment. The author used a gaming app for the students to enhance the vocabulary in three weeks. The result showed a significant importance of the mobile app in developing vocabulary knowledge.

Adoption of mobile technology for language teaching and learning is increasing and proves to be efficient. In accordance to this, this study was established with an aim of enhancing the new approach of using mobile apps in teaching and learning Tamil grammar.

METHODOLOGY

This research used action research design and quantitative analyses to study the data. This part discusses the design, sampling, measurement, procedure and data analysis used to conduct the research.

Design

Teaching and learning processes and discussion among the researcher and students were made consistently throughout the research. These teaching and learning process included the use of “Tamil Grammar APP” for reinforcing the grammar of the students. The students were also provided with the opportunities to utilize the mobile application launched based on Tamil grammar. The topics designed in the mobile application were based on the recommended curriculum.

Sampling

Samples of 10 students were selected for this study. The students were able to talk fluently and write adequately in proper Tamil language. The performance of the students was measured through the pre-test and post-test which were conducted in “Tamil Grammar APP”. Both of these tests were initially constructed in the particular mobile application to make the students trouble-free.

Measurement

Learning achievement for Tamil language grammar was outlined to collect the data regarding students’ knowledge in grammar proficiency. Another similar sort of paper was outlined to figure out the influence of mobile application assisted Tamil language learning on the students, which was given at the end of the experimentation as post-test. The pre-test comprised fifteen multiple-choice and structure forms of questions which were built in within elementary Tamil grammar. Whereby, for the post-test a sum of ten questions were asked and without exception questions from all five grammar topics that assembled in “Tamil Grammar APP” were asked to the students.

Procedure

A brief description was given to the students. The mobile application assisted learning aimed on Tamil grammar consisting of ‘Phonetics’, ‘Morphology’, ‘Morphophonemic’ and ‘Syntax’. It is then followed by downloading the “Tamil Grammar APP” from <http://www.appsgeyser.com/4355772> or from the provided QR code.

As a prolegomenon for the application, users perchance kindly referred to the “Welcome, Join” and Introduction” pages to gather more information regarding this mobile application. Thenceforth, students are required to access “Practices and exercises” page and they are requisite to work on the pre-test attached on that page itself. When confronted with this pre-test student advised to not refer to any kind of reference and they should run into the test with the baseline knowledge they had previously.

This pre-test included a bundle of questions which focused on basic grammar and the outcome of this test revealed the current level of Tamil grammar knowledge of the students involved.

Students instructed to get into the Introduction page and complete the given questions. There were a total of five topics embodied regarding Tamil grammar for Secondary school students and all the topics had outright with related notes and references augmented with relevant “YouTube” videos. Students invaded these pages and explored all the stuff inside which helped them to strengthen their Tamil grammar knowledge. Intensive exercises regarding the topics they learnt had also built in to evaluate themselves.

After five weeks of the progression a post-test was consummated to identify what changes had taken place in the Tamil grammar knowledge of the students. When the scores of these two tests were compared, the difference was visible. All the students had improved their Tamil grammar knowledge.

This validated “Tamil Grammar APP” as a handy tool which could be handled by students anywhere, anytime as per Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. In contrast to classroom learning, in MALL there is no need for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. In fact, MALL can be considered an ideal solution to language learning barriers in terms of time and place (Tayebeh Mosavi Miangah & Amin Nezarat; 2012).

Data Analysis

The data gathered by the researcher in two different sections were analyzed and moved toward with quantitative analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis made on pre-test and post-test had revealed that the students enhanced their Tamil grammar knowledge as the difference of total average marks between pre-test and post-test was 73%. Although learning through mobile applications may take longer time compared to computer application, the learners feel a greater sense of freedom of time and place, so that they can take the advantage of spare time to learn a second language (Tayebeh Mosavi Miangah & Amin Nezarat, 2012).

Progression was shown in Tamil grammar knowledge compared to the pre-test marks. The average all over growth after the research was 19% as compared to

pre-test. This improvement might be caused due to the students' excitement of scrutinizing the new learning phase which was based on mobile application assisted Tamil language learning.

According to Tayebah Mosavi Miangah & Amin Nezarat (2012), Game-based learning is another theme for mobile learning in which learning materials are so designed to be integrated with aspects of the physical environment. In such environments, learning activities are facilitated using the mobile technology which serves as a link between the real world of knowledge and the visual world of the game. Students may get involved in Tamil sort of language learning if they are popularized with current fetching learning mechanisms.

	Number of Students	Pre-Test	Post-Test
T	1	63	68
a	2	91	98
b	3	37	67
i	4	63	78
e	5	56	92
	6	67	69
	7	56	83
	8	46	86
	9	66	89
	10	84	89
C	Average marks (%)	63	82

o
mparative Score Chart of Students' Pre- Test and Post-Test

Total Average Mark	73	
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As the compilations of data revealed 10 students who were involved in the study have shown betterment which is 100% of the total number of students. The greatest enhancement was shown specifically in the areas of Phonetics, Morphology, syntax and Morphophonemic and this was due to the intensive notes provided and segregated exercises for each topic created using the touchstone of Bloom's Taxonomy. This approach of questions made the students to contrive themselves to focus on 21st century education which principally emphasized on creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills.

Students were shaped attentively by using the correct grammar that was illustrated through "Tamil Grammar APP". As a peculiar enthusiasm was shown by the researcher in learning grammar, the students were much inspired by that and tried to put their extra efforts in thoroughly understanding the five easiest topics given. The verbal teaching session was also conducted by the researcher before the experimented students explore each of the topics granted to the better result.

CONCLUSION

As can be seen from the findings, there has been a wide range of distinctions noted in the respondents of the action research carried out. The mobile application assisted Tamil language learning has been verified to be a conducive tool where new approach of teaching and learning could have brought a progression in studies as students would show their eagerness to explore the modernized world of education in which most of their interest is situated.

The research proved to highlight the significant improvement in boosting the Tamil grammar knowledge of the students. The research findings can be benign for other researchers as well, especially for those who confronted issues pertaining to new learning and teaching mechanisms. This research also provides guidelines to the educators to vary their pedagogy strategy due to the technology growth especially in Tamil language learning which is often executed with the same text books and exercise books. This will lead the educators to adopt a new technique to improve their students' Tamil grammar. It would be entertaining and profitable for those educators who have direct contact with the students and they would be excited to perceive a change.

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