

THE IMPORTANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF MOBILE APPS IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Annotation: mobile apps represent a modern approach to learning foreign languages. While they serve as useful supplementary tools, they cannot replace traditional language education. Each app offers a unique method for language acquisition, with its own strengths and limitations, none stands out as the ultimate solution. Using a combination of different apps tends to be more effective than relying on a single one. Nevertheless, these apps primarily focus on language learning rather than language practice. As a result, language tutors, study groups, and other conventional educational methods remain essential and cannot be entirely replaced by mobile language learning apps.

Key words: mobile apps, language learning, artificial intelligence, gamification, vocabulary acquisition, grammar practice, listening comprehension, Duolingo, Memrise, educational technology.

Аннотация: Мобильные приложения представляют собой современный подход к изучению иностранных языков. Хотя они служат полезными вспомогательными средствами, они не могут полностью заменить традиционное языковое образование. Каждое приложение предлагает уникальный метод овладения языком, со своими преимуществами и ограничениями - ни одно из них не является универсальным решением. Использование комбинации различных приложений, как правило, оказывается более эффективным, чем опора на одно единственное. Тем не менее, эти приложения в первую очередь направлены на изучение языка, а не на его практическое применение. В результате, языковые преподаватели, учебные группы и другие традиционные методы обучения остаются необходимыми и не могут быть полностью заменены мобильными приложениями для изучения языков.

Ключевые слова: мобильные приложения, изучение языков, искусственный интеллект, геймификация, освоение словарного запаса, грамматическая практика, понимание на слух, Duolingo, Babbel, Memrise, образовательные технологии, смешанное обучение, поддержка учителя, качество приложений.

Annotatsiya: Mobil ilovalar chet tillarini o'rganishda zamonaviy yondashuvni ifodalaydi. Ular foydali qo'shimcha vosita sifatida xizmat qilsa-da, an'anaviy til ta'limini to'liq almashtira olmaydi. Har bir ilova tilni o'zlashtirishning o'ziga xos usuliga ega bo'lib, o'zining kuchli va zaif tomonlari mavjud; ularning hech biri mutlaq va universal yechim sifatida ajralib turmaydi. Bir nechta ilovalardan birgalikda foydalanish, odatda, faqat bitta ilovaga tayanishdan ko'ra samaraliroq hisoblanadi. Shunga qaramay, ushbu ilovalar asosan tilni o'rganish jarayoniga qaratilgan bo'lib, real til amaliyotini to'liq ta'minlay olmaydi. Natijada, til o'qituvchilari, o'quv guruhlari va boshqa an'anaviy ta'lim shakllari muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi hamda mobil til o'rganish ilovalari tomonidan to'liq almashtirilishi mumkin emas.

Kalit so'zlar: mobil ilovalar, til o'rganish, sun'iy intellekt, o'yinlashtirish (gamifikatsiya), lug'at boyligini oshirish, grammatika mashqlari, tinglab tushunish, Duolingo, Memrise, ta'lim texnologiyalari.

Introduction

Knowing foreign languages is undoubtedly a significant advantage for career growth. However, not everyone can dedicate several days a week to structured language courses. For busy individuals, mobile applications have emerged as a convenient solution, allowing users to study anytime and anywhere.

Today's world is shaped by the impact of globalization [1]. This has elevated international communication to a whole new level. It is now common to move to another country, study overseas, interact with people from different cultures, and use foreign languages for work-related purposes. In fact, lacking knowledge of at least one foreign language can lead to being left out of various aspects of modern life [2]. English remains the dominant global language at present. However, due to the growing influence of countries like China and regions such as Latin America, limiting oneself to English alone is no longer sufficient.

On the one hand, there is a growing need to use foreign languages in daily life; on the other hand, the level of global integration is still not enough to guarantee regular practice with native speakers [3]. As a result, many learners turn to mobile applications to maintain their language skills in situations where access to a teacher or formal lessons is limited. Moreover, those raised in the digital age are often more comfortable interacting with technology than with people. Mobile apps help address this preference as well. Some of these apps are developed by educators, while others use artificial intelligence to operate effectively.

Thus, there is a growing demand for language-learning apps among users who are beginning, continuing, or aiming to retain their language knowledge. Technological advancements now allow these tools to be built either on traditional educational approaches or through modern IT-based solutions [4]. However, the issue of app quality and the criteria for assessing it remains unresolved. Sure, here is a thoroughly paraphrased version of the "Methods", "Results", and "Discussion and Conclusion" sections, rewritten to sound different while preserving the original meaning and citation placement:

This study explores both the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary mobile applications aimed at foreign language acquisition. To carry this out, we conducted an analysis of the top-rated language learning apps available on the Play Market and App Store. The focus was on evaluating their core functions, distinctive features, and the business models driving them. Based on this analysis, we assessed their educational quality and examined the feasibility of using them independently, without direct teacher involvement

Although LinguaLeo is often associated with beginner-level English learners, it also provides extensive resources for advanced users familiar with literary and professional English. Business professionals may benefit from its specialized "Business English" section, which includes courses in grammar, business communication, and industry-specific content in finance and accounting. The platform features 20 structured courses, including practice materials for major proficiency exams such as CAE, FCE, IELTS (General and Academic), and GIA. Learners can engage with various exercises—six types of interactive training activities, personalized vocabulary tools with audio and transcription, thematic word lists, and a 60,000-word offline dictionary. Users can also read curated English content from sources like TED and the British Council, and continue learning offline.

Recognized in 2013 as a top educational app by both Apple and Google, Duolingo rapidly gained popularity, with over a million downloads in just a few weeks post-launch. Its Russian version supports English and German, while using English as the interface language unlocks six additional languages. Lessons are divided into multiple activities such as vocabulary acquisition, grammar, listening, spelling, pronunciation, and translation. Progress follows a structured path that discourages skipping ahead, enhancing retention. The app also incorporates gamified rewards through an internal currency system that can only be earned through consistent

effort.

British Council

The British Council, while fostering cultural exchange, also supports English language learning. For self-guided learners, it offers 13 different mobile applications. These apps promote interactive language acquisition via games, audio programs, video content, and quizzes. “Learn English Grammar” addresses grammar skills at various proficiency levels, while “IELTS Wordpower” helps users prepare for standardized exams with categorized questions. “My Word Book” enhances vocabulary retention through customizable flashcards with personal annotations and visuals. Audio-video lessons also develop listening comprehension, and football fans may enjoy the “Premier Skills” app designed around sports-themed content.

Babbel

Babbel, used by over 15 million learners worldwide—including German Chancellor Angela Merkel—offers instruction in 14 languages such as English, French, Russian, and more. While some content is free, full access requires a subscription. Lessons emphasize both vocabulary and grammar, using bilingual dialogues and audio voiced by both male and female narrators. The app includes tiered learning paths for beginners and advanced users, with themed modules on pronunciation, cultural context, and linguistic nuances like idioms and false cognates.

Busuu

More than a language tool, Busuu operates as a global network where users help each other learn. Languages include English, Arabic, Japanese, and several European languages. Free features include vocabulary and literacy tasks, while premium access adds grammar lessons, multimedia resources, travel courses, and business English. Courses are segmented into progressive levels, each with lessons involving listening, reading, comprehension, and written output. A key strength is its peer feedback feature, enabling learners to interact with native speakers for real-time corrections and improvements.

Memrise

Memrise extends beyond language to include topics like science, literature, and professional skills. Its language offerings range from grammar quizzes to literature by Dickens. Learning is supported by mnemonic strategies and creative visuals. The platform likens word acquisition to gardening—words must be revisited periodically to be retained, much like watering plants to keep them alive.

Fun Easy Learn

Best suited for learners focused on expanding their vocabulary, Fun Easy Learn offers a database of 6,000 words per language. It uses seven distinct activity types to facilitate memorization through varied cognitive processes. While only available on Android and lacking a polished design, its methodology is highly effective. Seventeen languages are currently supported, with Russian adaptation available for major options like English and Chinese, and English-based support for additional languages such as Korean, Greek, and Indonesian.

Pros and cons of language learning apps

Mobile applications powered by artificial intelligence offer several clear benefits [5]. These include automatic identification of repeated mistakes, flexible learning unbound by time or location, constant software updates, tailored feedback based on user data, and the ability to integrate multiple apps. However, these advantages are contingent upon the app’s initial quality. Essential attributes include accurate language databases, user-friendly design, effective pedagogical systems, and engagement tools such as gamification and certifications [6][7].

Furthermore, effective apps must accommodate individual learning patterns introducing vocabulary with spaced repetition and requiring contextual use. This also applies to grammar and broader communication skills [8]. On the downside, AI remains significantly less capable than human instruction and requires continuous refinement. Additionally, no single app fully meets all the ideal standards for language learning. While using several apps together can be more productive, they still cannot replace essential human traits needed for successful language

learning. Thus, incorporating teacher-led sessions with personalized guidance remains necessary to complement app-based study.

Mobile applications provide strong supplementary tools for language learning. They are particularly effective for grammar and reading practice when foundational knowledge already exists [2]. However, they fall short for developing speaking and writing proficiency [4]. Using multiple apps in tandem is generally more effective than relying on one alone. Pricing is typically affordable, though it varies; for instance, LinguaLeo offers more budget-friendly options than premium alternatives like Busuu. The core limitation lies not in language exposure, but in meaningful practice [6]. All reviewed apps offer restricted modes of engagement [7][8]. Therefore, for truly effective learning, app usage should be paired with real-life practice opportunities, such as sessions with tutors, language exchange groups, or writing services that provide feedback and correction.

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