

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning in ESL: A Comparative Study of Learning Apps and Traditional Methods

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Abstract

In the context of teaching English as a second language (ESL), this study compares the efficacy of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and traditional classroom-based methods. It focusses specifically on the chosen students at the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro (FPI), located in Ogun State, Nigeria. This study assesses the effects on language acquisition, student engagement, and overall proficiency using a sample of 500 ESL learners (ND1 students taking GNS101 (Use of English)), equally divided into two groups: an experimental group using MALL applications and a control group receiving traditional instruction. The MALL group outperformed the traditional group in vocabulary acquisition, with an average score increase of 15% ($p < 0.05$) as opposed to an 8% rise in the latter group, according to quantitative analysis.. On the other hand, grammar proficiency was higher in the traditional group compared to the MALL group (12% versus 6%), albeit the difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). There were no discernible variations in the two groups' increases in reading comprehension. MALL was thought to be less successful for teaching difficult grammatical concepts, but it did increase learner enthusiasm and engagement, especially in the Nigerian school context, according to qualitative data from surveys and focus groups. These results imply that the most all-encompassing language learning experience could be obtained using a hybrid strategy that incorporates both MALL and conventional approaches.

Keywords: Comparative Study, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, traditional classroom-based methods