

A METHODOLOGY TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING USING MOBILE APPLICATIONS (Facebook, HelloTalk, Tandem, Duolingo)

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Abstract:

The development of mobile applications as language learning tools has created new possibilities for enhancing English speaking competence. The current paper presents an analysis of the effectiveness of Facebook, HelloTalk, Tandem, and Duolingo in facilitating speaking skill acquisition by learners. Based on close observation of the app-specific features and how they support language practice, this article gives a guide for students and teachers to incorporate these tools in the development of speaking skills. The paper has benefits, weaknesses, and useful tips, and it points to the potential of these apps to create interactive learning opportunities.

Keywords: English speaking skills, mobile applications, language learning, interactive learning, Facebook, HelloTalk, Tandem, Duolingo.

Introduction

Speaking is a crucial part of learning a language, but it can be quite challenging for learners who often lack opportunities for real-life practice. Fortunately, advancements in mobile technology have equipped learners with tools to tackle these challenges. Mobile applications like Facebook, HelloTalk, Tandem, and Duolingo present unique chances for immersive and interactive speaking practice. This article explores how these apps can improve speaking skills and provides a methodology for their effective use in learning English.

Mobile Applications and Their Role in Language Learning

1. Facebook: Facebook is a popular social media platform that offers an informal setting for practicing English speaking skills. Through groups, live chats, and video calls, learners can engage in conversations with native speakers or fellow learners. Language-specific groups create spaces for discussions, while live sessions enable real-time speaking practice.

Example: A learner joins an English-speaking group centered around hobbies and takes part in weekly live discussions. This experience allows for real-time speaking practice and builds confidence in conversational English.

2. HelloTalk: HelloTalk is a language exchange app that connects learners with native speakers of their target language. It features text, voice, and video chat options, providing users with a supportive and reciprocal environment for practicing speaking. Tools like voice notes and real-time corrections help improve pronunciation and fluency.

Example: A learner pairs up with a native English speaker and practices daily conversational phrases using voice notes. The partner offers corrections and feedback, which helps the learner use the language more accurately.

3. Tandem, much like HelloTalk, emphasizes language exchange by connecting learners with native speakers. Its features for video and audio calls enable comprehensive speaking practice. Additionally, Tandem offers access to professional tutors who can deliver structured speaking lessons.

Example: A learner arranges weekly video calls with a native speaker to discuss specific topics, gradually enhancing their fluency and pronunciation.

4. Duolingo is a gamified language learning app that integrates speaking exercises into its lessons. Users repeat phrases, respond to questions verbally, and participate in interactive speaking tasks. While it doesn't focus exclusively on speaking, Duolingo's organized exercises lay a solid foundation for pronunciation and fluency.

Example: A learner utilizes Duolingo's speaking exercises to practice sentence construction and pronunciation, supplementing other speaking activities.

Methodology for Using Mobile Applications to Improve Speaking Skills

Improving speaking skills using mobile applications begins with goal setting. Learners should define clear and measurable objectives tailored to their proficiency levels. For instance, beginners might aim to hold a five-minute



conversation, whereas intermediate learners could focus on fluently discussing complex topics. Once goals are established, selecting the right applications is critical. Learners should choose tools that align with their specific needs and preferences. Facebook serves as a platform for informal practice, while HelloTalk and Tandem provide opportunities for direct interaction with native speakers. For foundational speaking practice, Duolingo offers structured exercises.

Consistent practice is essential in language learning. Learners should dedicate specific times for using these applications and engage in activities such as live chats, voice notes, and video calls to build their speaking skills. Feedback and reflection are also crucial components of this methodology. Learners should actively seek feedback from native speakers or tutors to identify areas of improvement. Reflecting on this feedback allows learners to refine their speaking abilities and track progress over time.

Additionally, integrating mobile applications with other learning activities ensures a holistic approach to skill development. Classroom discussions, language meetups, and self-recording exercises can complement mobile-based learning, providing diverse opportunities to practice and apply speaking skills in real-world contexts.

Benefits of Using Mobile Applications

Mobile applications offer numerous advantages for learners aiming to improve their speaking skills. One significant benefit is accessibility, as these tools provide flexible and convenient access to speaking practice. The interactive nature of applications such as HelloTalk and Tandem enables dynamic and engaging learning experiences, while their real-life context connects learners with native speakers for authentic conversational practice. Moreover, applications like Duolingo incorporate gamification, which motivates learners to practice regularly and stay engaged with their learning journey.

Challenges and Considerations

Despite their benefits, mobile applications come with challenges that learners and educators must address. Technological barriers, such as limited access to smartphones or stable internet connections, can hinder usage. Privacy concerns also arise when interacting with strangers on language exchange platforms, making it crucial for users to exercise caution and prioritize safety. Over-reliance



on technology is another potential issue, as learners should balance mobile application use with offline speaking opportunities to ensure comprehensive development. Additionally, some applications provide limited corrective feedback, highlighting the need for supplementary resources or guidance from teachers.

Mobile applications like Facebook, Hello Talk, Tandem, and Duo lingo have revolutionized language learning by providing learners with tools for effective speaking practice. By setting clear goals, practicing consistently, and integrating these applications with other learning activities, learners can significantly enhance their speaking skills. However, addressing challenges such as privacy concerns and technological barriers is essential for maximizing their potential. With thoughtful implementation, these applications can serve as valuable resources for improving English speaking proficiency.

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