

Mobile purposive-extensive-podcast-listening versus mobile self-regulated-podcast-development: A critical framework for designing foreign language listening

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Abstract. Nowadays mobile technologies are widely employed in almost all fields of education for varying reasons. The present study intends to explore the role of mobile technologies in the development of students' listening skills in a higher education context. The aim of the present study is twofold; while it seeks for the feasibility of mobile technologies in listening activities of higher education students, it will also try to propose solutions to a rather neglected side of teaching listening within the frame of foreign/second language education. Although there are several studies on listening skills in foreign/second language teaching, almost none of them clearly or scientifically deal with the elaboration of the listening activities (i.e. conditions describing listening skills). Thus, using mobile technologies, the present study will also try to find an evidence-based answer to this issue. However, since this presentation is part of an ongoing study, supported by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), we will just propose two critical frameworks for its methodology, introduce the proposed framework for integration of the mobile technology and welcome the contributions of the scholars about its function in the field of language education.

Keywords: second language learning, higher education, mobile assisted language learning, call design, emerging technologies.

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1. Introduction

Today, there are several factors that urge learners to engage in mobile learning activities in any ways, such as learning at the work place, need for lifelong learning, ease of use, and accessibility. As in many fields, suitability of mobile devices for foreign language learning attracts researchers' attention to explore new venues for both design and practice. Thus, we developed two methodological frameworks to deliver mobile assisted foreign language learning.

2. Method

2.1. Design

Critical frameworks offered in this study are a result of a comprehensive literature review on foreign language learning approaches/methods and on learning with podcasting and mobile environments. Afterwards, we will briefly provide the theory and rationale behind the proposed frameworks.

2.2. Mobile-purposive-extensive-podcast-listening

There is a good deal of evidence in the literature that reveals the positive contribution of intensive listening activities both on listening comprehension and speaking skills of the language learners (Gradman & Hanania, 1991). Nevertheless, almost none of the studies in the available literature highlight the relationship between listening comprehension and attentive and controlled listening activities that focus on learning outcomes. In this respect, Tolman's (1932) purposive learning concept is worth mentioning here; purposive learning requires learners to set up the learning process by being familiar with the learning outcomes that will be gained at the end of the learning process (Senemoğlu, 2012). If the learners know that they will have a purpose throughout the narrowed, context-driven, and repetitive listening activities, they may focus on the learning content, and thus, as Schunk (2012) states, have a higher motivation towards learning and fostering their eagerness to learn. In turn, this will cause a shortening in the listening duration of narrowed, context-driven, and repetitive listening activities and lead to a better comprehension in listening, as Krashen (1996) suggested in "narrow listening"; that is, if the listeners listen to a specific passage several times, they might gain a more comprehensible language input.

During the mobile-purposive-extensive-podcast-listening process proposed in this study, the participants' attention to the listening text they were listening to

necessitates an active employment of metacognition (Fernandez-Duque, Baird, & Posner, 2000). This enables an active use of attention and will result in better quality listening activities that ensure second/foreign language input processing.

Another concept related to mobile-purposive-extensive-podcast-listening is the learning environment. The learning environment consists of the media that deliver learning materials and items that support the actual learning content. Therefore, it has been concluded that the integration of mobile-purposive-extensive-podcast-listening method should be facilitated with an appropriate medium and learning environment. With this in mind, provision of technology enhanced learning environments have been suggested (TELEs) (Wang & Hannafin, 2005). Concisely, the purpose of the proposed method is provision of a more mobile and individualized learning support.

2.3. Mobile-self-regulated-podcast-development

This method is set up concerning three basic approaches; a) free listening, b) intensive listening, and c) design-based learning environments.

Although Dupuy (1999) assumes that listening to audio records performed by high proficient speakers in leisure times is effective in the development of skills in second language learning, she did not define the qualification of leisure time. For example, the time while driving a car, reading a book or even the time spent while sleeping can be considered as a leisure time, and listening can be performed in such times as well. However, different from mobile-purposive-extensive-podcast-listening, i.e. highlighting the initiative of the listener, this method basically offers a listening technique which allows the listeners to listen to the passage as much as possible at any time and anywhere without focusing on the accompanying listening material. Thus, the proposed listening method puts forward a perspective which goes hand in hand with constructivist learning theory and hypothesizes that learning occurs as a result of individualized experiences, autonomous learning and self-regulated learning that emphasizes individualized experiences in learning (Zimmerman, 1990).

In the process of creating design-based learning environments followed by extensive listening processes, learners are expected to make some linguistic productions. In this context, students are required to publish and evaluate their own podcasts which are developed in the target language. As this approach provides an authentic application where both learners and teachers interact with each other, it enables learners to learn through experience (such as creating their own original

podcasts). This can be considered as the reflection of a constructivist theory and interactionist language learning approach. There are various forms of interaction in learning processes. As Cook (1981) claims, interaction is the obvious point about any form of learning in that it consists of an interaction between the learner and the environment. Similarly, according to Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, language acquisition takes place during human interaction in the target language environment. The learner is then exposed to rich comprehensible input in the target language. The interactionists believe that language emerges from the interplay between learners' linguistic and cognitive capacities and their social language environment. In this approach, meaning and correctness are negotiated by the learner through interactions. According to this approach, if a learner spends a limited amount of time in the language environment, acquisition will be limited. Very briefly, it is claimed that interaction can enhance second language acquisition and fluency.

3. Discussion and conclusions

The focus of the present study is to contribute to the development of the learners' second/foreign language learning skills in higher education through organizing their listening activities. Two complementary methodological frameworks that were based on the use of mobile technologies are offered in the present study.

Of these methodological frameworks, while mobile-purposeive-extensive-podcast-listening requires participants to focus on listening material and do narrowed and learning-guide-supported extensive listening, mobile-self-regulated-podcast-development method proposed a framework which requires participants to produce podcasts in the target language immediately after doing extensive listening activities without focusing on any point in their free time. It is supposed that the two proposed frameworks might have an effect on the individualization of mobile based second/foreign language learning processes. However, more empirical studies need to be conducted in order to examine the level of the effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed frameworks. Additionally, it is anticipated that the proposed methods that keep track of listeners digitally (electronically) will help us a) model listening behaviors with an ontological approach and b) contribute to the development of adaptive hypermedia for foreign language learning as well as expert systems that will individualize language learning. In particular, it is supposed that the mobile-self-regulated-podcast-development method, which can be used in studies examining such purposes, might have a specific structure that will help figure out learner models with reference to their leisure time listening habits and skills on production in the target language.

Mobile based second/foreign language learning alternatives will empower the individualization of the learning process and contribute to the spread of the autonomous learning strategies and systems. Therefore, it is assumed that there will be a tendency towards conducting similar studies in the field. Especially, it is supposed that the approaches that we proposed within the scope of the present study will be effectively used in the adaptation of the teaching and learning strategies.

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