POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS AND EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION OF MOBILE PRONUNCIATION TOOLS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract

Mobile pronunciation tools are a new way to acquire pronunciation skills through a combination of internet resources and mobile applications for English language learners (Abarquez, 2021). As English continues to be a widely spoken language worldwide, language learners are looking for new and innovative ways to improve their pronunciation skills. This article has reviewed studies on the potential limitations and effective integration of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners. This review aims to explore and discuss the potential constraints and challenges of using mobile pronunciation tools for English language learning. Additionally, it examined how these tools can be effectively integrated into classroom instruction and self-directed learning. The articles for this review were discovered by using internet search engines such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Research Gate, in the topic area of the potential limitations and integration of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners. The retrieved data was carefully investigated using inclusion and exclusion criteria. The topic investigation involved collecting data from ten journals article, which were then analyzed by creating a grid table. The resulting table is used to analyze patterns, similarities, and differences that can help conclude. The results of the analysis show that although mobile pronunciation tools have the potential for helping English language learners improve their pronunciation, they also have some limitations that need to be addressed. For future research, especially for those who are interested in integrating mobile pronunciation tools as the topic of the study, this paper can be a good lesson for the next study.

Keywords: Mobile pronunciation tools, English language learners, classroom instruction, self-directed learning

INTRODUCTION

As English continues to be a widely spoken language worldwide, language learners are looking for new and innovative ways to improve their pronunciation skills. Mobile pronunciation tools are becoming an increasingly popular resource for language learners, especially those looking to enhance their English pronunciation. However, it is essential to consider the potential limitations and challenges associated with these tools, as well as the effective integration of these tools into language learning practices. This paper aims to explore and discuss the potential constraints and challenges of using mobile pronunciation tools for English language learning. Additionally, it examines how these tools can be effectively integrated into classroom instruction and self-directed learning.
Mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners are becoming increasingly popular as more people use smartphones and tablets for language learning. These tools often feature audio and visual aids to help learners improve their pronunciation skills and identify areas where they need more practice. Some mobile pronunciation tools use advanced technology like speech recognition software to provide immediate feedback and help learners refine their pronunciation. Mobile pronunciation tools can be a convenient and cost-effective way for English language learners to improve their language skills and build their confidence in speaking. However, it is important to recognize that mobile pronunciation tools may have limitations and challenges that could impact their effectiveness. These limitations could include issues related to the accuracy and reliability of identifying pronunciation errors and providing feedback, the need for customization and flexibility in terms of feedback and practice, compatibility and accessibility across different devices and platforms, and the integration of these tools with other learning resources. Understanding these limitations is crucial for both teachers and learners to make informed decisions about the use of mobile pronunciation tools in language learning.

Several previous studies have discussed the use of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners’ pronunciation practice. First, Rahmania and Mandasari (2021) examine student perceptions of the JOOX application (a music streaming platform that provides lyrics) to improve student pronunciation. The survey found that students find it helpful to learn pronunciation through the JOOX application, as it helps them learn independently and become more confident in speaking English. Wongsuriya (2020) studied the effect of using the ‘Pronunciation Power 2’ mobile learning application to improve students’ pronunciation. The study found that students who used the app significantly improved their English pronunciation skills compared to those who didn’t use the app. Finally, Syafitri et al. (2018) investigated the use of Powtoon as a digital medium to improve students’ pronunciation in speaking classes. The results show that Powtoon as a digital medium may improve students' pronunciation and students' motivation to learn in speaking classes.

Previous studies have explored the effectiveness of various mobile pronunciation tools, but none of these have discussed the potential limitations and challenges of using these tools. To fill the gap, the researcher tried to present the data from several studies on mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners’ pronunciation practice. This paper aims to provide a literature review on the potential limitations and challenges of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners. Moreover, the effective integration of mobile pronunciation tools into language learning practices is essential for maximizing their benefits. Integration involves incorporating these tools seamlessly into classroom instruction and self-directed learning, ensuring they complement existing teaching methodologies and resources.

Teachers and learners need to explore strategies for incorporating mobile pronunciation tools effectively, addressing potential challenges such as technical barriers to learner motivation and engagement, and balancing the use of these tools with other language learning activities. By identifying effective integration approaches, teachers and learners can optimize the use of mobile pronunciation tools and enhance language learning outcomes.
To further examine the potential limitations and effective integration of mobile pronunciation tools, the writer conducted a literature review, analyzed relevant studies that were written from 2019 to April 2023. By synthesizing and evaluating existing literature, this study aims to provide comprehensive insights into the constraints and challenges of using mobile pronunciation tools for English language learning, as well as practical recommendations for effective integration into language learning practices. As a result, the following are the research questions:

1. What are the potential limitations and challenges of using mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners to improve their pronunciation skills?
2. How can teachers effectively integrate mobile pronunciation tools into classroom instruction to overcome the limitations and challenges?
3. How can learners effectively integrate mobile pronunciation tools into self-directed learning to overcome the limitations and challenges?

METHOD

The papers for this research were discovered by using internet search engines such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Research Gate. Keywords for the search include "mobile pronunciation tools," "English language learners," "limitations," "challenges," "integration," "classroom instruction," and "self-directed learning." The following are the criteria for the articles' inclusion:

1. It is empirical-based research and was published between 2019-2023.
2. The research can represent the potential limitations and challenges of using mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners and how to effectively integrate them into classroom instruction and self-directed learning.
3. The articles must be related to the education setting, specifically in English language teaching and learning.
4. Articles that meet the inclusion criteria were examined and classified into sub-themes.
5. Articles that do not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded.

Ten journal articles related to the topic area were selected and reviewed. The data were analyzed by creating a grid table and populating it with relevant information from each journal article, including the abstract, introduction, conclusion, and key points from the results and discussion sections. The table was analyzed for patterns, similarities, and differences that can help conclude. Various study methods such as content analysis or statistical tests can be used to examine the data and answer research questions related to the potential limitations and effective integration of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners. The interpretation of the results can inform the development of language teaching strategies that utilize mobile pronunciation tools to enhance language learning outcomes in the classroom. Communication of the findings through publications or presentations can also contribute to the body of knowledge on language learning and technology use in education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Potentials of Mobile Pronunciation Tools for English Language Learners
Mobile pronunciation tools offer several potentials for English language learners to enhance their pronunciation skills. These tools provide learners with access to authentic pronunciation models, allowing them to listen to and imitate native speakers. According to Kan and Ito (2020), their research on language learning and pronunciation training using applications demonstrated the effectiveness of mobile tools in providing individualized practice and immediate feedback, thereby helping learners identify and correct pronunciation errors.

Besides that, the convenience and flexibility of mobile learning enable learners to practice pronunciation anytime and anywhere, promoting regular and consistent practice. Moreover, mobile tools have the potential to enhance engagement and motivation by incorporating interactive features, gamification elements, and progress tracking, making pronunciation practice more enjoyable and rewarding. Additionally, these tools can be integrated with other language learning activities, such as vocabulary acquisition or listening comprehension.

For instance, a study conducted by Yürük (2020) explored the effectiveness of utilizing Kahoot as a tool for enhancing pronunciation skills. The statistical analysis using a t-test found that the experimental group significantly improved their English as a foreign language (EFL) pronunciation skills using the Kahoot application. Based on these findings, it is suggested that incorporating Kahoot into various educational levels can be beneficial for the development of EFL pronunciation skills.

Besides that, Meisarah (2020) suggests some mobile applications for pronunciation and phonetics learning, such as AV Phonetic, English Phonetic Pronunciation, English Pronunciation developed by Kepham, and U-Dictionary. Based on the concerns regarding the term Mobile-Assisted Pronunciation Training (MAPT), these applications are classified under content and design approaches that closely cater to students’ pronunciation practice needs.

Lastly, Miqawati (2020) examines the enhancement of pronunciation learning, participation, and attitude through the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). The findings indicated that the utilization of Tflat courseware materials and activities positively influenced students’ pronunciation learning, increased their active involvement in classroom tasks, and fostered a favorable attitude towards technology-based learning. This study underscores the potential and significance of MALL as a valuable tool to facilitate students’ pronunciation learning, emphasizing its role in encouraging students’ engagement and self-monitoring progress during language learning activities. Consequently, MALL emerges as a vital alternative approach for supporting and enhancing students’ pronunciation skills.

Mobile pronunciation tools offer significant potential for English language learners to improve their pronunciation skills. These tools provide access to authentic models, individualized practice, and immediate feedback, facilitating the identification and correction of pronunciation errors. Moreover, the convenience, flexibility, and interactive features of mobile tools enhance engagement and motivation, making pronunciation practice more enjoyable and rewarding.
enjoyable and rewarding. Integrating these tools with other language-learning activities can create a comprehensive language-learning experience. However, further research is necessary to address the limitations and ensure the effectiveness and accuracy of mobile pronunciation tools.

2. Limitations of Mobile Pronunciation Tools for English Language Learners

Mobile pronunciation tools have certain limitations for English language learners, despite their potential. The accuracy and reliability of the pronunciation assessment offered by these technologies are one of the main issues. Particularly when dealing with regional accents or intricate intonation patterns, automated systems may have trouble capturing sophisticated pronunciation aspects. This is in line with Nagle (2019) who states that the mobile application has a technological limitation in that it does not fully utilize tools like voice recognition to analyze pronunciation of learners rather than having users evaluate themselves. Furthermore, computerized evaluation may be biased because these tools might not take into consideration cultural and individual differences in pronunciation.

Another limitation of mobile tools is the shortage of individualized education and interpersonal communication. While they do offer feedback, it cannot be as thorough or specific as feedback from a teacher or language expert who can consider each student’s needs and offer individualized advice. Whether automated or not, feedback must be accurate and reliable; despite the advancements, there are still limitations in providing real-time, robust, and simple to interpret, automated feedback. While recent years, there are still problems with the level of detail and accuracy of feedback, whether at the segmental or suprasegmental level (Rogerson-Revell, 2021). Since not all students may have access to the necessary tools or reliable internet connections, technical limitations and compatibility problems can also present difficulties. Furthermore, relying too heavily on mobile technologies to practice pronunciation could lead to a neglect of other crucial language abilities like grammar, vocabulary, or discourse.

Despite the potential and convenience of mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners, several limitations must be recognized. Assessing pronunciation might be less accurate and reliable, especially when dealing with regional accents and intricate intonation patterns. Furthermore, giving customized feedback and attending to particular needs is difficult due to the lack of interpersonal interactions and individualized teaching. As a result, even though these resources can be very helpful, they should be utilized in conjunction with thorough language education that considers cultural and individual pronunciation variances.

3. Effective Integration Strategies for Mobile Pronunciation Tools.
   a. Integration with classroom instruction.

Technology can no longer be separated from teacher activities in the classroom. A study conducted by Ghounane (2019) shows that the majority of teachers (86.66%) supported the use of technology in the classroom, with the caveat that pedagogical guidance should be used to support it. When integrating mobile pronunciation tools into classroom instruction, teachers should thoroughly consider the curriculum being
used and carefully review pedagogical guidance before integrating it into the class.

Mobile pronunciation tools, however, have developed into priceless instruments for English language instructors in the contemporary classroom. Teachers can handle the restrictions and difficulties that come up when teaching pronunciation by including these tools in their lessons. These tools give students access to voice communication and sound features so that they can download dictionaries to their smartphones and learn how to pronounce unfamiliar new words. In addition, through multimedia features, students can record their voices and send them to the teacher, which would help to assess the student’s pronunciation flaws (Suhair & Abdulameer, 2021). This integration enables teachers to tailor instruction and offer targeted guidance, improving students’ overall pronunciation skills. For instance, teachers can use pronunciation applications that analyze students’ speech and provide real-time feedback on students’ pronunciation accuracy.

Mobile pronunciation tools also provide several additional benefits including accessibility and ease. This is in line with Amalia (2020) who states that mobile applications appear to help offer a personalized, learner-centered learning opportunity with widely accessible and flexible practices. Students may access these resources on their tablets or smartphones to practice their pronunciation at any time. Due to the teachers’ flexibility, pronunciation practice can be incorporated into daily routines, warm-up exercises, and homework assignments. Teachers can promote student engagement and motivation by facilitating pronunciation practice, which ultimately results in better pronunciation.

As a result, the use of mobile pronunciation tools in the classroom has become crucial for English language teachers, offering helpful resources for educating students on pronunciation and enhancing their general skills. These resources provide voice communication, sound features, and multimedia capabilities to students, enabling individualized and focused instruction. Additionally, students can practice pronunciation at their convenience with the accessibility and usability of mobile pronunciation tools, which encourages engagement and motivation. Teachers can improve the learning process and assist students in efficiently mastering pronunciation by embracing technology and incorporating it into their instructional strategies.

b. Individualized Learning and Practice.

Tools for mobile pronunciation have shown to be quite useful for English language learners looking for self-directed learning options. With the aid of these tools, students can get around restrictions and difficulties typical in conventional educational environments. First, self-directed learners can practice pronunciation on their phones at their own pace and leisure. This is in line with Bogach et al (2021) who examine the mobile pronunciation aids and an intuitive user interface support networking from a technology and communicative standpoint. Then, it would encourage the development of easily accessible student-focused mobile apps that were designed to enhance pronunciation wherever and
whenever the students were. With convenient access to these resources on their smartphones or tablets, students may practice concentrated pronunciation whenever and wherever they like, which enables them to advance their abilities at their own pace.

Additionally, mobile pronunciation tools give students quick feedback and advice on how to make corrections. Being able to receive automated and instant feedback on learners' pronunciation is one of the main benefits of mobile pronunciation tools (Rogerson-Revell, 2021). These tools can effectively test pronunciation correctness and give learners immediate feedback by capturing and analyzing their voices. With the use of this quick feedback, students can recognize and correct their own pronunciation mistakes rather than exclusively depending on the teacher’s direction. Due to their ability to actively pursue pronunciation improvement, more independent learners are more autonomous and self-directed.

Mobile pronunciation tools also provide a wealth of materials and resources for self-directed learners. These resources frequently include interactive tasks, audio samples, and pronunciation practices that are appropriate for learners of all proficiency levels. According to Redjeki and Muhajir (2022), mobile pronunciation tools have some material resource features that are specifically created to help students' pronunciation. The first resource feature is interactive tasks or "quizzes," where students are typically asked to complete a test imitating the pronunciation of a native speaker after watching a video or listening to an audio clip. The second resource feature is an audio sample "speak," which simulates a conversation with a native speaker so that students can practice their pronunciation as much as possible. The third resource feature is pronunciation practices or "voice recording," to record students' voices so that they can more easily assess whether they have pronounced English words or phrases correctly. The ability of learners to select materials that meet their individual needs and interests ensures a customized and individualized learning experience. Learners can gain a thorough understanding of pronunciation and holistically enhance their skills by examining the variety of resources made available by mobile pronunciation tools.

In conclusion, self-directed language learners can greatly benefit from mobile pronunciation aids. Due to the restrictions of conventional educational environments, these technologies allow students to practice pronunciation at their own pace and convenience. They encourage learner autonomy and independence by giving prompt feedback and direction. Additionally, the abundance of information and resources provided by mobile pronunciation tools enables a complete and personalized learning experience that is tailored to each learner's needs and interests. Overall, including mobile pronunciation aids gives students the ability to overcome obstacles and significantly improve their pronunciation abilities.

c. Incorporating authentic materials and real-life situations.
Mobile pronunciation tools can be integrated into genuine content and events from everyday life to make language learning more applicable and useful. By listening to and mimicking native speakers in various circumstances, such as dialogues, interviews, or conversations, learners may improve their pronunciation skills. Learners can acquire the abilities necessary to communicate successfully in everyday circumstances because of this integration. It has also been demonstrated that using authentic materials like videos to present educational content helps students process the material well (Alkhudair, 2020). Additionally, authentic materials improve students' general language comprehension by introducing them to various accents, intonation patterns, and speech rates.

In addition, integrating real-life situations and authentic materials into mobile pronunciation tools gives learners the chance to interact with language in a more genuine and meaningful way. As learners increase their awareness of the need to improve pronunciation, they become more aware of their language faculty, and many phonological features of a foreign language make learners integrate mobile pronunciation tools into their real-life situations (Kuznetsov et al., 2020). When mobile pronunciation tools are used, students are exposed to real language use in a variety of circumstances, including news broadcasts, podcasts, and social media content. Integrating those various settings can help learners gain a greater knowledge of cultural quirks, idioms, and current language trends. Along with improving their pronunciation, this exposure also broadens their cultural knowledge and linguistic flexibility, enabling them to interact comfortably and successfully in a variety of real-world contexts. A more thorough and immersive language learning experience is promoted using authentic materials and real-world contexts, which equip learners to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use.

In conclusion, language learners can benefit in several ways from the integration of real-life situations and authentic materials in mobile pronunciation tools. It enables learners to practice pronouncing words correctly by listening to and imitating native speakers in various settings. Additionally, exposing learners to authentic materials improves their knowledge of accents, intonation patterns, and speech rates in language. Last but not least, incorporating authentic materials and real-world situations into mobile pronunciation tools gives learners a more genuine and meaningful language learning experience, exposing them to cultural nuances and modern linguistic trends while improving their capacity for effective communication in real-world settings.

d. Feedback and Guidance from Teachers or language experts.

Even though mobile pronunciation apps offer helpful resources for independent study, teachers or other language experts are still essential for providing guidance and feedback. The pronunciation recordings created by students utilizing mobile applications can be reviewed and analyzed by teachers, who can then offer helpful criticism and recommendations for improvement. According to Yang (2022), feedback
from teachers fills in knowledge and skill gaps and may inspire students to continue improving their weak areas. Learners are guided toward more correct pronunciation by this tailored feedback, which enables them to recognize their strengths and limitations. Additionally, teachers can augment the mobile tools by providing extra justifications, clarifications, and examples, improving the learning process all around.

Even though mobile pronunciation apps are useful tools for self-study, it is important to note that teachers and other language specialists play an important part in language learning. Their advice and criticism are very helpful in improving pronunciation abilities. Teachers have the option to monitor and evaluate recordings made by pupils using mobile applications, providing helpful critiques and individualized suggestions for progress. In addition to filling knowledge and ability gaps, this feedback encourages students to strengthen their areas of weakness. Learning can be further improved by teachers by offering more explanations, clarifications, and examples, and by giving students feedback that is specifically matched to their strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the partnership between educators and mobile apps produces a thorough and efficient method for learning pronunciation techniques.

The findings in the literature review are in line with earlier studies on learning language and mobile pronunciation tools. Studies that highlight the potential benefits of personalized practice, timely feedback, and access to real pronunciation models suggest the potential of mobile pronunciation tools to improve pronunciation skills (Kan & Ito, 2020). Research demonstrating the significance of learner engagement in language learning is aligned with the usage of gamification aspects, interactive features, and progress tracking in mobile technologies to encourage engagement and motivation (Yürük, 2020). The incorporation of mobile technologies into other language-learning activities is consistent with the idea of developing a holistic language-learning experience, in which different language-learning abilities and components are interconnected (Meisarah, 2020).

On the other hand, the issues raised regarding the accuracy of pronunciation assessment, the absence of tailored instruction, and technical restrictions are consistent with the difficulties found in earlier studies. Concerns have been raised about the accuracy and reliability of automated pronunciation assessment, particularly when dealing with regional accents and intricate intonation patterns (Nagle, 2019). Studies stressing the importance of instructor experience in pronunciation education have emphasized the value of personalized feedback and personalized instruction (Rogerson-Revell, 2021). The compatibility problems and technical restrictions highlighted are in line with earlier studies on the difficulties in incorporating technology into settings for language learning (Rogerson-Revell, 2021).

English language instructors can successfully address the constraints and difficulties posed by pronunciation instruction by integrating mobile pronunciation tools into the classroom. When implementing these tools into their classroom, teachers should carefully evaluate pedagogical recommendations and take the curriculum into account. Teachers can provide tailored training, focused supervision, and in-the-moment feedback to students to help them with their
pronunciation by using mobile pronunciation tools. By incorporating pronunciation practice into regular activities and projects, they can also increase motivation and engagement. However, teachers must strike a balance between the use of mobile gadgets and all-encompassing language instruction that covers other crucial language skills.

Mobile pronunciation tools, on the other hand, give self-directed learners the chance to practice and refine their pronunciation abilities. Students can use these resources at their own pace and convenience, giving them the flexibility to work on their pronunciation whenever and wherever they like. These tools provide learners with immediate feedback and direction that allows them to recognize and fix their own pronunciation mistakes, promoting learner autonomy and self-directed learning. Mobile pronunciation tools' accessibility to a variety of resources and information encourages individualized and customized learning. Students can choose resources according to their requirements and interests, improving their overall pronunciation skills.

The limitations and challenges mentioned in this literature review can be addressed in future research on mobile pronunciation tools for English language learners. Innovative methods for assessing pronunciation in automated systems can be improved through studies, especially when it comes to capturing regional accents and intricate intonation patterns. In addition, given the significance of instructor proficiency in pronunciation instruction, research can investigate ways to deliver more targeted education and feedback via mobile tools. It would also be good to conduct further research on how mobile pronunciation tools can be integrated with other language learning activities and the effects on learners' overall language development.

Additionally, studies can look at how well mobile pronunciation tools work over the long term in enhancing learners' pronunciation abilities and how well these abilities translate to authentic communication situations. To improve their adaptive capabilities and deliver more specialized and targeted pronunciation coaching, artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms may one day be included in mobile gadgets. To gain a better understanding of the efficiency and application of mobile pronunciation aids, it would also be helpful to look into how they affect various learner demographics, such as those with varied language origins or special learning requirements.

Even though mobile pronunciation tools have a lot of potential to help English language learners improve their pronunciation, they also have issues that need to be resolved. Teachers and students can get beyond these restrictions and make the most of mobile pronunciation tools by properly integrating these resources into classroom instruction and promoting self-directed learning. To increase the precision of pronunciation evaluation, offer personalized instruction, address technical issues, and guarantee the long-term efficacy of these tools in increasing learners' pronunciation skills, additional research and development are required.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

According to the article reviewed in this study, mobile tools for pronouncing words have a lot of promise to help English language learners improve their pronunciation. These technologies facilitate identifying and
correcting pronunciation mistakes by giving users access to real models, tailored practice, and quick feedback. Mobile technologies' accessibility, adaptability, and interactive elements further boost motivation and engagement, making learners pronunciation practice entertaining and fruitful. A thorough and all-encompassing language learning experience is produced by combining these tools with additional language learning exercises. However, there are drawbacks to mobile pronunciation tools, such as difficulties in delivering personalized feedback and precise pronunciation assessments. It might also be lacking the personalized instruction and interpersonal skills that teachers can provide.

Additionally, for those who only use mobile technologies to practice pronunciation, they can overlook other crucial language skills. However, these restrictions can be overcome if mobile pronunciation tools are effectively incorporated into classroom instruction, where teachers can offer pedagogical guidance and targeted guidance, and if students use these tools for self-directed learning, benefiting from easy access, prompt feedback, and a wealth of materials and resources. To solve the drawbacks and ensure the efficacy and accuracy of mobile pronunciation tools, more research and development are required.

REFERENCES


