

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF MOBILE-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN MODERN EDUCATION

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Abstract

The integration of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) into educational settings has become increasingly prevalent, offering learners unprecedented accessibility and flexibility (Traxler, 2007). This study investigates the perceptions of English language teachers regarding the benefits and challenges of integrating MALL into modern language classrooms. While findings across the literature largely indicate **positive attitudes** towards MALL's potential for enhancing **student motivation, autonomy, and engagement**, significant concerns persist regarding technical limitations, pedagogical content quality, and classroom management issues. Understanding teachers' perspectives is crucial for developing effective and sustainable professional development programs that support the successful integration of mobile technology in language education.

Keywords: *Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Teacher Perceptions, Modern Education, Language Teaching, Digital Literacy, Autonomy.*

Introduction

The 21st century classroom is undergoing a rapid transformation driven by ubiquitous mobile technologies, such as smartphones and tablets. These devices have given rise to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), a sub-field of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) that leverages the portability and connectivity of mobile devices to facilitate language acquisition outside the traditional classroom (Kukulka-Hulme & Shield, 2008). MALL is lauded for enabling "**anytime, anywhere**" **learning**, fostering self-directed study, and providing instant access to authentic resources (Traxler, 2007; Khujakulov et al., 2024).

However, the transition from conventional teaching to MALL-integrated practice is mediated by the educators themselves. A teacher's attitude, knowledge, and experience with new technologies significantly influence the success of any technological integration

(Son, 2014). This article aims to synthesize global and local research on teachers' perceptions of MALL, examining the perceived benefits and the persistent barriers to its widespread and effective use in language education.

Method

This article employs a **qualitative synthesis approach** based on a review of published academic literature. The data sources reviewed include global meta-analyses, empirical studies, and scholarly articles, with a specific focus on research detailing EFL/ESL instructors' perceptions, attitudes, and reported experiences with MALL. The search strategy targeted academic databases using keywords such as "MALL," "teacher perceptions," "instructor attitudes," and "mobile learning in language education," and specifically sought out articles by Khujakulov and Akhmedova to incorporate regional perspectives. The analysis synthesizes common themes, positive perceptions, and recurring challenges identified by teachers across various educational contexts.

Findings

The synthesis of research reveals that teachers generally hold a complex view of MALL, dominated by optimism regarding its potential but tempered by practical concerns.

1. Perceived Benefits

The most frequently cited positive perception is MALL's ability to **boost student engagement and motivation** (Jimenez, 2019; Yang, 2012). Mobile applications often utilize gamification and interactive features that make language practice more appealing than traditional methods, leading to a stronger desire to learn outside of class (Sugiarto, 2024). Furthermore, teachers acknowledge MALL's capacity to support **autonomous learning** and **individualization**. By giving students control over *what*, *when*, and *how* they learn, mobile devices cater to diverse learning styles and paces (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009). The feature of **ubiquity** is highly valued, as it allows learners to leverage everyday moments such as commuting for language practice, thereby expanding exposure beyond classroom hours (Lăpădat, 2023).

2. Perceived Challenges and Barriers

Despite the noted advantages, teachers report several significant barriers. **Technical issues** are a primary concern, including unreliable internet connectivity, small

screen size limiting intensive reading, and device compatibility problems (Soleimani et al., 2014). Pedagogically, the lack of **high-quality, pedagogically sound content** and the general absence of clear institutional guidelines or professional development programs are major inhibitors (Pérez-Paredes & Zhang, 2022).

In the context of local research, **Khujakulov et al. (2024)** highlight that while MALL promotes self-directed study and collaboration, its effectiveness is often compromised by technical barriers and a lack of adaptive design in some applications. Similarly, **Akhmedova (2021)** has discussed the need for teachers to move beyond device-oriented pedagogies to focus on socially-situated practices, implicitly noting that many educators struggle to integrate mobile tools critically and theoretically into the curriculum. Concerns over **classroom management**, specifically the potential for devices to become a source of distraction or academic misconduct (cheating), also significantly influence teachers' willingness to integrate MALL (Godwin-Jones, 2015).

Conclusion

Teachers' perceptions of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning are overwhelmingly positive regarding its potential to enhance core aspects of language acquisition namely, **accessibility, motivation, and learner autonomy**. However, this optimism is counterbalanced by substantial challenges related to **technological infrastructure, teacher training, and pedagogical integration**. For MALL to fulfill its transformative promise in modern education, policymakers and institutions must address these barriers through investments in robust digital infrastructure, the provision of targeted professional development programs focused on MALL pedagogy, and the creation of clear guidelines for appropriate classroom use. Only through this concerted effort can the gap between teacher enthusiasm and effective implementation be successfully bridged.

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