



Analyzing the Effects of Using Technology in Learning English at the Undergraduate Level at Panjshir Higher Education Institute

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Abstract

In recent decades, a developing trend in education is using technology in teaching and learning, particularly in teaching English. Using technology and smartphones is widely influenced for foreign and second language learning across the globe. Technology has a more significant influence on improving language abilities than just convenience. The main objective of the present research was to show the learners' attitudes toward using technology and smartphone apps for the English language and new vocabulary in their careers. The present study used a quantitative research design. The data for this research was collected utilizing a Google Forms questionnaire administered to 55 students from Panjshir Higher Education Institute's English Language and Literature Department. According to the results of the present study, most learners use technology and smartphone apps to enhance their foreign language skills and abilities. In conclusion, using technology and smartphone apps positively influenced and developed students' attitudes, skills, and abilities toward English language acquisition.

Keywords: Language, technology, vocabulary, undergraduate students.

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology in the twenty-first century has significantly transformed various aspects of human life, including education. In particular, technology has become a vital tool in teaching and learning, especially in language acquisition (Kalyani, 2024). Although, many educators acknowledge the benefits of educational technologies often finding them both efficient and easy to use these advancements have proven to enhance understanding and foster more effective communication (Amir, 2022). As Amir (2022) mentioned teachers also believe that technology will play a crucial role in shaping the future of education. In addition, as noted by Miller (2014), most modern college graduates will have experienced at least some form of technology-driven education. Strom and Moffitt (2012) also expressed that there has been substantial improvement in computer programs, software enhancement, and online learning tools, all of which can be utilized in classroom settings. Moreover, technology has become an essential communication tool, particularly in

countries prioritizing its use in English language learning (Amir, 2022). The rise and expansion of social, multimedia, and digital technologies in twenty-first-century lives have greatly influenced media networks altering behavioral and social norms over time (Alahmad, 2020).

The rapid integration of technology into education has significantly impacted the teaching and learning of English, particularly at the undergraduate level. Various studies have emphasized technology's positive role in enhancing language learning. For instance, using smartphones, apps, and digital platforms has been shown to facilitate vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and communication skills. According to Diliprao (2016), the use of technology in everyday life can help students improve their listening skills and develop vocabulary more efficiently. Similarly, Ahmadi (2018) highlights that technology fosters interaction between students and educators, promotes student autonomy, and increases motivation to learn foreign languages. Mobile devices, especially smartphones, are the most popular technology among learners, providing access to learning materials anytime and place (Diliprao, 2016). He mentioned that apps like WhatsApp, mobile dictionaries, and Telegram are popular tools for students to check word meanings, pronunciation, and definitions. The widespread use of WhatsApp has made it a valuable platform for students to receive assignments, engage in mini-research, and improve their English language skills (Budiman et al., 2023). Kurd et al. (2023) also suggest that images and other multimedia forms leave a lasting effect on learners' memory, making applications and social media essential tools in language education. Moreover, the role of technology in enhancing language skills goes beyond convenience. It aligns with modern educational approaches, such as the communicative approach, which enables more effective student engagement and interaction (Sosas, 2021). Teachers who integrate multimedia into their lessons, such as interactive whiteboards and language learning software, can provide students with more personalized practice and feedback (Eslit, 2023). Despite these advancements, some challenges persist, as educators remain cautious about fully embracing technology in the classroom, and more evidence is still needed to convince stakeholders of its effectiveness (Jamalifar & Chalak, 2014).

Furthermore, the ability to access learning materials from anywhere through internet connectivity has fundamentally altered how students learn and communicate (Abbasi, 2023). The rise of social media and digital communication tools has changed linguistic behaviors, as seen in the use of text-speak among the younger generation (Abbasi, 2020). Despite initial hesitation from some educators, students overwhelmingly favor technology-enhanced learning environments, and technology has proven to improve learning outcomes in English language education (Chuong, 2022).

Despite the growing incorporation of technology in educational practices, the extent of its impact on English language learning at the undergraduate level remains underexplored, particularly in non-native English-speaking countries like Afghanistan. At Panjshir Higher Education Institute, students increasingly use technology, such as smartphones and apps, to aid in vocabulary learning and language acquisition. However, there is still a lack of systematic research examining how effectively these tools enhance language proficiency and engagement in the classroom. Moreover, while students are eager to use technology for learning, challenges such as limited internet access and a lack of teacher support may hinder their potential benefits. This study aims to investigate the effects of using technology in learning English at the undergraduate level within the English Language and Literature Department at Panjshir Higher Education Institute. Specifically,

the study seeks to: 1. Assess how various technological tools, such as smartphones, apps, and online platforms influence students' vocabulary acquisition and overall English language proficiency.

2. Explore the role of technology in improving students' engagement, motivation, and interaction in the English learning environment.

Research questions:

1. What Apps are more effective in learning the English language?
2. How often does technology help learners learn the English language?

By understanding these aspects, this research tries to provide insights into how technology can be more effectively integrated into English language instruction at the undergraduate level.

Material and Method

This study used a quantitative method descriptive analytical approach. Analyzing the effects of using technology in learning English at the undergraduate level at Panjshir Higher Education Institute. The participants in this study consisted of 55 undergraduate students from the English Language and Literature Department. The sample was taken non-randomly from the English department students. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect the data. Getting views of the participants consisted of 11 closed items to find out the opinions of the learners about effects of using technology. The questionnaire had five Likert scales. The data was examined through the Word program by checking the frequency of each item and displayed in pie charts.

Results

The present research was conducted to analyze the effects of using technology in learning English at the undergraduate level of the English Language and Literature Department at Panjshir Institute of Higher Education. The findings of the present study are shown and illustrated in the following pie charts.

1. Select your class.

55 responses

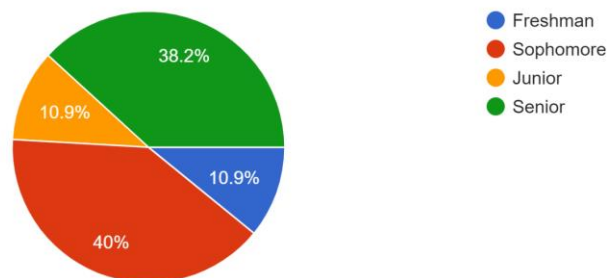


Chart 1: Select your class. The data for this study was collected from 55 undergraduate learners. 10.9% of them were freshmen, 40% of them were sophomores, 10.9% juniors, and 38.2% of them were senior students of the English Language and Literature Department.

2. How often have you used a mobile dictionary for new vocabulary?

55 responses

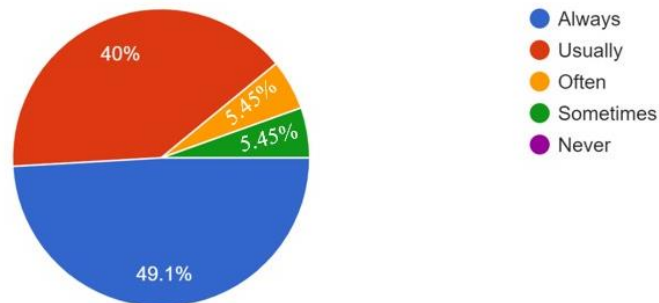


Chart 2: How often have used a mobile dictionary for new vocabulary?

According to the responses of the participants about learning new vocabulary through using a mobile phone dictionary, 49.1% of the respondents chose the term always, that is the majority of the participants used a mobile phone which has positively impacted the learning process. However, 40% of respondents who used a mobile dictionary selected the phrase "usually," which came in second in the learning process. The third option was chosen 5.45% of the time, which means using a mobile dictionary is less effective. The latest responses of the participants were that 5.45% sometimes use a mobile phone. Nobody had chosen the never term. It showed that most learners use mobile phone dictionaries for learning new vocabulary. However, the least of the participants had negative ideas.

3. How often do you use Google Meet to learn the English language?

55 responses

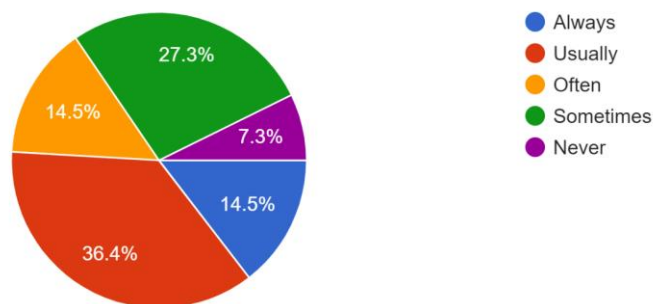
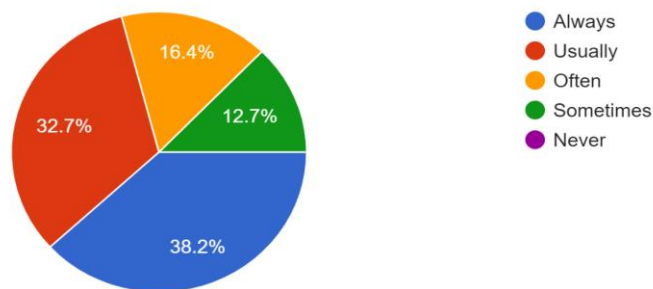


Chart 3: How often do you use Google Meet to learn the English language?

The responses showed that 14.5% chose the first item. Moreover, 36.4% of them used the term usually. Furthermore, 14.5% of them selected the often option. Hence, 27.3% prefer sometimes. Likewise, 7.3% selected never term. Overall, the responses revealed that most of the learners used Google Meet to learn the English language. On the contrary, the least of them had negative thoughts.

4. How often do you use WhatsApp to learn the English language?

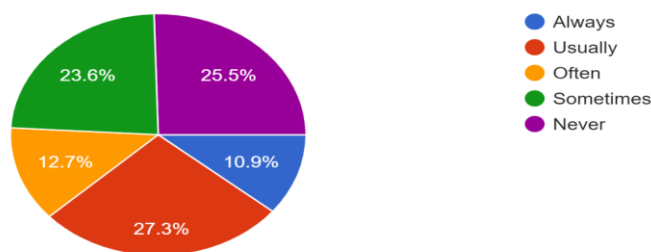
55 responses

**Chart 4:** How often do you use WhatsApp to learn the English language?

The responses revealed that 38.2% of them preferred always. Afterward, 32.7% chose the usually term. At the same time, 16.4% elected often option. Besides, 12.7% of them preferred the term sometimes. The findings displayed that the majority of the participants used WhatsApp for learning.

5. How often do you use Zoom for learning the English language?

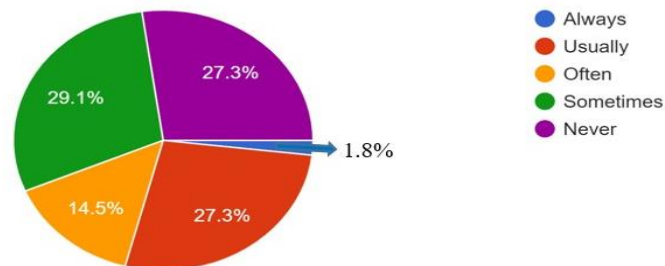
55 responses

**Chart 5:** How often do you use Zoom for learning the English language?

The replies indicated that 10.9% of them used the term always. In the meantime, 27.3% of the students used the usually. In addition, 12.7% used the term often. Later on, 23.6% used sometimes option. Consequently, 25.5% preferred never. As a result, the majority of the learners had positive views and the minority had negative beliefs.

6. How often do you use Telegram to learn the English language?

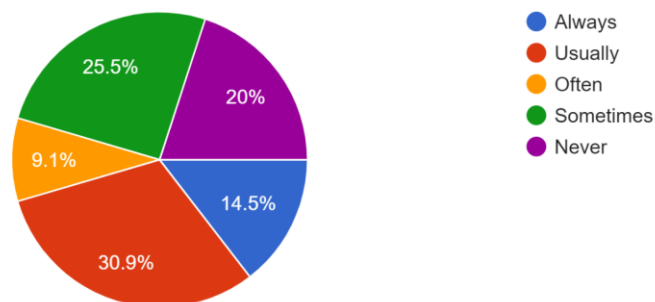
55 responses

**Chart 6:** How often do you use Telegram to learn the English language?

The responses manifested that 1.8% of them preferred the term always. Indeed, 27.3% of the participants used the usually option. Furthermore, 14.5% of the students preferred often. Moreover, 29.1% of them used the term sometimes. Finally, 27.3% of them selected the term never. The data indicated that the majority of students had positive and the minority had negative ideas about using Telegram for language learning.

7. How often do you use a computer to learn the English language?

55 responses

**Chart 7:** How often do you use a computer to learn the English language?

According to the chart above, 14.5% of participants used the term always. Moreover, 30.9% of them preferred the usually option. Further, 9.1% of the students chose often. Furthermore, 25.5% of them selected the term sometimes. In the meantime, 20% of the participants chose the term never for using a computer in language learning. The result

displayed, that the majority of the participants were optimistic and the minority were pessimistic about using computers for learning.

8. I encourage myself to use technology for university assignments.

55 responses

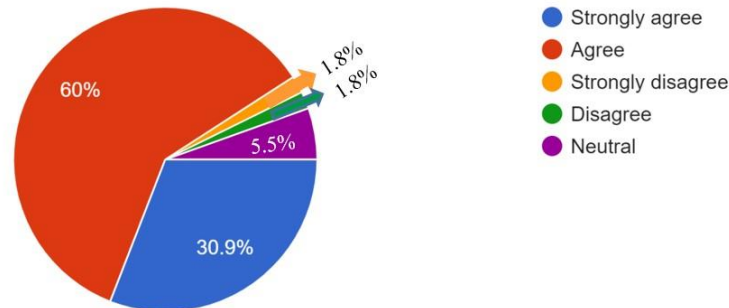


Chart 8: I encourage myself to use technology for university assignments.

The results of Chart 8 indicated that 30.9% of the participants strongly agreed to use technology in conducting university assignments. Moreover, 60% of them agreed with the use of technology in the conduct of university assignments. Furthermore, 1.8% of the participants strongly disagreed. In the meantime, 1.8% of them disagreed. In addition, 5.5% of the responses preferred neutral. As a result of the study, students were positive about using technology for university assignments.

9. Using technology increases the enjoyment of learning English language.

55 responses

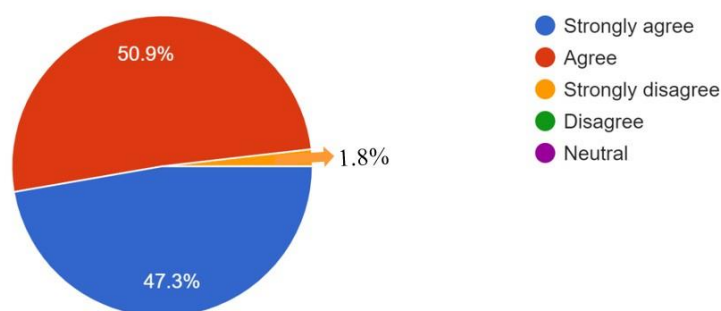


Chart 9: Using technology increases the enjoyment of learning the English language.

The above chart indicated that 47.3% of the participants strongly agreed that using technology increases students' learning process. Moreover, 50.9% of the participant's replies agreed. Also, 1.8% of the participants were strongly disagreed. The overall data in the above

chart displayed that participants were optimistic about increasing their enjoyment of English language learning.

10. Using a smartphone to learn English makes it easier to understand the lessons.

55 responses

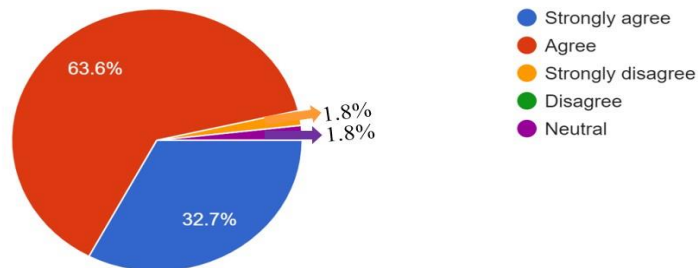


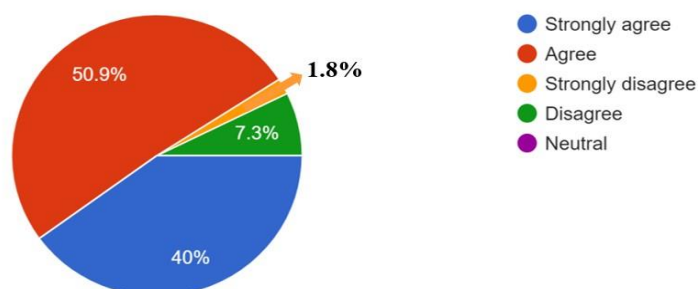
Chart 10: Using a smartphone to learn English makes it easier to understand the lessons well.

The above chart indicates that 32.7% of the students strongly agreed with smartphones which makes the lesson easier. Besides, 63.6% of the participants agreed that smartphone makes the lesson understandable. Furthermore, 1.8 % of them strongly disagreed. In the meantime, 1.8% of the students selected the term neutral. The results revealed that the majority had positive and the minority had negative ideas.

Chart 11: Using an internet-based (online) dictionary helps to develop your pronunciation properly. The above chart responses showed that 40% of the participants strongly agreed that using online dictionaries develops pronunciation skills. Furthermore, 50.9% of them agreed with the use of internet-based (online) dictionaries. Moreover, 1.8% of the participants strongly disagreed which means online dictionaries do not develop learners' pronunciation skills. Besides, 7.3% of the participants disagreed that online dictionaries do not develop their pronunciation skills. Results indicated that the majority of students had positive and the minority had negative thoughts about using online dictionaries for developing pronunciation skills.

11. Using an internet-based (online) dictionary helps to develop your pronunciation.

55 responses



Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that many students acquire new vocabulary and improve their English skills through technology and mobile applications, such as WhatsApp. This supports the claims made by Kurd et al. (2023), who found that using mobile apps for vocabulary acquisition was enjoyable. However, the participants in this study seldom used Telegram and Zoom to learn English. Most offline and online mobile dictionaries to find word meanings in their source and target languages. Smartphones were primarily used to help understand the context of words. Additionally, using classroom projectors made lessons more engaging and easier for students. When it came to writing the assignments, a small percentage of students did not use computers, but nearly 90% of the participants used computers in conducting their assignments. As Diliprao (2016) observed, learners accustomed to using technology believe that computers can help them learn a language more efficiently, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their listening skills. The students' attitudes toward learning English indicated that a significant number felt comfortable using technology and smartphones to develop language skills and submit assignments. Therefore, integrating technology and online apps helps students improve their language abilities and facilitates the stages of learning, including pronunciation. Elmadani & Abdelrady (2020) also noted that pronunciation errors are often corrected when students learn English through technology. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as the limited availability of smartphones and the internet, which hindered some students' learning experiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of technology both inside and outside the classroom has become vital to modern education, significantly enhancing students' English language learning. The study's findings indicate that many participants using mobile dictionaries had already developed some level of English proficiency, with more favoring mobile dictionaries over printed ones. Interestingly, platforms like Google Meet were not as popular for language improvement, whereas WhatsApp emerged as the most familiar and widely used app for language learning. Conversely, Zoom was found to be unfamiliar and challenging for many participants, and Telegram was not utilized for learning at the undergraduate level. Though participants did not often use computers for assignments, they relied heavily on technology tools, which helped boost their skills and abilities. Smartphones, with various apps, played a pivotal role in supporting English language acquisition and vocabulary learning. Nevertheless, the participants did not use the Telegram tool at the undergraduate level. The participants stated that students typically did not utilize the computer for assignments. In sending assignments, most of the time the participants used technology

tools and it increased their skills and abilities. Finally, the participants used smartphones with different installed apps in the English language and new vocabulary learning. As technology evolves rapidly, undergraduate students, especially in countries like Afghanistan, are expected to increasingly incorporate tools such as chatbots and advanced mobile apps into their educational practices, further enhancing their learning experiences.

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Data Availability Statement:

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest:

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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