

## **Theme: MALL for student-centered learning**

Mobile devices such as smartphones afford the opportunity for a variety of authentic, student-centered learning activities, and guided exposure and practice within the classroom can help learners develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence, to become motivated, independent learners beyond the classroom. This symposium will highlight three research projects that explore these affordances of MALL.

Firstly, Marni Manegre will present a study titled Comparing Student-Centered Learning in a Video-Based App to the Grammar-Translation Method in an EFL Class which explores the effectiveness of the Soqqlle app for English comprehension and production among Spanish learners of English. Secondly Martin Mullen will present on TESOL Student-teacher attitudes to smartphones as classroom resources, describing an exploration of MEd TESOL student teachers' attitudes to smartphones and their experiments with the devices. Thirdly, Ikram Khansal will report on an Investigation of the Use of Kahoot! as an Alternative for Homework Methods by EFL Teachers in Algeria, documenting the benefits and drawbacks of using Kahoot! in EFL instruction and explores the perceptions of teachers regarding its use.

A number of learning applications have been developed as a result of technological advancement in the active multidisciplinary field of research linguistics, along with education (Shadiev & Liu, 2023). This study aims to show whether using the Soqqlle method improves the English production and comprehension performance of A2 level EFL Spanish students, as this sort of technology is uncommon in EFL Spanish classrooms. A sample of 76 high school students participated in this study in the Catalan region of Spain. The participants were distributed into three groups: a control group and two experimental groups. While the control group only received instruction using the grammar-translation method, both experimental groups were coached on how to use the Soqqlle application for video storytelling and content-based learning. The first treatment group used the Soqqlle app, and the second experimental group received instruction through the grammar-translation method, and they also used Soqqlle. A prequestionnaire, pretest, posttest, and postquestionnaire were used to collect the data, and an analysis of the data was conducted using a repeated measures ANOVA and chi-square goodness of fit tests. The results revealed that all three groups had improved following the instruction period, and the methods of instruction were equally effective contrary to the assumption of the alternative hypothesis. Additionally, the findings have shown that using Soqqlle increases motivation at the same rate as the other methods employed in this study due to the dynamics between the teacher and the students, putting an emphasis on the quality of the instructor over the quality of the type of instruction.

**Keywords:** *Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), student-centred learning, video-based learning, EFL learners, Soqqlle.*

## **Secondly, Martin Mullen will present on TESOL Student-teacher attitudes to smartphones as classroom resources**

This presentation will document research conducted with a series of cohorts of TESOL student-teachers at Master's Degree level at a Scottish university. The aim of the research project was to explore the teachers' perceptions of smartphones as a potential classroom tool, and to

investigate the factors which either encourage or discourage teachers from employing the devices as part of their teaching activities.

Across modules, students and the researcher used their phones to explore language learning resources, shared experiences, and documented their out-of-class use of a range of apps. The trainee teachers were interviewed by the researcher, and the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis to capture and explore themes that were consistently identified across the data. Findings indicate that the trainee teachers are tentatively in favour of using smartphones in the classroom, and feel that, as teachers, it is something they 'should' be familiar with and capable of. Nevertheless, a number of factors impact on their likelihood of actually using the devices, including concerns over just how prepared they are to use the devices, worries that introducing smartphones in the classroom might lead to more disruptive classes, and pondering what the teacher's role is in the personalised use of smartphones.

The presentation will end with a discussion of how each of these factors can be mitigated against to support the effective use of smartphones as part of a teacher's classroom repertoire.

**Keywords:** *Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, Teacher education, Digital Literacy, Learning Beyond the Classroom*

### **Thirdly, Ikram Khansal will present on an Investigation of the Use of Kahoot! as an Alternative for Homework Methods by EFL Teachers in Algeria**

The daily practice of a foreign language through homework is an indispensable cornerstone in language learning, and it is considered by language teachers as a requirement in the language learning/teaching process. Throughout the last decades, several characteristics of homework (e.g., frequency, purpose, amount) have been extensively analyzed; still, the format of homework delivery has been less investigated. In recent years, a strong investment has been made to equip schools with technology for educational purposes, leading to some transformations in teachers' homework practices. Recent literature has described the implementation of online homework by EFL teachers using mobile learning in general and mobile apps more specifically.

Research on mobile learning technologies as a support to teaching English as a Foreign language is still in its early adoption stage worldwide. Such adoption requires several elements to be considered, including the readiness and acceptance towards adopting mobile learning among teachers which is a critical aspect of ensuring successful implementation. This presentation will provide an overview of the findings derived from a current PhD study conducted at the University of Limerick, Ireland, focusing on the use of Kahoot! as an alternative for traditional homework methods used by middle school EFL teachers in Algeria. This study showcases the benefits and drawbacks of using Kahoot! in EFL instruction and explores the perceptions of teachers regarding its use. It also focuses on the impact of Kahoot! on teachers' instructional practices, such as its potential to enhance teachers' ability to engage students and promote language learning outcomes. The findings of this study inform the development of effective pedagogical practices for teachers using Kahoot! in EFL instruction, as well as contribute to the existing literature on the use of educational technology in foreign language instruction.

**Keywords:** *Mobile learning, MALL, Mobile Apps, Kahoot, EFL instruction, Homework.*