

## USING MOBILE-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (MALL) TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN BANGLADESH

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**ABSTRACT:** *As there is a rapid growth of technology in today's world, wireless communication technology is not an exception to this respect. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language teaching and learning. Mobile has no inbuilt wisdom, no intellect of its own, no inventiveness and instinctive capability to teach or learn. Nevertheless, it is used for different purposes in many ways. The teachers, in particular, can use mobile technology to prepare their students to teach effectively through using apps, blogs, and digital keyboards. And this use of technology can make the dynamic changes in teaching and learning English language skills, such as, reading, speaking, listening and writing. Drawn data from questionnaire survey, interviews with students and teachers, this paper demonstrates the suitability of mobile phone use as a pedagogic tool the classroom practice to enhance the ways of teaching to cultivate communication in English to the engineering students in Bangladesh context. To undertake this research, a questionnaire survey was conducted among 300 engineering students at two universities in Bangladesh. Findings suggest that mobile phone is advantageous, such as, it is handy to use, it is easily portable, it can be used anytime and any place, students can share reading materials easily and comfortably. However, this study also reports the disadvantages firstly, it can drive away students' attention in classroom practice, and secondly, students can misuse it. Finally an assessment has been made that mobile phone use can help engineering students to improve their English language skills to communicate.*

**KEYWORDS:** mobile-assisted language learning; motivation; pronunciation; engineering students.

## INTRODUCTION

### Mobile Learning

In recent times, mobile learning, or m-learning, has become a potential learning model through which learners can connect themselves with the learning materials wherever and whenever they want, and this is what can be termed as the use of mobile or wireless devices for educational purpose (Kukulka-Hulme & Traxler, 2007; McNeal & Hooft, 2006; Thornton & Houser, 2005). Lan & Sie (2010) claim that learners engage more in learning process using mobile technologies

and Internet. Mobile learning means the use of various technological devices, this includes Smartphone, MP3 players and Hand-held computers, and these devices are very useful for learners to learn language (Tai & Ting, 2011; Dudeney & Hockly 2007). In addition, learners can access easily to educational resources using mobile devices via a wireless medium which is facilitating for students (Litchfield et al., 2007). Odabasi (2009) contends that this model could be applied to enhance the use of mobile technologies in educational context. Soliman (2014) claims that learners need more time and more opportunities to perform together to the target language but in face-to-face teaching in some certain situations is quite limited for many learners. Hence, mobile learning could be useful to fulfil this gap (Soleimani et al., 2014). Besides, the use of this technology can help using appropriate materials for meaningful teaching and learning in the classroom practices (McNeal & Hooft, 2006). Researchers maintain that learners become more successful in learning target language when it is taught correctly.

### **What makes MALL attractive for language learners?**

Kukulska-Hulme (2009) argues that Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) devices are quite attractive for learners to learn languages because of their moveable and ever-present features. They encourage interactive, collaborative and participating learning activities and help learners personalize learning independently (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). As a result, students can think about what, where, when and how they will learn. Moreover, MALL can offer a blended learning ambience which includes both face-to-face, online and offline learning practices (Stockwell & Hubbard, 2013). Additionally, it is also motivating for students as they can simply access to resources at anytime and at anywhere (McNeal & Hooft, 2006). Mobile devices, in particular, mobile phones present a wide range of activities that are pretty affluent. In addition, a number of usual activities that students regularly make use of can be listed as follows: to read e-books, to listen to audio and audio-visual materials such as podcasts, to share visual materials, to make social contact, to play games, to record audio and video documents, to make social contacts. Moreover, mobile devices are considered as instructional materials in many educational institutions because of their multiple functions and features (Dudeney & Hockly, 2012; Stockwell & Hubbard, 2013; Conacher, 2009). Pearson (2013) claims that 92% of the participants believe that mobile equipments have an immense influence on their learning. Findings also suggest that mobile devices and activities used for educational purposes can promote self-directed forms of language learning and greater student autonomy (Chinnery, 2006). Therefore, students' control over practice and flow of learning fosters independence.

Mobile phone is being used in almost all fields of life, including in education and communication (Jain et al., 2011). In education, mobile has become so essential for its various functions. The utilization of mobile in education has recently started to appeal the potential and significant progress in learning language skills. To teach foreign language, the application of Integrated Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) becomes pedagogic instruction in curriculum in many secondary and higher education institutions (Abdous et al., 2009). Learning through mobile has long been considered as one of the natural strategies. Moreover, it plays an important role in learning English specifically in learning pronunciation, vocabulary and the oral-aural skills because of its characteristics and input and output capabilities (Chang et al., 2010; Terrell, 2011).

## **Theoretical Framework for MALL**

Researchers suggest various frameworks to evaluate the process and effects of mobile learning. Engestrom (1987) initially introduced Activity Theory (AT), a mostly applied framework for analyzing human practices. Recently, several researchers have used AT as a theoretical basis for analyzing mobile learning studies and for designing mobile learning classroom (Frohberg et al., 2009; Sharples et al., 2007; Zurita & Nussbaumn, 2007).

Given the view of original Activity Theory, Sharples et al. (2007) revised AT for mobile learning and their study proposed an AT-MALL conceptual framework to analyze Mobile Assisted Language Learning. The AT-MALL has six major components:

1. Subjects: In the MALL activity subject is who may be involved in learning language through mobile devices
2. Object: It is one of MALL activities that focuses on the goal of MALL such as acquiring language skills or enhancing learning motivation through mobile devices
3. Tools/ Instruments in MALL activity involved in applying tools for successful language learning
4. Rules/ control for the activity, which are norms that limit the MALL activity, such as the procedure in teaching scenario or learning pace designated in MALL platforms
5. The Context of the activity deals with teachers, students, classroom situation and the devices used in teaching learning practice
6. Communication / interaction, which refers to the method of interaction between users and MALL technologies.

## **METHODS USED IN THIS STUDY**

To carry out this research, a questionnaire survey and interviews were conducted using purposive sampling method among engineering students at two universities in Bangladesh. Purposive sampling method aids researchers to choose proper contributors. A questionnaire survey was conducted in face-to-face among 300 students (Cohen et al., 2000; Abdous et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2011). It was in English and designed with both closed and open-ended questions which asked about the usability of mobile phone as a tool to learn English language skills in classroom. Some open questions were also designed to explore the problems of using mobile phone as pedagogic instruction in classroom practice. After finishing questionnaire, interviews were conducted among teachers and students. According to Fontana and Frey (2005), interview is a “basic method of data gathering” and is useful “to obtain a rich, in-depth experimental account of an event or episode in the life of the respondent” (p698). In interviews, participants have the chances to illuminate their answers, to clarify their judgments and understandings, and to refer to examples (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Many scholars (Cook 1990; Ochs 1999) argue that transcriptions are value-laden and reflect the transcribers’ interests and assumptions. Swann further explains this point: ‘Transcription necessarily corresponds to a researcher’s interests and what they see as the analytical potential of their data, as well as their wider beliefs and values’ (2010), which are informed by an underlying philosophy. Clearly, the researcher’s interests, beliefs, and values play an important part in

decisions made about transcription. In addition to researcher's beliefs and values, the selection and transcription of data is also affected by other factors, including the goal of research. Ochs puts it as follows: 'transcription is a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions' (1999: 168).

Hammersley and Atkinson contend that 'the analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider contexts. What are produced, for the most part, are verbal descriptions, and theories: quantification and statistical analysis play a subordinate role at most' (2007:3).

Given this view, both approach - verbal descriptions as well as quantifications of data are used in this study. Tables are used for statistical analysis of questionnaire data. Thematic analysis were applied to analyse the interview and group interview data. Thematic analysis is a systematic and uniform technique for categorizing qualitative data (Boyatzis, 1998:4). In this process, themes are emerged from a close scrutiny of the collected data and themes are developed inductively (Aronson, 1994; Braun & Clarke, 2006). To maintain confidentiality, participants' names are anonymised.

### **Ethical Issues**

To carry out research with human participants in educational contexts, ethical issues need to be considered (Stutchbury and Fox, 2009). Ethical issues: morality, confidentiality, honesty, culture and relationship were strictly maintained at various phases of the work: gaining access, collecting data and writing up. Participants were assured that there would be no harm in terms of physical, mental, financial and professional participating in this study (Flinders, 1992). Fieldwork permission was obtained directly from the head of the departments. Personal networks helped gaining this access. Pegg (2009) maintains that individual networks help selecting contexts, gaining access and undertaking research easily. Participants' informed consents were gained before starting this research. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) claim that good relations with participants and knowledge of their culture, such as faith, beliefs, festival and social activities and being familiar with them in the context is one of the basic principles of collecting rich data in qualitative research. Hence, every single opportunity was made use of to build a good rapport with the participants for collecting data.

### **Teaching English to Engineering students**

In this globalised world, English occupies the central position and necessity of effective communication skills has been increased. English is the language of business communication and of international affairs. Ibbotson, (2014) claims that in this global village, it is a must for everyone to be competent in English language skills, in particular, for professionals working in the field of education, science and technology. Engineers know how the world has acknowledged the importance and the necessity of English language but still young engineers stayed unemployed despite having fair knowledge of their core subjects. The main reason of this unemployment is that young engineering graduates lack communication skills in English which

are considered survival skills in the competitive world of the twenty-first century (Jensen, 2000). To keep them updated about the latest developments in the field of information and technology, engineering students must develop good command over English language.

In this modern business world, higher level of communication skills are greatly required for better job and better payments. Apart from individuals' subject knowledge, personal qualities, language competencies and communication skills matter for dignity in professional career. Today, the engineers are no longer confined to a laboratory or workshop. He/she can be found as an administrator in the public service, as a manager in industry, as a technical consultant in different sectors, as a politician, as an educator, as a research officer in technological institutions and in almost every facet of professional employment. Jain et al., (2011) claim that an Engineer must devote much of his working time to communicating with others - writing letters, technical reports, essays, feasibility studies, industrial surveys, management reports and as well as speeches and keynote addresses.

In this digital world, teaching English to engineering students means to make them enable them to operate in an international context. The skills and techniques that an Engineering student acquires remain with him for the rest of his/her working life and it is suggested that the prescribed English course should provide with all aspects of communication skills that are needed at workplace such as industry-specific knowledge and skills, soft skills, management skills, and employability skills (Rizvi, 2005).

### **Ways of comprehending English through the mobile phone for engineering students:**

Sharples (2000) maintains that mobile apps, keyboards, blogs are being more advanced day by day than the initial days for language learning and teaching. Engineering students are more knowledgeable of using digital updating technology which also helps to make the dynamic changes in learning and teaching. Even language learning apps are playing a remarkable role in learning English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Students can easily develop their language skills through practicing sounds following rhythm, tone, listening English speeches, news, songs through the mobile phone.

Mobile has changed the way of life completely. English as an international language is the best way of communicating with each other. Using Internet on the mobile has made it easier in improving English. The accents may be different, the pronunciation may be different but it definitely helps in conveying the feelings, emotions and sentiments of one to another. Mobile learning has made it easier. Even students can use a digital dictionary in the Smartphone where synonyms, antonyms of words are available. The Audio-visual system also enables the students learning different language skills easily.

Educators have become increasingly interested in the learning benefits that mobile technology can provide to students in and out of classrooms through various features for information access, communication, collaboration and creating digital products. Moreover, mobile phones help to guide engineering students designing different architectural frame/tool. As an easily accessible



device, it is also excellent for engineering students of self-learning (Terrell, 2011; Chang et al., 2010; Chen, 2013; Chinnery, 2006; Tai, 2012; Tai & Ting, 2011; Conacher, 2009).

### **The Need of communication skills for engineering students**

Engineering students need to be communicatively competent for various reasons such as, to communicate effectively in classroom interactions, for personal communications, to achieve academic goals and objectives, and later on to be successful professionally. Subject knowledge is insufficient for engineering graduates to gain success professionally, however, it is also essential to contain good personal qualities, communication skills and language competencies.

Canale & Swain (1980) developed the concept of communicative competence. According to them, communicative competence means gaining competence in three aspects: grammatical, sociological and strategic. Grammatical competence emphasises the knowledge of the language system, such as grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling. Canale (1983) claimed that grammatical competence means the knowledge and skills that facilitate one to comprehend and articulate correctly the factual sense of the speech. According to Richards & Rodgers, sociolinguistic competence means, “an understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationships, the shared information of the participants, and the communicative purpose of their interaction” (1986: 71). Sociolinguistic competence focuses on the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use, such as appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness, and style in a given situation (Canale & Swain, 1980:6). Strategic competence highlights the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, which enable learners to overcome difficulties when there is a termination in communication due to limited knowledge about the actual communicative event, and insufficient competence in other dimensions. Strategic competence also helps the learner keep the flow of communication (Canale & Swain, 1980:27). Canale (1983) further elaborated their model of communicative competence by adding discourse competence, which means the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive and coherent texts, such as a letter, a political speech, poetry, an academic essay or a cooking recipe.

Effective communication is important for conveying of messages either in spoken or written would matter for a great career. English Language competencies often proves to be a fatal and futile for different professionals. Engineers are considered as knowledgeable, high skilled, creative workforce, and are engaged in writing, publishing, speaking in conferences for professional reasons. However, they are also struggling for effective communication in some contexts.

Some essential needs of communication skills are greatly remarkable for engineering students:

1. To express and share their ideas and thoughts in an effective manner.
2. To peruse higher education both in home and abroad.
3. To work in a globalized and multilingual culture.
4. To experience as a whole in writing, negotiable, interpersonal skills etc.
5. To understand the socio-cultural aspects of the language
6. To enhance cognitive abilities and critical thinking
7. To facilitate learning with various applications

## Data analysis and discussion

To undertake this research, two types of data were collected: quantitative and qualitative. For collecting quantitative data, a questionnaire survey was conducted among 300 engineering students. Dornyei (2003) maintains that questionnaire is a useful tool since it quickly collects a large amount of information in a form that considers simple to present and analyse. Questionnaire was designed following closed and open-ended questions to draw out information. Closed questions, a three-point Likert scale and Yes-No type were asked to collect information about students' mobile devices and their uses. Moreover, open-ended questions were also asked to obtain information regarding advantages and disadvantages of using mobile phone as a tool to learn English language skills to enhance communication in English.

### Findings from closed questions (Yes-No type)

Data suggest that all the students (100%) possess mobile phone. Data also reveal that majority (85%) of the students report that mobile phone can be used in the classroom for teaching and learning English, however, 10% students respond that it cannot be used but 5% students remain neutral. Students report that they use mobile phones not only for learning purposes but also for other purposes. 65% students claim that they use mobile phone to watch films, songs, and for socializing in social media. In addition, 60% students also contend that they use laptop for learning English language skills such as, pronunciation and vocabulary.

To sum up, it is evident that engineering students are familiar with mobile phone, and its multiple functions. It is also clear that they are using mobile phone for learning English skills and sub-skills. In addition, they also use laptop for learning English language skills.

### Findings from closed questions (Three-point Likert scale)

Given the aim of this study, closed questions, the three-point likert scale were asked to obtain responses regarding whether mobile phone as a tool helps improving English language skills such as, reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar.

SL	Statements	Agree%	Disagree%	Neutral%
1	Reading in English language	93	4	3
2	Writing in English language	70	13	17
3	Listening and understanding English language	90	2	8
4	Speaking in English language (i.e., having a conversation)	72	10	18
5	Vocabulary knowledge	89	3	8
6	Knowledge of grammar rules	50	22	28

Table 1: Frequency of mobile phone as a tool to learn English language

Table 1 shows that a large number of the engineering students consent that mobile phone as a tool helps learning English language skills mostly in reading, writing, listening and understanding, speaking, and vocabulary, in percentage, 93%, 70%, 90%, 72%, and 89% respectively. However, table 1 demonstrates that only 50% students use mobile phone for learning English grammar rules. However, it is obvious that the majority of the students generally use mobile phone for reading in English language, listening and understanding English language, and vocabulary knowledge; 93%, 90% and 89% respectively. It is also clear that students prefer using mobile phone for learning English language skills such as, writing in English and speaking in English language, 70% and 72% respectively. From the above table, it is evident that engineering students prefer mobile phone as a tool for learning English language skills. Our final impression is that for engineering students, mobile phone can be introduced as a pedagogic tool for teaching and learning various English skills in the classroom practice which could eventually help develop their communication skills in English.

Closed questions, the three-point likert scale were also asked to obtain responses regarding how often they use mobile phone to improve English language skills such as, reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar.

SL	Statements	Sometim es%	Always %	Rarely %
1	Reading in English language	58	33	9
2	Writing in English language	46	24	30
3	Listening and understanding English language	50	37	13
4	Speaking in English language (i.e., having a conversation)	57	13	30
5	Vocabulary knowledge	50	36	14
6	Knowledge of grammar rules	36	17	47

Table 2: Frequency of mobile phone use for language skills learning

Table 1 presents the preference of using mobile phone for learning English language skills; nonetheless, table 2 demonstrates how often students use mobile phone for learning each English language skills. Table 2 demonstrates that a good number of engineering students occasionally use mobile phone for improving English language skills, for example, reading in English, listening and understanding English language, speaking in English language, and for vocabulary knowledge, in percentage, 58%, 50%, 57% and 50% respectively. However, it is also evident that engineering students continuously use mobile phone as a tool to improve mostly in reading, listening and understanding English language, and for vocabulary knowledge; 33%, 37% and 36% respectively. Table 2 presents that students infrequently use mobile phones for improving writing in English, speaking in English, and knowledge of grammar rules; 30%, 30% and 47% correspondingly. It is clear in the Table 2 that engineering students prefer sometimes but not always to use mobile phones as a tool to improve English language skills. From table 1 and table 2 it is obvious that engineering students prefer to use mobile phone as a tool to improve English language skills but their practice is limited to sometimes. It indicates that if mobile phone is



considered as a pedagogic tool in the classroom practice, students' usage of mobile phone could have changed significantly.

### **Findings from open-ended questions**

Open-ended questions were asked to draw out responses regarding advantage and disadvantage of using mobile phone in classroom practice. Themes are emerged from students' written responses. This study reveals that 85% students report that using mobile phone for learning English language skills is advantageous as it can handy to use, it can be used any time and any place, by using it materials can be shared easily, and finally it can draw students' attention. On the other hand, findings also suggest that 15% students consent that it would be not suitable to use in classroom practice hence it can create distraction in the classroom, and students can misuse it. Findings show that majority of the students (85%) claim that using mobile phone is convenient to learn English language skills. Our final impression is that mobile phone can be introduced as a pedagogic tool to enhance English language skills learning in classroom practice.

### **Findings from Interview data**

Interview data were analysed thematically. Two major themes, advantages and disadvantages of using mobile phone for developing English language skills were emerged while analyzing interview data.

#### *Advantages of using mobile phone for improving English language skills*

After finishing the questionnaire survey, interviews with teachers and group interviews with students conducted. Interview data revealed the advantages and the disadvantages of using mobile phone for learning English language skills for enhancing communication skills in English, and finally its usability as pedagogic tool in classroom practices. Interviews with teachers revealed that engineering students are considered brilliant and they need to communicate in English efficiently firstly for achieving academic purposes, and later on, secondly for professional achievements. Teachers reported:

Engineering students are generally brilliant. They are pursuing engineering degrees. To be a successful engineer, they need to be good at communication. Of course, they must have knowledge in English language. They need to know the use of English language in communication. Our students are technically sound. I believe that engineering students must have communication skills and language competencies to be a good engineer and a successful engineer. If students are encouraged to use mobile phones to learn English language skills it will certainly enhance their communication skills in English. Mobile phone is usable for students because they can carry it easily and they can share reading materials with each other. It can be motivating for our students too (Mamun).

Only engineering subject knowledge is not enough to be an engineer and to be a good professional. Our students are bright, that's fine but it will be useless if they fail to achieve communication skills and language knowledge. Our students are technically

good. Everyone is using mobile phone. Everyone is connected with Internet. We should think about how we could use these opportunities to enhance their English language learning and communication skills. I think mobile phone can be used for this purpose. It has merits and demits but I prefer to use this chance for our students. Mobile is handy to use. They can use it anytime and any place. It is good if it is introduced as a classroom tool (Rafi).

This is the age of technology. Students are already using various technologies for leaning purposes. Students get benefit to use mobile phone for leaning English language skills as it is portable, it is easy to use, and by using it they can easily share materials among themselves. It can also attract students for learning English language skills, particularly, vocabulary and pronunciation. So far I know they use personal laptop and mobile phone for learning purposes. They are using mobile phone for watching films, songs and to communicate in social media. I think the use of mobile phone can enhance English language skills learning. This could also help our students leaning different types of communication skills (Umniya).

Engineering students know how to use technology for various purposes. Students want to get reading materials easily and comfortably. It is true that our students are weak in communicating in English. I believe that using mobile phone technology in classroom practice certainly motivates our students and they will encourage learning English language skills and communication skills, indeed. Mobile phone is handy to use and comfortable to carry. Of course they share their reading materials easily. It would be a good initiative to consider mobile phone technology as a teaching instruction. Mobile phone can help students learning English language skills, particularly, vocabulary, pronunciation and reading skills (Toufik).

Engineers must need English language skills and communication skills to be successful as a student and as a professional. You see, our engineering students are good in English but when they are given a situation to communicate in English they feel nervous, fear, and anxiety. They are bright but they cannot communicate in English. It is true that they have been in touch in English since their childhood; yet they are lacking confidence using of English for communication purposes. They also lack skills to write their answers' scripts. Their pronunciation is very poor. They are deficient in presentation skills. I think it is a new adoption in our education system. I think the use of mobile phone in classroom practice could change in teaching learning in our context (Anamul).

In summary, interview data revealed that the use of mobile phone as tool in classroom practice enhance teaching and learning English language skills and communication skills. It is also evident that students can learn, in particular, vocabulary and pronunciation skills by using mobile phone. Interviews with teachers report that students are already familiar with the use of mobile phone technology for various causes such as, to watch films, to communicate in social media, to watch video songs and to play games, hence it can be used as a potential tool to enhance English language skills learning. Data also imply that mobile phone is handy to use, easily portable and comfortable to share reading materials, therefore, if mobile phone is introduced as teaching tool,

engineering students will be benefited and thus helps improving their English language skills and eventually this will improve their communication skills too.

Interviews with students report the same as the teachers suggested unanimously. In interviews, it is clear that students are familiar with various uses of mobile phone such as watching films, video songs, and to communicate in social media. It is also evident that students claim that mobile phone is easily portable, handy to use, easy to share materials among themselves and finally it inspires them to learn English language skills and communication skills. Students reported:

We use mobile phone for watching films and video songs, for communicating in various social media. Mobile is useful for sharing our reading materials. We can always carry it. We can use it always and everywhere. We can get it so easily when we need it. We can also share documents and materials comfortably. We are familiar with using of different technological devices. We can use it for our learning purposes too. If it is considered as a tool to teach English language skills, hopefully, it will improve our English language skills. It will help us to communicate easily among ourselves and with our teachers too. Besides, our learning of communication skills will be enhanced smoothly. We also believe mobile phone can be a potential instrument for classroom practice and beyond classroom practice (Group Interview).

#### *Disadvantages of using mobile phone for improving English language skills*

While interviewing, teachers reported the advantages of mobile phone as a tool to improve English language skills, such as, reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar knowledge to develop communicative ability in different contexts, however, they also claimed disadvantages of mobile phone use for English language skills learning. Teachers argued that using mobile phone in the classroom practice could encounter disadvantages too. Teachers divulged:

Our students are pursuing engineering education. They are really bright and studious. They are aware that they are achieving engineering degrees. They also know that their degree is a professional degree and they need to communicate their learning and experience in different communities, and they have to serve the nation. Hence they need to communicate effectively and meaningfully in nation building. Using of mobile phone in improving English language skills there are some disadvantages, such as, it could distract students' attention and students could misuse it (Mamun).

You see, so far I know each student is using mobile phone. They are always connected with Internet. They are always with Internet resources; they are using it for various purposes. One thing we need to ensure that students should know the good use of mobile phone. We provide our students every online facility for teaching and learning, it is also necessary that our students need to be well equipped with mobile phone technologies and they need to know the good use of technology. Of course there are problems to use mobile phone in classroom practice. Mobile phone can be useful but measure should be

taken to free it from disadvantages, for examples, distraction of students' attention in classroom and students' misuse (Rafi).

Engineering students possess good knowledge about the use of technology. They are familiar with it. But they may be misguided in using mobile phone in classroom practice. It is now obvious that engineering students frequently use mobile phone for various purposes and so far I know they are happy with it. They are using it for their reading materials. But I am wondering how much they are using it for good causes. Certainly, there are disadvantages, students can be distracted and they can use it wrongly (Umniya).

It is good that we are in the era of technology. Our engineering students must acquire subject knowledge but they also need to gain English language skills to compete globally. It is mandatory. Mobile phone is not a new device to them. They already own it and they are using for various purposes. We need to ensure its good use. Mobile phone use could help students to improve English language skills, however, disadvantages of using it as a tool need to be addressed, otherwise, it may bring negative impact in their learning. Our students can be driven away from classroom practice and even, they may use it erroneously (Toufik).

You know, engineering students are sound in using technology. It is a good sign. The government of Bangladesh encourages students and teachers to use technology in classroom practice. Mobile phone is now available to everyone. So far my knowledge goes, our students are using it for learning purposes. They may use it wrongly. It can drive away their attention. They can misuse it if they lack proper knowledge of using it (Anamul).

Interview data suggest disadvantages of using mobile phone as a tool to develop English language skills to enhance communication skills in English, firstly, it could drive away students' attention in classroom, and secondly, students could misuse it. Students also maintain the same disadvantages of using mobile phone as a tool to develop their English language skills. While interviewing students reported:

We have mobile phone. We are using it for various purposes. We also use for learning purposes. It is good we have Internet facilities. We can search materials and video lectures for our understanding and learning. We can see what is going on around us and in the global village. We are now global citizen. Using mobile phone for our English language skills, particularly, vocabulary and pronunciation is unquestionably good. But we have to know its good use. Everything is good but it can distract our attention, and some one can misuse it (Group Interview).

It is evident in interview findings that using mobile phone as a tool to develop engineering students' English language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary and grammar to increase communication skills in English is effective and useful. Interview data suggest that engineering students are already familiar with the use of mobile phone for various purposes such as, watching films and video songs, playing games and to communicate in different social media.

Data reveal that mobile phone can be introduced as a tool in classroom practice as it can be carried easily, handy to use, students can share reading materials comfortably, and it can be used anywhere and anytime; thus facilitates engineering students for learning English language skills to be competent in communication in English. Nevertheless, apart from advantages, interview data report disadvantages of using mobile phone as a tool, firstly, it can drive away students' attention in classroom practice and secondly, students can misuse it which can impede students learning.

### **Limitations of this research**

This research aims to investigate the suitability of using mobile phone as pedagogic tool to enhance English communication skills for engineering students. Therefore, data could have been collected from more universities which might help producing more findings. Interviews were conducted with 5 engineering faculty teachers. Among students, five groups comprised of 7 students each randomly selected for group interviews. Interviews were not conducted with English teachers, head of the departments and concerned authority for syllabus design and materials production. The data would have been richer if we had the chance to interview with English teachers, head of the departments and concerned authority for syllabus design and materials production.

### **CONCLUSION**

Mobile phone is one of the most ingenious innovations of human kind and it has changed the peoples' way of working, learning, communicating and playing. It is evident that engineering students are already using mobile phone for various purposes including learning. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has already been used as a tool to improve English language skills to enhance communication in English. This study investigates the adoptability and potentiality of using mobile phone as a tool to improve English language skills to enhance engineering students' communication skills in English in Bangladesh context. Findings suggest both advantages and disadvantages of using mobile for the purposes. This study asserts that for learning English language skills to communicate mobile phone use is advantageous, because, it is handy to use, it is easily portable, it can be used anytime and any place, students can share their reading materials easily and comfortably. However, this study also reports the disadvantages of using mobile phone as a tool to develop English language skills to communicate in English, firstly, it can drive away students' attention in classroom practice, and secondly, students can misuse it. Researchers contend that mobile phone presents the learners with a holistic language learning process. As a result, learning via mobile phone helps creating an interactive learning environment in multiple contexts using different kinds of applications, and tools available. Finally, the MALL is a rising field experiencing fast development. Research suggests that it may provide language learners with rich, real-time, collaborative, and conversational experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. This is because mobile devices can be effective tools for delivering language-learning materials to learners. This paper concludes with a good note that mobile phone can be used as a tool to develop English language skills to enhance communication skills in English for engineering students.



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