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Enhancing Learner-Centered English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
Learning (Reading Comprehension Skills) through Mobile Media

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Introduction

Throughout decades, education systems have been developed according to the changes in technology. It is worth mentioning here that technology has a great impact on educational innovations. Hence, developing technology has had a significant impact on language learning and generally on teaching processes either in supportive or administrative ways.

Recent developments in internet and wireless technologies have fostered educators and curriculum developers to shape contemporary classroom environment. It is notable that policy makers tend to integrate those innovations into educational environment. Nowadays, it is inevitable for someone to use smart devices such as mobile phones and tablet personal computers with updated qualifications.

Ubiquitous and versatile smart devices are very efficient educational tools with their portability. They are time-saving and easily of accessible for teaching and learning not only for students, but also for educators. The great revolution in information and communication technologies (ICT) has provided a huge area for students and their lecturers to communicate, share data and collaborate. In recent years, smart mobile devices and their usage with wireless internet access at university campuses have become ubiquitous (Motiwalla, 2007). The smart devices equipped with last qualified technologies and software give learners freedom to do what they demand without any limit of time and location.

There had been small scale studies on application of social media tools before Facebook launched in 2004. They were not so popular because of lack of sufficient internet access and portable electronic devices. Following increasingly developed smart technologies, social media platforms became very popular among both teenagers and young adults. These social mobile media tools provide and assist students to learn, access digital sources, and to download, save and manage their regular studies anytime and anywhere in their educational environment (Sharples, Corlett, & Westmancott, 2002).

The high potential of mobile media is reflected with e- or m-learning strategies all over the world with the potential of alternative educational platforms. There is no limitation on time and location about mobile learning opportunities. Mobile learning offers as much as authentic materials, project-based and student-centered learning, interactive methods engaging students, etc. It totally breaks down the walls around the classroom and provides lifelong learning. The

pervasive connectivity of mobile devices offers authentic educational materials, project-based and student-centered learning.

Social Media is a general term, which is used to cover all online platforms and applications not only for personal computers, but also for smart devices such as Ipads or Samsung Tablet PCs as well as smart phones. Social media tools are used to communicate, share data, collaborate, and interact for different purposes while you are online. Hence, social media provides a wide range of web instruments, which are easily-accessible, so that individuals are able to talk about, create and share any kind of documents, recommend and interpret others' sharing and have online reactions to anything that happens all around the world.

Social Media has various definitions evolving in time. According to Buettner (2015), "Social media are computer-mediated tools that allow people to create, share, or exchange information, career interests ideas, and pictures or videos in virtual communities and networks" (p. 58). Another definition for social media was made by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, pp.59-68) "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."

Boyd & Ellison (2008) define social media or social network sites as "web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system"(pp.211- 212).

The working definition of social media in this study is: utilizing various social networking platforms for educational purposes in terms of expanding and increasing learners' educational skills integrating social media tools into formal and/or informal learning process. Our goal is enhancing learners' reading comprehension skills via implementing Facebook, Edmodo, Twitter and YouTube in reading classes.

Campbell (2010) classified characteristics of social media in three headlines:

- The vast bulk of the content in social media is user-generated.
- There is great interaction and collaboration among users.
- There is easy integration and link with other social platforms and web sites.

Mobile learning also has various definitions, based on previous studies. The terms used to define mobile learning are mobility of the learners, social media and mobile applications, interaction and collaboration between students and lecturers. Georgieva, Smrikarov and Georgiev (2005) observed mobile learning as usage of smart devices to enrich and facilitate learning environment at anytime and anywhere. Keegan (2005) defines mobile learning as the provision of any kind of education or learning using portable smart devices such as smart phones, palmtops, PDAs, and handhelds.

Another statement of Mobile Learning by Ally (2009) was as the delivery of learning content to mobile devices. Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler (2005) assert, “Mobile Learning is partly related to learning and partly to the improvement of mobile computing and global marketing of mobile devices. It is swiftly becoming a plausible and financially feasible component of online and distance learning and anyone in charge of courses in companies, universities and colleges must reckon meticulously what it has to offer” (p.2). Wexler et al. (2007) delineates Mobile Learning briefly as “any activity that helps people to be more productive when consuming, communicating with, or creating information, facilitated through a compact digital portable device that the person carries routinely, has dependable connectivity, and fits in a pocket or purse” (p.21). However, Liu and Han (2010) asserted that mobile learning would be an innovative method for educational purposes that helps learners to obtain the knowledge through mobile wireless technologies and social media applications.

The **goal** of the dissertation is to create learner-centered attitudes and approaches in order to improve Ishik University students’ reading comprehension skills through mobile media, implemented in a non-native environment. The dissertation aims to inquire:

- The types of social media platforms mostly used by Ishik University Students in Iraq;
- The contribution of social media to the students’ academic achievements;
- The attitude of the students towards mobile learning via social media;
- The comparison of mobile learning and traditional way of holding reading lessons;
- The application of mobile learning in formal and informal learning;
- Theoretical and practical bases of using social media tools in teaching reading comprehension;
- Advantages and disadvantages of using mobile media in the acquisition of efficient reading comprehension techniques.

The **problem questions** of my dissertation are:

- What is level of readiness of Iraqi students for mobile learning?
- What are the most applicable social media tools for Iraqi undergraduate students?
- Does mobile learning enhance students' reading skills more than the traditional way?

The **hypotheses** of the study are framed through the following issues:

- The implementation of mobile learning using social media tools will enhance students' reading comprehension skills.
- Implementing mobile learning will flip the classroom into learner-centered teaching.
- The students will become interactive and collaborative in reading classes if or when mobile learning is applied.

To solve the above-discussed problems the following **methods of research** were used:

- Questionnaires
- Review and analysis of existing literature on the topic
- Quasi-experiment
- Observation
- Statistical analysis of obtained through experiment data

Quantitative paradigm:

- Pre-survey (online survey at the first week of the research)
- Pre-test (at the first week of the study)
- While-test 1 (eight weeks after the pre-test)
- While-test 2 (eight weeks after the while-test 1)
- Post-test (at end of the study)
- Post-survey (online survey at the end of the research)

Novelty

In recent years, advances in social networking and rapid developments in wireless internet technologies have stimulated us to research mobile learning and social media. There have been many studies on e-learning, but mobile learning is quite a bare area yet to be investigated. There is little systematic research available, especially in Near East countries. According to

researcher's previous observation and working experience, in Kurdistan Region of Iraq there was a great potential for implementing mobile learning in this country. Because of the climate and customs, students were reluctant to study for their lessons. This innovative research provided new learning methods to Iraqi students. Furthermore, this was the **first study** conducted at Ishik University where students were reluctant to study, especially during hot days. Hence, students were satisfied to use social media tools in their lessons. Not only the Ishik University staff, but also Fezalar Educational Institutions' (part of which Ishik University is) teachers were introduced to mobile learning.

Theoretical value

In this study we applied mobile learning via social mobile media tools and we provided students mobility for learning occasions, which means that learners were not bound to a fixed time or place in their studies. They could easily reach reading materials through their smart devices. The students were guided with the advances of social media platforms such as Facebook and Edmodo. The studies were student-centered because learners used the applications interactively and collaboratively. The students could reach and recommend on the reading materials anytime and anywhere due to the peculiarities of mobile learning. Additional extensive and intensive reading materials were delivered through social media tools to students' mobile devices. Thus, learners became investigative, communicative, collaborative, and productive in the learning environment. The majority of the students gained online reading comprehension strategies while using social media. Students were involved into reading activities formally and informally in social mobile learning process. Formative and informative assessments were done in Edmodo.

The theoretical bases of the research study are:

- Mobile teaching and learning (Kukulka-Hulme, 2005).
- Transforming the delivery of education and training (Ally, 2009)
- Pedagogical forms of mobile learning (Laurillard, & Pachler, 2007).
- The design and implementation of a mobile learning resource (Sharples, 2002).
- Analysis of the nature of reading (Feng, 2010).
- Reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game (Goodman, 1967).
- Collaborative strategies for teaching reading comprehension (Moreillon, 2007).
- Acquisition of vocabulary and spelling by reading: additional evidence for the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1989).

- Typology of reading comprehension exercises (Grellet, 1996).
- Ideas about student-centered learning (Clasen & Bowman, 1974).
- Learner-centered classroom practices and assessments (McCombs & Miller, 2006).
- The ideas of supporting instruction and formative assessment (Heritage, 2008).
- Explorations in applied linguistics (Widdowson, 1979).

Practical importance of the study

A lot has been researched and published about the role and significance of CALL and social networks in education, but the application of mobile media as a tool to improve educational purposes has been less studied. The practical usage of new mobile applications will open a wide variety of chances to make them contributors to language learning and particularly in the environment where the tools are applicable easily and quickly. The dissertation will make it clear that there are efficient ways to engage mobile devices and applications into EFL learning practically. Due to this research policy makers and curriculum developers will be able to realize whether students are motivated enough to convert to learning which requires to read much on a daily basis.

The dissertation will enable lectures to gain an alternative view on students' awareness of, engagement in, and their psychological and technical readiness for mobile learning, particularly, in the environment of Iraq, where some peculiarities like climate, social status and background, etc. matter significantly.

The research will, hopefully, encourage lecturers to implement some social media tools such as Edmodo and Facebook in their lessons to enhance students' reading skills.

Dissertation structure

The dissertation includes: introduction, 3 chapters, conclusion, recommendations and 11 appendices. It involves 18 tables and 19 figures.

Chapter 1: Theoretical basis of using social mobile media tools in teaching reading comprehension

The chapter outlines the theoretical background of social mobile media tools which provide and assist students to learn, access digital sources, and to download, save and manage their regular

studies anytime and anywhere in their educational environment (Sharples, Corlett, & Westmancott, 2002). Social media is a general term which is used to cover all online platforms and applications not only for personal computers, but also for smart devices. Social media tools are used to communicate, share data, collaborate, and interact for different purposes while you are online.

This chapter also defines the phenomena of mobile learning as ‘using mobile technologies to ease and bolster learning regardless of place or time.’ (Shih, Chuang, & Hwang, 2010, p. 56).

This chapter summarizes the peculiarities of the mobile learning as below:

- Mobile learning provides interaction not only among students and their learning environment, but also facilitates interaction among instructors.
- Mobile learning is also collaborative, because via social networking websites students can communicate, share and collaborate at different locations and at various times.
- Portability is another significant peculiarity of mobile learning.
- On the other hand, m-learning really engages learners’ attention.
- Regarding to portability of devices and social network’s engagement learning happens just in time.

The chapter also provides a thorough analysis of the essence of EFL reading comprehension skills. In the literature review reading is considered as a process of obtaining information and interpreting it with the background of the person. The chapter provides an overview of reading models. They are bottom-up and top-down models. Actually, they differ in various points, but in the process of reading normally both of them are used. They are used for complementary ways to process reading.

Contrastive analysis of intensive and extensive reading is shown in table 11.

Reading Types	Intensive Reading	Extensive Reading
Definition	Reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks.	Rapid reading of large quantities of material or longer reading for general understanding

Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed meaning-developing reading skills, vocabulary and grammar knowledge • Careful detailed reading of section of a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lifelong reading habit, enjoyment and general reading skills • Reading in order to gain a general over view of the contents.
Who selects	Teacher	Student
Amount	Very little	A book a week at their level
Difficulty of the books	Hard	Easy, so they can read fluently
Where to read	In class	In class at first, then home reading.
Comprehension Check	With exercises	Not always necessary as students may choose a book they have already read.
What to read	Course materials	Materials at smooth reading level

Table 1.1. Contrastive analysis of intensive and extensive reading

Learner-centered approaches in EFL classes are discussed in the chapter. As the learners are the main body in the classroom, the traditional teacher-centered teaching has been recently replaced with student centered learning. The major characteristics of student centered learning are listed in this chapter as below: 1.Learning as the process of knowledge construction. 2. Collaborative learning 3.Metacognition 4.Educator-student partnership 5.Authentic assessment.

The first chapter also indicates the advantages and disadvantages of using mobile media tools in the acquisition of efficient reading comprehension strategies. It gives detailed information about elaboration of reading strategies.

Chapter 2 - Practical Basis of Using Social Mobile Media Tools While Teaching EFL Reading Comprehension Skills

The main concern of this chapter is the practical basis of using social mobile media tools while teaching EFL reading comprehension skills. In this chapter the approaches towards the development of reading skills in current course books, websites and mobile media applications have been analyzed. The reading textbook used at ELT department of Ishik University, Cover to Cover Reading Comprehension and Fluency textbook, was analyzed and updated due to the demands of reading strategies and students' needs for the students of the experimental group.

The topics in the units for both the control and the experimental groups were chosen according to learners' interests and age.

This chapter presents the possibilities of the development of reading skills on websites and mobile media applications. The presence of the virtual world has started to appear much more visibly parallel to the developments in the technology. Websites and mobile media applications are some of those reflecting themselves in the educational fields. As for websites, it is possible to make their classification as follows: websites that directly contribute to the education and teaching and the ones that also contribute to intellectual development of students.

In this chapter reading classes in ELT department at Ishik University are discussed. The aim of this section is to introduce and examine the traditional method of teaching reading and the method of using blended learning via social media. Different lecturers use different methods and approaches in teaching reading. This sub-chapter describes the traditional way of teaching reading and the way it can be taught with the help of mobile learning.

From the data given in this chapter it can be concluded that foreign language classes at universities could be fruitful and more interactive, if social mobile tools are used. However, it will be so only if students and lecturers are acquainted with the peculiarities of mobile learning. They all should be briefly informed how to embed social media platforms in their course. The major social media platforms that could be used for educational purposes are Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Edmodo and Bloggers. Facebook as a top trend social networking platform, is the interface media among students and lecturers in terms of educational purposes.

Chapter 3: Research dealing with application of mobile social media for teaching reading in a student-centered way at Ishik University

The research presents the results of three studies:

In the **first study** we aimed to reveal whether Iraqi university students from Kurdistan region are ready to use mobile learning. 186 students from four universities answered to an online survey questions. Two of them were state and the other two were private universities. The results showed that the students were ready for mobile learning. Just they needed to be led. Most of the

students had an internet access. Majority of them have the opportunity to access internet anytime and anywhere. They are enough involved in internet during the day. Students had various types of mobile learning devices, such as smart phones and tablet PCs beside laptop computers. They always carry at least one portable smart device with them which provides access to internet. Few students did not have any social media account, however, when they are at the university, they do not hesitate to sign up for some of those social media platforms. As a consequence, undergraduate students in Kurdistan region have a great potential for implementing mobile learning in their learning environment. It is now teachers' and students' turn to establish Mobile Learning process utilizing social media tools.

The **second study** was experimental study for measuring and testing students' development in reading skills. The participants were from Ishik University 51 sophomore students in ELT department at Educational Faculty of Ishik University in Erbil, Kurdistan region of Iraq.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of social mobile media on EFL undergraduate students' reading comprehension skills. During two academic semesters the experimental group students were exposed to mobile learning, utilizing social media tools and the special educational software application called Edmodo. On the other hand, the control group students had traditional reading lessons.

According to the research plan, a pre-test was conducted to both experimental and control groups. All four tests were generated using Oxford press test bank for Cover to Cover reading and comprehension text book. The tests were standardized reading comprehension tests, including vocabulary skills, manufactured by Oxford Publishing.

Table 3.1 shows the averages of test results in both groups. All testes were evaluated out of 100 points. The averages are increasing gradually in both groups. In control group the average for pre-test is 52.72, for while-test 1 is 55.76, for while-test 2 is 59.68 and for posttest it is 63.96. The total improvement is by 11.24 points. The experimental group averages are: pre-test is 53.46, while-test 1 is 58.08, while-test 2 is 62.81 and posttest is 67.19. The total improvement is by 13.73 points, which is more than for the control group.

Averages of Progress Tests

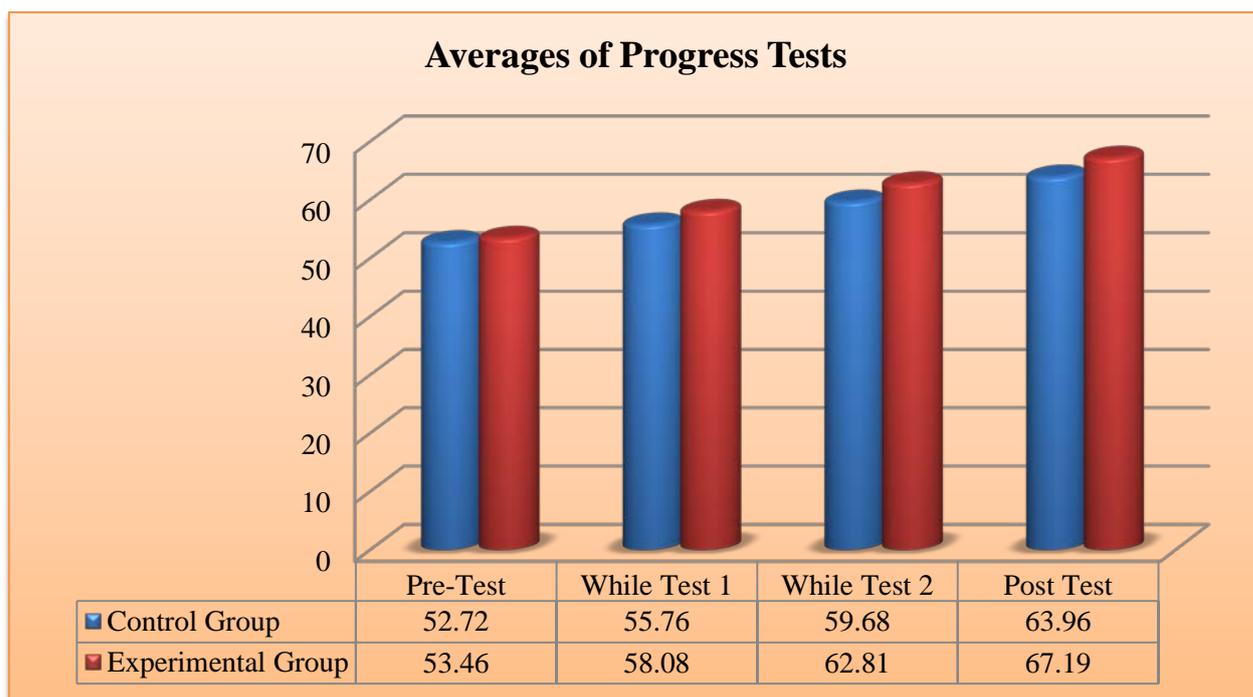


Table 3.1. Averages of test results in the experimental and control groups

In the table 3.2 below, paired samples tests was held for the experimental and the control groups. The first pair was pre-test experimental group and pre-test for the control group. The second pair was while-test 1 for the experimental group and while-test 1 for the control group. The third pair was while-test 2 for the experimental group and while-test 2 for the control group. The fourth pair was posttest for the experimental group and posttest for the control group.

According to the statistics shown in the table, p value for the first pair was 0.890, which is greater than 0.05. In this case we conclude that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean points of pre-test of the experimental group and pre-test of the control group. So, initially the groups had approximately the same level of skills.

However, in the second pair p value 0.006 is less than 0.05, which means there is a statistically significant difference between the mean points of while-test 1 results of the experimental group and while-test1 of the control group. The table also indicates that p value equals 0.045 for while-test 2 results of the experimental group and for while-test 2 of the control group - we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in this pair. The Sig. (2-tailed) value for the last pair was 0.016 which means there is a statistically significant difference in this pair,

too. Thus, the experiment results in the two groups' results differ in a statistically significant way.

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Test Ex. Gr. Pre-Test Control Gr.	-.040	1.428	.286	-.630	.550	-.140	24	.890
Pair 2	While Test 1 Ex. Gr. While Test 1 Control Gr.	1.400	2.327	.465	.439	2.361	3.008	24	.006
Pair 3	While Test 2 Ex. Gr. While Test 2 Control Gr.	2.160	5.113	1.023	.050	4.270	2.112	24	.045
Pair 4	Post Test Ex. Gr. Post Test Control Gr.	2.320	4.488	.898	.467	4.173	2.585	24	.016

Table 3.2. Paired Sample Test Values for Experimental and Control Groups

This experimental study revealed that learners should be supported with many different tasks to let them have much more responsibility in their informal learning process. Smart devices really prolong students' extra activities outside the classroom. Using social mobile learning provides students to take the control of their own learning methods and strategies (Başoğlu & Akdemir, 2010). They develop their learning skills and the learning becomes student-centered. The informal learning reading activities involve students for communicative and collaborative learning.

Although the participants in this research were initially reluctant for extra assignments, using smart devices and integrating their social media accounts into reading lessons highly motivated them. Out of the classroom, students created a collaborative learning environment for themselves. It is possible to conclude that smart phones and other mobile technologies beside social media tools foster learners' autonomy in ubiquitous mobile learning in non-formal settings. Students were exposed to extra reading and vocabulary materials via social media. They

also saved their time while commuting because they always had the learning environment with them. Students were supported not only with extra reading materials, but also with audio visual linguistic materials. They were able to take online quizzes and followed their own progress in the foreign language. They were interactive and collaborative not only with their lecturer, but also with their peers in their class. The students were confident, because the Facebook group was close to strangers and Edmodo also was a safe learning environment for them.

As a conclusion it can be claimed that ubiquitous and pervasive mobile learning via social media platforms should be taken into consideration not only by lecturers and students, but also by policy makers and educators. More investment and investigation should be done in schools. All people concerned with education should be informed about mobile learning which is safe, fast and encouraging.

In the **third study** the aim was measuring and understanding students' satisfaction and acceptance of social mobile learning. The participants were the experimental group students. They were 16 female and 10 male sophomore students in ELT department at Ishik University. They accepted this post-experimental survey voluntarily at the end of mobile learning process. In the survey the frequency of internet application during the experiment for three different purposes was also reflected. Figure 3.1 describes the purposes of internet usage.

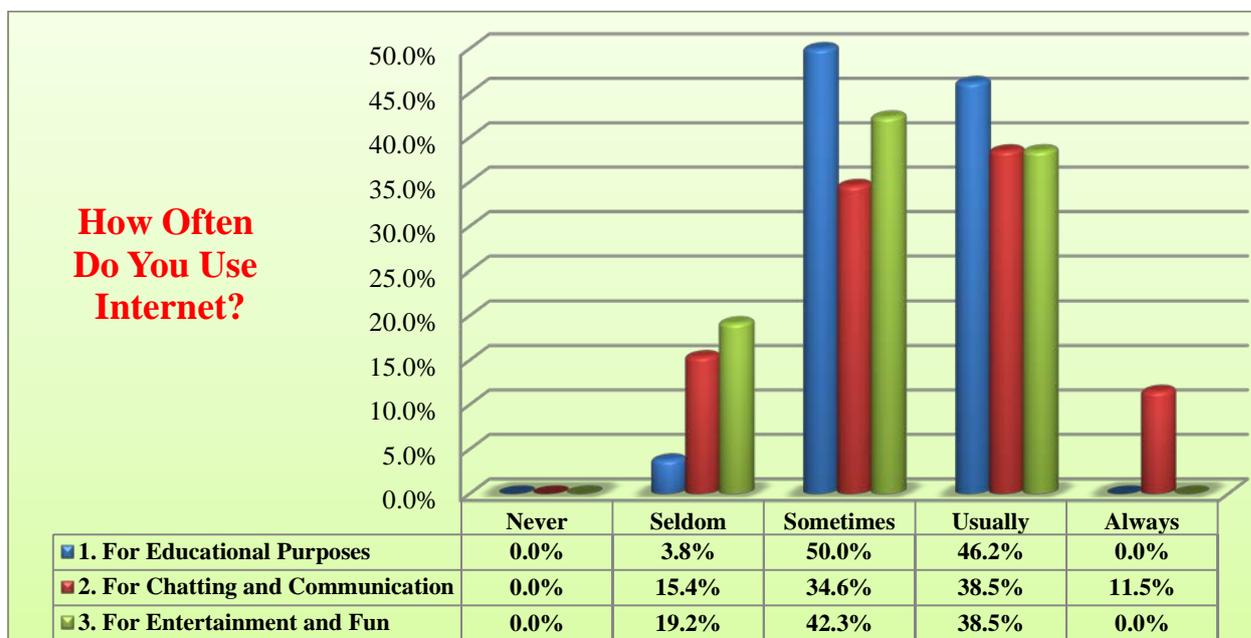


Figure 3.2. Purposes of Internet application

We can conclude from post survey study that majority of the students were highly equipped with mobile learning instruments such as internet connectivity, smart devices and social media accounts. They were using those tools in their social life. Besides, they met with mobile learning in our studies. Most of the students were ready to integrate mobile learning into their academic studies.

The post-experimental survey revealed that the great majority of the experimental group students were satisfied with the implementation of mobile learning via social media tools (see table 3.3). As the measurement was done via 5-point Likert scale, the mean result above three can be viewed as positive. All ten question were assessed by higher points.

Frequency and Descriptive Tables	Frequency										Descriptive	
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		No Idea		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Std. Deviation
Questions	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
1. I want my teachers to use mobile learning in our lessons.	3	11.5	4	15.4	6	23.1	10	38.5	3	11.5	3.23	1.210
2. Social media and mobile learning can make my learning easier.	2	7.69	1	3.8	5	19.2	12	46.2	6	23.1	3.73	1.116
3. I can improve my English knowledge to expected levels through mobile learning.	1	3.85	1	3.8	6	23.1	12	8.0	6	23.1	3.81	.981
4. I am more satisfied with mobile learning than other English-learning methods.	0	0	4	15.4	7	26.9	7	26.9	8	30.8	3.73	1.079
5. I can reach reading course materials easier with mobile learning.	0	0	3	11.5	6	23.1	11	42.3	6	23.1	3.77	.951
6. Mobile learning helps to improve my reading skills	0	0	3	11.5	4	15.4	14	53.8	5	19.2	3.81	.895
7. I improved my reading skills by using social media such as Edmodo and Facebook.	1	3.85	4	15.4	7	26.9	9	34.6	5	19.2	3.50	1.105
8. I can reach and read any text on social media.	1	3.85	0	0.0	5	19.2	10	38.5	10	38.5	4.08	.977
9. Reading on the smart devices is more enjoyable and easier than books.	2	7.69	1	3.8	10	38.5	8	30.8	5	19.2	3.50	1.105
10. I really support mobile learning in English language learning.	0	0	3	11.5	3	11.5	14	53.8	6	23.1	3.88	.909

Table 3.3: Descriptive statistics of post-experimental survey

Conclusions

The following outcomes of the research have been demonstrated:

- The literature review revealed that wireless internet access and mobile learning has become increasingly crucial. Recently various research studies on the usage of wireless and mobile communication technologies in educational environment have been conducted. All these innovative technology-supported learning approaches are called Mobile Learning, which is becoming financially feasible for universities and colleges. It is believed that the smart mobile devices (such as smart mobile phones, tablet Pcs, netbooks, etc.) have a great influence on implementing activities in educational environment. It does not matter those activities are conducted in formal or informal learning process. The common sense in the literature is that broad connectivity via wireless supplies flexible mobility to learner through handheld mobile smart devices. Those ubiquitous tools make learning process not only portable and spontaneous, but also personal and exciting.
- Literature review also indicated that learners are free and have a flexible schedule while using smart devices, not fixed in a predetermined location or limited by any other circumstances. Learner can use all the advantages of mobile learning about anything, anytime, and anywhere. This high potential of mobile devices enriches the mobile learning process. Breaking through the barriers, m-learning becomes 24/7. Consequently learners feel much more individual and flexible. From the literature review, it can be concluded that the world education system is evolving to a new concept, which is called Social Mobile Learning offered by new smart technologies. In addition, mobile learning not only provides interaction among students and their learning environment, but also facilitates interaction among instructors. Mobile learning is also collaborative, because via social networking websites learners can communicate, share and collaborate at different locations and at various times. Learning performance and learner relevance increase dramatically via mobile learning. Mobile devices are accessible to a larger population as they are becoming more and more affordable. Mobile Learning is a dynamic and developing process which will make many surprises beyond.
- In last decades, educators and scholars have been struggling to adopt new technologies and their special features into teaching and learning process. However, it is not so easy to

cover all changes in Information Computer Technologies (ICT), due to rapid developments in mobile devices and social media.

- The literature review displayed that the perspective of reading varied from person to person contingent upon the person's individual attitude and goals towards printed words. Thus, the definition of reading depends on purpose of the reader, content of the text and printed material, attitude of reader to the text, prior knowledge and schemata of the reader. Reading is a tool to get the ideas of speakers. Reading is accepted as an interactive process, in which students or readers activate their prior background knowledge and previous experience to understand the passage. It is better to consider reading as a process of obtaining information and interpreting it with the background of a person. People not only get information or data via print, but also with various types of means, for instance, listening to a text read, which is used by visually impaired people. Thus, reading cannot be defined as the process of excerpting some print from papers. As a conclusion, reading could be understood as an interactive process between the reader and the passage.
- The process of reading can follow various models. Two of them are bottom up and top down models. Bottom up model is moving from linguistic components to the whole-text meaning comprehension. The top down model draws on readers' own experience and intelligence. This reading approach stresses on what the reader contributes to text comprehension with his background knowledge. To have a deeper comprehension, readers should enrich their background knowledge by reading much more texts. So extensive reading plays a great role on this process.
- In the literature review it was concluded that the purpose of intensive reading was to increase the learners' skill of dealing with language features and to enhance their reading comprehension strategy. Extensive reading, which was sometimes called *free reading, book flood, and reading for pleasure*, is a kind of reading strategy for language acquisition and learning via large amounts of reading. Both extensive and intensive reading strategies develop students' comprehension and vocabulary skills.
- The research held involved three studies. The first study aimed to reveal Iraqi students' readiness towards mobile learning and social media. Based on the results of the pre-experimental questionnaire students were ready for mobile learning. Just they needed to be led. These results were also supported by some previous studies (e.g. Stockwell, 2008; Gikas & Grant, 2013; Embi & Nordin, 2013; Ismail, Idrus, Abu Ziden, & Rosli, 2010;

National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; ;Wexler, et al., 2007; Shih, Chuang, & Hwang, 2010).

- The second component of the research was pedagogical experiment. The experimental study results supported the hypothesis that the implementation of mobile learning using social media tools would enhance students' reading comprehension skills effectively and using social media would sharpen students' reading and vocabulary skills. The results indicated that control group scores increased gradually, from 52.72 to 63.96. The total improvement was by 11.24 points. On the other hand, the experimental group students' scores had more increase compared to control group students' scores, from 53.46 to 67.19. The total improvement was by 13.73. The paired sample statistics tests showed that the difference between the groups' results before the experiment was statistically insignificant, while at the end of experiment it was statistically significant. This fact reveals a higher efficiency of social mobile learning approach to teaching reading comprehension skills compared to traditional teaching.
- Another hypothesis of the research was that implementing mobile learning flips the classroom into learner-centered teaching and students become interactive and collaborative. The third study (a survey held with the experimental group students) revealed that the majority of the students were highly equipped with mobile learning instruments, such as internet connectivity, smart devices and social media accounts. They had been using those tools in their social life. Besides, they met with mobile learning in our studies. Most of the students were ready to integrate mobile learning into their academic studies. According to the results, we can claim that the great majority of the experimental group students were satisfied with the implementation of mobile learning via social media tools. Experimental group students' attitudes to mobile learning were quite positive. The results obtained in this study were similar to previous studies (e.g., Wang, Shen, Novak & Pan, X. 2009; Shin & Kang, 2015).
- Although the students at Ishik University met implementing mobile learning in their classes for the first time, they were ready to adopt m-learning. Mobile learning or integrating social media tools into students' reading lessons was a new idea, this new approach became popular throughout the educational faculty at Ishik University, hence other lecturers started to use Edmodo in different academic subjects such as Grammar and Academic Debate lessons. Reflections from learners showed that utilizing mobile learning and social media tools in lessons were accepted as a new approach and

innovation in EFL learning. Due to availability of high quality mobile phones, it was considered by students to be easy to apply the mobile learning process. In similar studies researchers found same impressions from the students (Holotescu, 2014; Chen, 2013).

Research limitations

The following are the limitations to the research that should be mentioned:

The survey of Iraqi students' readiness for mobile learning was held with a limited number of universities and students.

The experimental study was also a small-scale study, limited to one university, two groups only. In the experimental group there were 26 students and in the control group there were 25 students. Thus, the results cannot be generalized to all higher education institutes, especially, state universities. For the experimental group social mobile learning was a new method for them. It took some time to adopt the new method; participants had some difficulties especially using Edmodo, so, had the duration of experiment been longer, the results could have been more impressive.

As social mobile learning was a new method; we could not find sufficient sample studies in the literature. It was the novelty of the research.

Recommendations

More studies in mobile learning should be held, in foreign language, as well as other courses' teaching, to reveal its efficiency, on the one hand, and to develop its effective application, on the other. Social mobile learning can and should be implemented in teaching practice. Education policy makers should be responsible to spread this method to educational institutions. Furthermore, teachers should consider how to embed social mobile media as soon as possible, to catch up with students' demands.

List of publications in which the main ideas and findings of the dissertation are reflected:

1. Yagci, T. (2014, November). Mobile Social Media Challenges Digital Natives In EFL Learning. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies*, 4(4), 49-53.

2. Yagci, T. (2015, April). Mobile Social Media in Higher Education & Implementation of "Edmodo" in Reading Classes. *6th International Visible Conference on Educational Studies and Applied Linguistics*. (pp. 436-442). Erbil: Ishik University.
3. Yagci, T. (2015, May). Blended Learning via Mobile Social Media & Implementation of "EDMODO" in Reading Classes. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 6(4), 41-47.
4. Yagci, T. (2015, June). Undergraduate Students' Relevance to Social Media Platforms and Their Attitudes to Mobile Learning: A case study in Ishik University. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 1(4), 34-46.
5. Yagci, T. (2016). Undergraduate Iraqi Students' Awareness of Social Mobile Media and Their Attitudes to Mobile Learning. *Journal of Education in Black Sea Region*, 1, 1, 79-85.