Applications of English Education with Remote Wireless Mobile Devices

Il Suk Lee*

Abstract

Useful applications for English education enable immediate conversion of mobile devices into remote wireless systems for classroom computers. Once the free software has been installed in the main computers in the classroom, using powerpoint, students can operate the computers through their mobile devices by installing Air mouse on them. By using this, the students can draw or write on the "board" to manipulate the educational resources from where they are/from their seats.

The study of English language encompasses not only academic study but also language training. Until recently, the issue of the English language learning has been ridden with certain problems— instead of being a tool that facilitates communication, its main purpose has been for school grades, TOEIC, and TOEFL. This study suggests English language learning methodology using various applications such as mobile, VOD English language content, and movie scripts in implementing easy and fun English language learning activities that can be studied regularly. This is operationalized by setting a specific limit on learning and by using various media such as podcast, Apps, to increase interest, motivation, and self-directed learning in a passive learning environment.

Key words: various applications, media, wireless remote system, mobile devices

무선 원격 시스템의 모바일 장치를 이용한 영어 학습 방법 연구

이일석*

요 약

유용한 영어 교육을 위한 어플은 강의실 컴퓨터를 위해 모바일 장치를 무선 원격 시스템으로 즉각적인 변환을 가능하게 한다. 일단 강의실 주 컴퓨터에 무료 소프트웨어를 설치하면 학생들이 power point를 이용하여 컴퓨터 통제를 위한 모바일 장치에 Air mouse를 갖도록 한다. 이를 이용하여 학생들은 board위에 글이나 그림을 그릴수 있으며 그들의 앉은 자리에서 학습 자료를 구동할 수 있게 된다. 영어공부는 학문연구가 아니라 언어 훈련이라는 점에서 지금까지의 영어 학습이 단순한 학습대상으로 먼저 인식하여 의사소통의 도구가 아닌 학교 성적이나 토익, 토플 시험을 위한 학습 대상이 되었다는 점에서 그동안 영어의 학습의 문제점으로 지적되어 왔다.

본 연구는 수동적인 학습 환경에서 흥미와 동기부여를 가지고 자발적인 학습을 위해 Podcast, Apps 등 여러 매체를 이용하여 일정 학습 한도를 정하여 꾸준히 학습 할 수 있는 쉽고 재미있는 영어 학습 중 모바일, VOD영어 학습 컨텐츠, 리얼 영화 스크립트를 이용한 미드 영어 등 여러 어플을 이용한 영어 학습방법을 제시하고자 한다.

키워드 : 컨텐츠, 영어 학습, 매체, 어플, 무선 원격시스템, 모바일

※ 교신저자(Corresponding Author): Lee, Il suk
접수일:2013년 05월 10일, 수정일:2013년 06월 10일
완료일:2013년 06월 20일
*단국대학교 영어과

Tel: +82-41-550-3130, Fax:+82-41-555-6240
  e-mail: lis213@dankook.ac.kr

1. Introduction

High quality educational contents that have various categories such as IELTS, listening, grammar, reading, and games in English, are offered for free through applications (apps) to enable learners to have self-directed class. The educational contents are provided in the form of video, audio, podcast, and apps and scripts are available for free.   It also includes test functions that help to provide better understanding of the learning content.

Mobile learning is one of the main educational materials in learning a new language in the process of education. There are numerous language learning apps in current App Store (iOS) or Play Store (Android) Market. The quiz, game, dictionary, and podcast apps are some of the apps that are applicable to ESL students. These apps enable the students to determine when and how they of their learning.

In addition, apps related to language learning news services are very effective for beginner and intermediate level language learners; these apps provide news from all around the world through scripts in comparatively slowly spoken simple language.

Furthermore elements of game can be applied to class generating more student interest on a given topic in the classroom. Although there are many kinds of applications for English language learning, the students can choose the apps appropriate for their level of English or their learning objectives and use the mobile devices as personal learning tools.

Moreover, English-language drama learning apps enable students to play parts of a movie repeatedly and watch movies without English subtitles as well as enable intensive practice of the most memorable lines later. They can also study real situation English expressions from movie scripts and practice listening skills through English-language dramas and video lectures. Learning is possible through different choice of subtitles such as having Korean language subtitle or having both English and Korean subtitles simultaneously. When an unfamiliar word appears in the subtitle, the apps connects it to the dictionary immediately and is equipped with a function to save the word to a personal vocabulary list.

Passive learning and language learning based on rote-memorization have long been a problem in learning English. This study moves away from such framework and proposes an effective new learning method. It provides a learning environment utilizing various media applications that motivate the students to participate in learning English with interest and motivation for self-directed learning.

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2. Applications for English language learning

Through English listening, grammar, reading, games, IELTS information, and other various categories using multiple apps, contents that are appropriate level of students can be selected.

Listen & Watch method of learning incorporates learning about a variety of topics through listening to audio, and watching a video. Grammar & Vocabulary include grammar instruction and tests. Fun & Games incorporate games in learning English.

Business & Work consist of audio and videos related conversational business English.

2.1 Learning Applications for Pronunciation and Vocabulary

There are many kinds of English language learning apps. Dictionary.com and Thesaurus.com, for example, are apps for vocabulary learning. These allow students to listen to pronunciation as well as look up over 2,000,000 definitions and related words without requiring connection to the internet. These can be downloaded in App & Play Store free of charge.

There are other apps available as well. Certain websites such as koreanenglish.org provides a list of free online English-English dictionaries. Of these free online English dictionaries, the most salient one for English conversation students is Longman English Dictionary. This website (www.ldoceonline.com) explains terms using relatively easy words.

Miriam Webster is another free online English dictionary. This dictionary provides two separate websites for English language learners (Merriam-webster Learner's Dictionary) and one for general usage with more features under subcategories and a variety of content. Miriam Webster dictionary also provides a free app for smart phones which is an advantage since it allows it to be used offline.

The Free American English pronunciation learning site Pronuncian enables students to learn to pronounce words by entering the spelling of the key words into its system while practicing listening and learn the meaning and the pronunciation of the key words. This website provides comprehensive information on what we generally term subcategories of English Pronunciation in detail such as Sounds (Pronunciation of the alphabet, consonants, vowels), Stress sounds, Linking sounds, and Pitch.

(Figure 1) Application Pronunciation

The main categories (Sounds, Stress, Linking, Pitch) at the top of the blue menu can be moved; clicking on the logo in the upper left corner or these icons-Video, Lessons, Assessment (pronounciation test), Podcast, will move you to the main page of the website.

Pronuncian offers learning materials on the web site along with a Podcast channel which provides regular pronunciation practice. The podcast audio material are provided with audio scripts so that the listening can supplemented with textual information.

2.2 Application for English conversation

The British Council offers several kinds of resources for English language learning for people who have these goals; to improve business English; to attain advanced level English; to work at foreign companies where English is required.

(Figure 2) Learn English Web

The curriculum of British Council's Learn English program is as follows: Learn English Kids is a website for children. It incorporates songs, story telling, videos, vocabulary and grammar games and activities to help people can learn English in a more interesting and fun way.
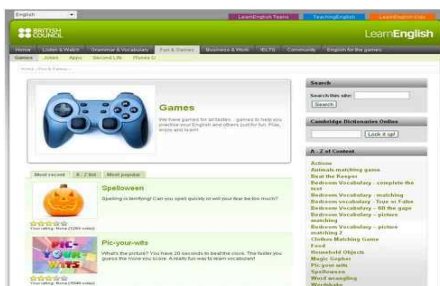
This website offers activities that can be done alone, but it is also structured to be performed with friends, parents, teachers making it more effective.

(Figure 3) Audio and Video

In Listen & Watch, the audio and video materials can be studied along with interesting topics enabling the student to experience more fun while learning.

Learn English Teens is a website for 13-17 year-old teenagers. It provides fun English exercises games, quizzes, videos, and test preparation tips. It also helps students improve their grammar and vocabulary.

(Figure 4) Fun & Games

Fun & Games provides simple games for learning English.   Business & Work also offers educational materials based on real-world business situations.

A popular English website for learning English is EnglishCentral. This site utilizes videos such as YouTube videos as basic learning materials and it is appropriate for intermediate and advanced English conversation students rather than beginner level students of English conversation. The biggest advantage of this site is that students can learn English through interesting popular videos. Fun English conversation materials provides opportunities to focus more.

Another advantage is that it enables listening and speaking practices at the same time. In speaking practice, it records the learner's responses and provides a score based on the analysis. The learner can do the recorded speaking practice as man times as he desires in order to attain a satisfactory score; in the process, the learner can practice different features of English pronunciation such as rhythm and intonation.

MyLanguageExchange is a website for practicing English conversation with a partner online. This site allows learners to find English language partners to practice conversation online. Learners can meet with people interested in learning English from all over the world and occasionally meet foreigners residing in the country. Usually, learners have opportunities to practice speaking English with native speakers in English schools; however, when they need additional practice outside school, they need to seek other ways.   Joining offline English conversation communities is one way and participating in English-speaking communities(offline meetings, churches, etc.) would be a good way to improve English.

USALearns is another English website that deals with life in the United States. This website, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education as part of its adult education

project, unlike most commercial websites, is very simple in design.

(Figure 5) USALearns

All of these website are conducted in English only and it could be difficult for those just starting to learn English. However, the English used are spoken rather slowly so that the beginning learner may have little trouble getting used to it after several times. These sites are all helpful for beginner and intermediate English language learners and can be used free of charge.

3. Mobile English Learning Applications

Reflecting this time of mobile technology, British Council has made an English learning application available free of charge reflecting the mobile era.

3.1 Educational Applications

This educational site enables learners to enhance English language skills through interesting episodes, games, and a variety of multimedia activities that it provides.

(Figure 6) Podcast App

Below are applications that can be downloaded from the Mobile Learning category from the site. Users of iphone can easily download it from Apple Store for free by searching under British Council.

Learning English Elementary Podcast App is an app for English learners with basic skills. The learners can listen to a conversation between Tess and Ravi that continues for 20 minutes then practice speaking by answering the provided questions. In addition, by using the provided script, the learner can practice listening.

(Figure 7) Big City Small World(iPhone 3G, 3GS, iPod Touch)

MyWordBook is an interactive vocabulary notebook for language learners. It has flash cards of most frequently used words with sounds and examples of usage that facilitate effective memorization. It allows the learners to add translations and examples and create their own notebook that help them learn vocabulary as well as provide tips for learning vocabulary.

Other than the mobile apps provided by the British Council, English Grammar in Use is a mobile app that can be downloaded for a fee from Apple or Play store. This application is based on the best-selling grammar book by Raymond Murphy. This application is designed for intermediate level English learners and includes many grammar activities. In this app, the learner can take advantage of the variety of interesting grammar activity menu that have built-in speech and sound. It also provides 2000 questions, phrases and allows the learners to study vocabulary as well.

3.2 Websites for self-directed English learning

www.engllishclub.com is a free online English language learning website that allows the learners to improve their English skills through a variety of activities. The materials provided are useful not only for students who want to learn English but also for English teachers .

(Figure 8) EnglishClub

Hangman is a well-known animated word puzzle game that incorporates   IELTS and TOEFL vocabulary as well as basic English words. This is an appropriate application for learning vocabulary. It has two game modes in which the learner can play the game against another player who choses the words for the game.   This is available free of charge from App & Play Store.

LearnEnglish Grammar is also available for free download from App & Play Store. Using this, all kinds of English grammar with 10 types of unique activities can be practiced. It allows beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels of learning and the questions use a unique form that are delivered in the form of text or images or audio.

Johnny Grammar's Quizmaster is a useful English quiz app that may be beneficial for all ESL students also available for free in Apple and Play Store. The students can test themselves and answer grammar questions or participate in 1000 misspelled vocabulary word quiz.

60-Second Word Challenge is a vocabulary quiz app that deals with day-to-day topics such as movies, TV shows, travel, and conversation. This is also available for free in Apple and Play Store. There are 600 questions and it provides feedback to wrong answers. This app makes possible effective learning in the shortest time possible.

4. Applications for learning English through English Language drama

In learning through English language drama, the learner looks up unfamiliar words in the dictionary while watching the drama. The effect of learning through drama is closely related to the level of the learner. Learning English vocabulary words through dramas is more effective for intermediate level learners than beginners.

These are the following advantages of learning through English language drama. First, vocabulary is learned not only by looking, but also by listening. Second, the word used in a certain situation is more easily remembered. Third, it can be learned with example sentences. Fourth, the student can hear pronunciation from native speakers that

is different from dictionary pronunciation. Fifth, words used frequently in daily life can be heard. Sixth, the drama can be played repeatedly allowing the learner to study the words repeatedly.

In order to use the advantages of learning vocabulary through drama effectively, the following are needed. An English language drama that deals with daily life should be selected. It may be different depending on personal taste, but dramas that deals with everyday life often use frequently appearing words which are easy to understand. Then the learner should make a habit of picking out words that he does not know without a script.

The learner should watch the drama without a script the first time to practice listening. It is hard to hear unfamiliar words while watching－in such a case, the learner should watch it repeatedly to pick out words that are unfamiliar and learn both the words and sound of the words. Once the learners can pick out unfamiliar words without the script, the words should be written down in a notebook along with the pronunciation in Korean.

For example, using the method for studying English through English-language drama, while watching the drama, the learner can study vocabulary by writing down the examples sentences, the situation in which the words are used. Moreover, by using the notepad and voice recorder on the smart phone, it is possible for the students to study at anytime.

5. Conclusion

There are three essential components needed to succeed in improving conversational English skills; effort, motivation, and learning methodology. In spite of individual differences, doors to success will open when these components are studied in proper ratio. There is a golden ration to achieve success in language learning. According to KoreanEnglish.org, the most ideal ratio is 6:2:2.

This study proposes English language learning methodology utilizing internet and mobile applications to enable students to select learning environment appropriate for their level with more interest. This is based on the suggestions for improvement of the problems that have been present in English language education－among various methods of English study, from the traditional passive learning environment to teacher-oriented one-sided education.

Additionally, animation and vocabulary apps such as Learn English enable students to work on all four English skills on their mobile devices in which they practice writing, listening, reading, and speaking. Learning English this way could be motivating and very effective for the students since they can study at their own level. Also using the app, the words can be repeated many times according to the native speaker's pronunciation, producing an effect which would be similar to that of studying with a native speaker of English face-to-face. Studying vocabulary through English language drama adds many dimensions to the learning process. Thereby, the learning would have a lasting effect and be remembered for a long time as well increasing the probability of it being used in real conversation since it had been learned by sound.

In addition to learning English through English language drama, as mentioned above, in Learn English students can choose the appropriate level－especially when they have a difficult time understanding such as ESL Jokes. If there is no sufficient time, learners can go to Idiom of the day in EnglishClub.com to learn English idiom or via

learn interesting facts from the past from This Week in History page.

In this manner, this study moves away from the traditional method of studying English language and suggests various ways of learning English that would boost student interest and motivation. A new direction for English language education has been proposed which allows self-directed learning using various applications and the internet. This would be considered to help learners of English as a second language in providing a very effective and practical way to study English.

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이 일 석

1992 단국대학교 영문학학사
1997 단국대학교
       영어교육석사
2005 단국대학교 영어학박사

2013- 현재 단국대학교 교육조교수
관심분야: 멀티미디어 언어학습, 모바일 어플 언어 교육,
          인터넷 영어 교육, TESOL