

**RECEPTIVE SKILLS: READING & LISTENING (REAL) RESOURCE
PACK WITH APP SUPPORT**

**Nur Ain Abdul Malek, Nor Syamimi Iliani Che Hassan, Nor Hairunnisa
Mohammad Nor & Hanis Kamarudin**

Academy of Language Studies
UiTM Cawangan Kelantan
Bukit Ilmu, 18500 Machang, Kelantan

Abstract: Educators all over the world have been incorporating smartphones specifically by using mobile applications (apps) in teaching. However, many educators encourage students to use smartphones especially for independent learning without any guidance. It is easy to assume that students would know how to use a certain app on their own. Barrs (2011) asserts that students demonstrate greater interest to continue self-directed learning using mobile devices when they are provided detailed guidance and explanation on how to use smartphone appropriately in classroom settings. This suggests that guided lessons using apps may increase the level of effectiveness in language teaching and learning. The objectives of the resource pack designed are to offer guided approach to the use of apps in language classrooms and to provide support materials to consolidate the lessons. Meanwhile, the novelty lies in the comprehensiveness of the lesson plans and materials while incorporating new technology in the classroom. The resource pack will give a valuable contribution to instructors in the teaching of English particularly on receptive skills like reading and listening. The development of this resource pack which is based on two apps: NST Mobile and LEB English is timely to educators who have interest in incorporating mobile devices in language teaching. Basically, this resource pack underscores a compilation of exciting and meaningful lesson plans meant for educators to conduct listening and reading instructions. Knowing time constraints often experienced by educators in preparing for their classes, worksheets are also included for the proposed lesson plans so that learning outcomes can be achieved at the end of the lessons.

Keywords: Smartphone apps, mobile learning, guided approach, technology based language learning and language teaching.

1. Introduction

With the rampant evolution of smartphones, we can see the growing trend of educators adapting to this handy technology for their personal and work comfort. Many educators have tried to incorporate smartphones specifically mobile applications (apps) in their teaching as apps provide a personal and learner-centered learning opportunity to students out there (Heyoung & Yeonhee, 2012). However, given the fact that there are thousands of apps available and a myriad of teaching methods, does it make any difference in the teaching and learning process?

Many are encouraging students to use language apps especially for independent learning without giving them any guidance. We assume that students would know how to use a certain app on their own. This is actually in contrast with Barr (2012) where he claims that students demonstrate greater interest to continue self-directed learning using mobile devices when they are provided detailed guidance and explanation on how to use smartphone appropriately in classroom settings. This suggests that guided lessons using apps may increase the level of effectiveness in language teaching and learning. Hence, the development of this resource pack is timely as it can be used as a guideline to those who have interest in incorporating smartphones particularly apps in teaching.

2. Problem Statement

A lot of language educators have shown keen interest in incorporating smartphones in teaching as these devices have enhanced capabilities that can dramatically increase the level of interest of everyone including students (Robert, 2011). They highly encourage students to use language apps independently as they have the concept in mind that students from this millennial generation will know how to utilize the apps in their smartphones on their own. It is irrefutable that introducing something new in language classroom like language apps is fascinating. Nevertheless, educators also need to realize that this new environment of using apps in language classroom should make students engage better in their on-going learning activities and can enhance students' productivity (Heyoung & Yeonhee, 2012). This however could not be easily achieved when educators offer no guidance to the students and they are given the trust to explore the apps on their own initiative without any follow up activities provided to them. At the same time, it will be very difficult for educators to know whether the use of smartphones particularly apps has impacted students' academic performance positively as the baseline that we have is just on students' own initiative in exploring the apps.

In addition to that, readily available language apps out there also do not provide full instruction that can control learners but they provide only individualized, personal, analytic learner-centered learning opportunities (Heyoung & Yeonhee, 2012). This is parallel with the invention of smartphones as personal devices to humans making them ideal for individualized informal learning. Therefore, as language educators, we should encourage and assist the learner autonomy that enables and provides means for learners to combine formal and informal learning, (Robert, 2011). By asking students to use apps in language learning (informal) and later on provide teachers' guidance and instructions (formal), we can ensure effective learning will take place. To fulfill the needs, two apps: NST Mobile and LEB English for reading and listening respectively have been selected and a resource pack is developed to guide educators in incorporating these apps in their class.

3. Objective

The two objectives of this resource pack are:

- 1) To offer a guided approach to the use of apps in language classrooms.
- 2) To provide support materials to consolidate the lessons for listening and reading skills.

4. Novelty

The novelty of this module lies in the comprehensiveness of the lesson plans and materials prepared while incorporating the use of language apps in the classroom.

5. Usefulness

This module will give a valuable contribution to educators in the teaching of English particularly on receptive skills like reading and listening. Apart from showing the relevancy of the use of smartphone particularly apps in

language classrooms, it will also provide further guidelines on conducting language activities using mobile apps in English language lessons.

6. Commercialization Potential Or Impact Towards Socio Economy/Humanity

Knowing the fact that educators often experience time constraint problem in preparing for their classes, the development of this resource pack will help a lot in shedding ideas to educators who have interest in incorporating mobile devices particularly apps in language teaching. Not only lesson plans are provided, interactive worksheets are also included so that learning outcomes can be achieved at the end of every learning session.

7. Images

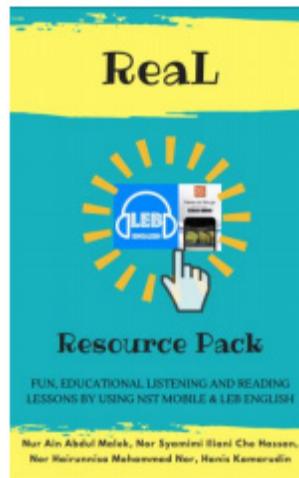


Figure 1: Cover page

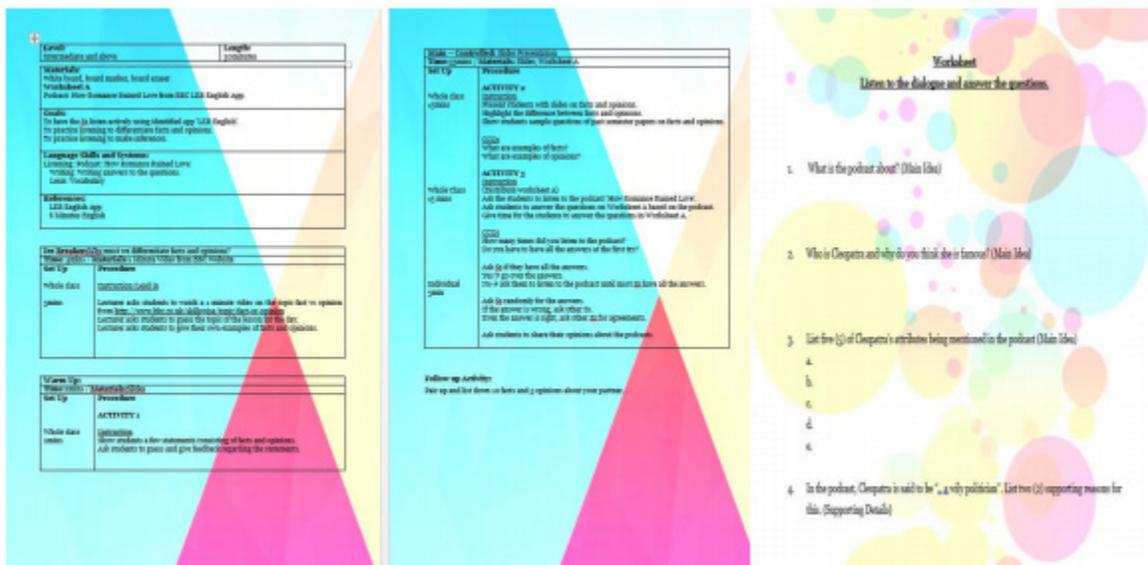


Figure 2: Lesson plans & worksheet

8. Conclusion

Incorporating smartphones specifically apps in language teaching can definitely increase students' achievements provided that students are not left on their own to explore the apps that educators plan to use in the language classrooms. Based on Steven, ZhiMin & Katsipataki (2012), the use of technology like mobile apps in language classroom must be supported with sound pedagogy and it must be adopted for a specific reason and not just simply following a trend. Apart from that mobile apps should also be used to supplement rather than to replace traditional approaches. Language apps should also be used alongside quality resource pack for the teachers. All of these can be materialized with guided lessons in using the apps because with the guidance provided, students will be less distracted from their real intention of using the smartphones in learning (Ng, Che Hassan, Mohammad Nor & Abdul Malek, 2015). When students could clearly see their directions in learning, the use of apps in language teaching and learning will be more meaningful and a successful language learning environment could be guaranteed.

9. References

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