

Perceptions and Readiness Towards Mobile Learning for Arabic Speaking Skills

¹ Hazrati Yahaya, ^{*2} Ibrahim Youssef Abdelhamid, ³ Abdul Azim Mohamad Isa, ⁴ Hanis Najwa Shahrudin, ⁵ Ragab Ibrahim Ahmed Awad

^{1,2,3,4} Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

⁵ Kulliyyah Usuluddin, Sains Al-Quran Dan Bahasa Arab, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic University (UniShams) Malaysia

***Corresponding author**

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ABSTRACT

Mobile learning has emerged as an innovative educational approach that supports flexible and interactive language learning, particularly in the development of Arabic speaking skills. The integration of mobile technologies into Arabic language education provides opportunities for students to improve pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, communication skills, and speaking fluency through continuous and accessible learning activities. However, the effectiveness of mobile learning implementation is closely related to learners' perceptions and readiness towards its use. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of mobile learning implementation in Arabic language education, particularly in enhancing Arabic speaking skills. The study also examines the factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning and students' readiness towards mobile-assisted language learning. This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey questionnaire distributed to university students enrolled in Arabic language courses. The findings revealed that respondents demonstrated positive perceptions towards factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills, with a mean score of 3.87. In addition, the mean score for students' readiness towards mobile learning was 3.70, indicating a moderately high level of readiness among the respondents. The findings suggest that students generally perceived mobile learning as beneficial in supporting the improvement of Arabic speaking skills through flexible access to learning materials, interactive activities, and self-paced practice opportunities. Nevertheless, several challenges were identified, including internet connectivity issues, limited digital competencies, and distractions during mobile learning activities. The study highlights the importance of integrating appropriate pedagogical strategies and technological support to maximize the effectiveness of mobile learning in improving Arabic speaking skills. The findings may provide useful insights for educators, curriculum developers, and higher education institutions in developing learner-centered mobile learning environments for Arabic language instruction.

Keywords: Mobile Learning, Arabic Speaking Skills, Arabic Language Education, Learners' Perceptions, Readiness, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the landscape of education, particularly in the field of language learning. The widespread adoption of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets has facilitated the emergence of mobile learning (M-learning), which enables learners to access educational content anytime and anywhere. Mobile learning has become an important component of contemporary education due to its flexibility, accessibility, and ability to support learner-centred learning environments (Al-Abdullatif et al., 2022; Eliza et al., 2024).

In the context of language education, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has gained considerable attention as an effective approach for enhancing language acquisition and communication skills. The integration of mobile technologies into language learning provides learners with opportunities to engage in self-directed learning, access authentic learning materials, and interact with peers beyond the classroom environment. Such opportunities are particularly beneficial for developing speaking skills, which require continuous practice and meaningful communication (Mohammed, 2022).

Arabic speaking skills remain one of the most challenging language skills for non-native learners. Many students experience difficulties in oral communication due to limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, inadequate exposure to authentic language use, and insufficient opportunities for practice. Consequently, educators have increasingly explored the use of mobile learning applications and digital platforms to support Arabic speaking development. Research by Puasa et al. (2022) demonstrated that mobile gamification through the i-Kalam application positively contributed to the development of Arabic speaking skills by increasing learner engagement and motivation. Similarly, Abdul Ghani et al. (2022) found that mobile-based digital games enhanced students' learning experiences and promoted greater participation in Arabic language learning activities. The effectiveness of mobile learning in Arabic language education has also been highlighted through studies involving virtual communication and online interaction. Mohamad et al. (2022) reported that non-native Arabic learners perceived virtual communication programmes with native speakers positively, as they provided authentic opportunities to practise speaking and improve communicative competence. Furthermore, Mohammed (2022) emphasised that digital learning environments integrating speaking and listening activities can significantly improve learners' oral proficiency and language performance.

In addition to supporting language development, mobile learning encourages collaboration, interaction, and knowledge sharing among learners. Through mobile applications and online platforms, students can engage in discussions, exchange information, and participate in communicative activities that enhance speaking proficiency. Such interactive learning environments are aligned with contemporary pedagogical approaches that emphasise active participation and learner autonomy (Al-Abdullatif et al., 2022). Despite its potential benefits, the successful implementation of mobile learning depends largely on learners' perceptions and readiness to adopt mobile technologies for educational purposes. Positive perceptions towards mobile learning influence learners' willingness to engage with digital learning platforms, while readiness reflects their technological competence, attitudes, and preparedness to utilise mobile devices effectively for learning activities (Eliza et al., 2024). Studies have shown that students who possess positive perceptions and high levels of readiness are more likely to benefit from mobile learning environments and demonstrate greater learning outcomes.

Moreover, learners' perceptions play a crucial role in determining the acceptance and sustainability of mobile learning initiatives. Çilek (2022) found that students learning Arabic as a foreign language generally demonstrated positive perceptions towards technology-enhanced learning approaches, indicating their openness to innovative instructional methods. Similarly, Nasirudeen (2026) highlighted the importance of digital literacy in enhancing language learning outcomes, suggesting that learners' readiness to use technology is essential for effective participation in digital learning environments.

Although previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of mobile learning in language education, research focusing specifically on learners' perceptions and readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to investigate respondents' perceptions of factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning and their readiness towards mobile learning as a needs analysis for the development of a mobile application to support Arabic speaking skills. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and application designers in developing effective mobile-assisted learning environments for Arabic language education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mobile Learning for Arabic Speaking Skills

The advancement of mobile technology has brought significant changes to language teaching and learning practices. The use of smartphones, tablets, and learning applications enables students to access educational

content flexibly without being restricted by time and location. In higher education, mobile learning has gained increasing attention due to its ability to provide a flexible, learner-centred learning environment and support lifelong learning (Naveed et al., 2023). Furthermore, mobile technology allows students to access learning materials continuously and enhances their engagement in the learning process.

In the field of language learning, the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) approach has been proven effective in improving various language skills, including speaking skills. A study conducted by Alzieni (2024) found that the use of MALL had a significant positive effect on the development of students' speaking skills through access to more interactive communication activities and continuous practice opportunities. The findings indicated that students who used mobile applications demonstrated better improvement in speaking performance compared to those who learned through conventional methods.

Additionally, Handikaningtyas et al. (2024) found that the use of MALL integrated with speech recognition technology significantly improved students' pronunciation, fluency, intonation, and speech rhythm. These findings suggest that mobile technology can provide more frequent speaking practice opportunities and detailed feedback to learners. Similarly, a meta-analysis conducted by Li (2024) revealed that Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has a significant positive impact on the development of foreign language learners' speaking skills compared to traditional teaching methods. Mobile technology enables learners to engage in continuous speaking practice, receive immediate feedback, and increase their motivation and engagement in language learning. Moreover, the mobility and flexibility of mobile devices allow learners to practice speaking independently outside the classroom, thereby enhancing their fluency and confidence in oral communication.

In the context of Arabic language learning, the use of mobile applications has become increasingly important in addressing the lack of exposure to authentic communication environments. Al-Abdullatif et al. (2022) emphasized that the integration of digital platforms and mobile technology in Arabic language education can improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes while supporting the overall development of language skills. The study also highlighted that users' acceptance of technology plays a crucial role in determining the success of mobile learning implementation.

However, the effectiveness of mobile learning depends not only on the technology itself but also on students' perceptions and readiness. Positive perceptions towards technology use can increase students' willingness to adopt mobile applications as learning tools. Hoi and Mu (2021) found that students' acceptance of MALL was influenced by their perceptions of the usefulness of technology, ease of use, and the support provided by instructors.

In addition, students' readiness is an important factor in determining the effectiveness of mobile learning implementation. Eliza et al. (2024) explained that readiness encompasses technological skills, attitudes, motivation, and the ability to utilize mobile devices for learning purposes. Students with a higher level of readiness were found to adapt more easily to digital learning environments and gain greater benefits from the use of mobile technology.

Based on the literature reviewed, mobile learning has significant potential to support the development of Arabic speaking skills by providing flexible, interactive, and learner-centred learning opportunities. Nevertheless, the success of its implementation largely depends on students' perceptions and readiness towards the use of such technology. Therefore, investigating students' perceptions and readiness towards mobile learning is essential to ensure the development of Arabic language learning applications that meet users' needs and effectively enhance Arabic speaking skills.

Speaking Skills in Arabic Language Learning

Arabic has become one of the most important international languages due to its significance in religion, culture, education, diplomacy, and global communication. The growing interest in learning Arabic has extended beyond Arab countries to many regions worldwide, including Southeast Asia, Europe, and North

America. Consequently, educational institutions have increasingly integrated Arabic language courses into their curricula to meet the growing demand for Arabic language proficiency (Çilek, 2022).

In Malaysia, Arabic is taught at various educational levels, including schools, colleges, and universities. The primary objective of Arabic language education is to enable learners to develop proficiency in the four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, speaking is often regarded as the most challenging yet essential skill because it reflects learners' ability to communicate effectively and use the language in real-life situations (Mohammed, 2022).

Speaking skills play a crucial role in language acquisition as they require learners to integrate vocabulary knowledge, grammatical structures, pronunciation, fluency, and communicative competence simultaneously. Learners are expected not only to produce grammatically correct utterances but also to convey messages clearly and appropriately according to different communicative contexts. However, many learners of Arabic as a foreign language face difficulties in speaking due to limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and insufficient opportunities for authentic communication (Mohamad et al., 2022).

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of creating interactive learning environments that encourage students to practice speaking actively. Mohammed (2022) found that digital learning environments integrating speaking and listening activities significantly improved learners' oral communication skills and speaking performance.

Similarly, Mohamad et al. (2022) reported that virtual communication programmes involving native Arabic speakers enhanced learners' confidence and communicative competence by providing authentic opportunities for language use.

The rapid development of digital technology has also created new opportunities for enhancing Arabic speaking skills through mobile-assisted learning. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) enables learners to engage in speaking practice beyond classroom boundaries through interactive applications, multimedia resources, and communication platforms. Alzieni (2024) found that the use of mobile learning significantly improved learners' speaking performance by providing continuous opportunities for interaction and practice. Likewise, Handikaningtyas et al. (2024) demonstrated that speech-recognition technology integrated into mobile learning applications enhanced learners' pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and oral communication skills.

Furthermore, Li (2024), through a meta-analysis study, concluded that MALL has a significant positive effect on foreign language learners' speaking skill development. The study highlighted that mobile technologies facilitate continuous speaking practice, immediate feedback, increased learner engagement, and greater learning autonomy. These features contribute to improved fluency, confidence, and overall speaking proficiency.

Despite these advantages, the effectiveness of mobile learning in developing Arabic speaking skills depends largely on learners' perceptions and readiness towards the use of mobile technologies. Positive perceptions encourage learners to accept and actively use mobile learning applications, while readiness reflects their technological competence, motivation, and willingness to participate in digital learning environments (Eliza et al., 2024). Therefore, understanding students' perceptions and readiness is essential for ensuring the successful implementation of mobile learning initiatives aimed at improving Arabic speaking skills.

Based on the literature, speaking skills remain a critical component of Arabic language learning, and mobile learning offers promising opportunities to support their development. Nevertheless, the success of mobile learning implementation relies heavily on learners' readiness and perceptions. Consequently, investigating these factors is crucial in developing effective mobile learning applications that can enhance Arabic speaking proficiency among learners.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey questionnaire to identify students' perceptions and readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills. A structured questionnaire was used as the primary instrument to collect data on the factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning as well as students' readiness to utilize mobile technology in enhancing their Arabic speaking proficiency.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A examined students' perceptions of the factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills, while Section B measured students' readiness towards the use of mobile learning in improving Arabic speaking skills. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. The use of this scale enabled respondents to express their opinions clearly and facilitated the interpretation of the collected data.

The questionnaire instrument was adapted and modified from previous studies related to the implementation and readiness of mobile learning to suit the context of Arabic language learning and speaking skills development. Prior to the actual study, a pilot study was conducted involving 95 undergraduate students enrolled in Arabic language courses at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam to determine the reliability of the research instrument. The pilot study yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.81, indicating a satisfactory level of reliability. According to Mohd Majid Konting (2005), a research instrument is considered reliable when the reliability coefficient exceeds 0.60.

The respondents of the study consisted of 272 undergraduate students enrolled in Level One Arabic courses at UiTM Shah Alam. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure the participation of students from various faculties and academic centres. This sampling technique was selected because the student population comprised diverse groups with different academic backgrounds.

The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0. Descriptive statistical analyses, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were employed to determine the level of students' perceptions and readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills. The interpretation of mean scores was based on a predetermined interpretation scale to identify the level of agreement and readiness among the respondents regarding the use of mobile learning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' perceptions of factors affecting the implementation of mobile learning

Table 1 illustrates the mean scores, standard deviations, and interpretation of respondents' perceptions of factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills. The overall mean score recorded was 3.87, with a standard deviation of 0.399, indicating that respondents generally demonstrated a high level of positive perception towards the implementation of mobile learning.

Table 1 Respondents' perceptions of factors affecting the implementation of mobile learning

No	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I like to try new things, especially when it comes to mobile learning	4.02	.595
2	I have a strong interest in the field of mobile learning	3.88	.620
3	I don't want to miss out on using new methods in mobile learning	4.13	.520
4	I am always positive about using the latest technology in learning	4.10	.535
5	Instructions from the university administration	3.61	.741
6	Instructions and encouragement from the educational institution	3.67	.720
7	Needs in learning	4.03	.627
8	I have in-depth knowledge about mobile learning	3.50	.773
Total		3.87	.399

As presented in Table 1, the findings indicate that the mean score for each item exceeded 3.50. This result demonstrates that respondents generally held positive perceptions towards factors that support the implementation of mobile learning for the development of Arabic speaking skills, with an overall mean score of 3.87.

The highest mean score was recorded for the statement, *"I do not want to miss the opportunity to use new methods in mobile learning"* ($M = 4.13$), followed by the statement, *"I am always positive about using the latest technology in learning"* ($M = 4.10$). These findings suggest that respondents were receptive to innovative learning approaches and showed a strong willingness to integrate mobile technologies into their Arabic speaking learning activities.

In contrast, the lowest mean score was obtained for the statement, *"I have in-depth knowledge about mobile learning."* This finding indicates that although respondents demonstrated positive attitudes towards mobile learning, their level of knowledge and understanding of mobile learning concepts may still require further enhancement.

Overall, the mean scores for all items were above 3.50, indicating that respondents had positive perceptions of the factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills. The findings suggest that respondents were generally supportive of adopting mobile learning as a platform for improving their Arabic speaking proficiency.

Readiness for Mobile learning

Table 2 illustrates the mean scores, standard deviations, and interpretation of respondents' readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills. The overall mean score recorded for this construct was 3.70, with a standard deviation of 0.708, suggesting that respondents demonstrated a high level of readiness to adopt mobile learning in enhancing their Arabic speaking proficiency.

Table 2 Respondents' readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills.

No.	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I am well aware of mobile learning	3.52	.682
2	I want to know more about mobile learning.	4.01	.462
3	I prefer conventional learning to mobile learning.	3.16	.934
4	I do not mind paying extra money for mobile learning.	3.03	.794
5	Mobile learning will not make my life difficult.	3.76	.653
6	I am ready for mobile learning if the university implements it now.	3.86	.593
7	I want my lecturers to integrate mobile learning in my classes in addition to the use of textbooks and MOOCs	3.91	.656
8	Mobile learning will save my learning time.	3.93	.603
9	Mobile learning is an alternative to web-based learning.	3.97	.579
10	Mobile learning is an alternative to conventional learning.	4.01	.547
11	Some of my lecturers have already integrated mobile learning into their teaching	3.53	.708
Total		3.70	.358

The aspect of students' readiness is an important element that needs to be examined to determine their preparedness for mobile learning in developing Arabic speaking skills. The findings revealed that the respondents generally demonstrated a high level of readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills.

Table 2 presents the mean scores of respondents' level of agreement regarding readiness towards mobile learning. The results indicate that the overall mean score for this construct was 3.70, reflecting a high level of readiness among the respondents. The highest mean scores were recorded for the items *"I want to know more about mobile learning"* and *"Mobile learning is an alternative to conventional learning"*, both with a mean

score of 4.01. These findings suggest that respondents were highly interested in exploring mobile learning and viewed it as a viable alternative to traditional learning approaches in enhancing their Arabic speaking skills.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score was recorded for the item "*I do not mind paying extra money for mobile learning*" ($M = 3.03$). This finding indicates that respondents preferred mobile learning applications that are accessible at minimal or no cost. Nevertheless, the overall findings demonstrate that respondents possess a positive level of readiness towards the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills and are willing to adopt mobile technologies as part of their language learning experience.

DISCUSSION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed educational practices, particularly in language learning. The emergence of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has provided new opportunities for learners to engage in flexible, accessible, and interactive learning experiences. Unlike traditional classroom-based instruction, mobile learning enables learners to access learning materials, practice language skills, and interact with educational content anytime and anywhere. These features have made mobile learning an increasingly important approach in contemporary language education, especially in the development of speaking skills.

The findings of this study revealed that respondents demonstrated positive perceptions of factors influencing the implementation of mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills, with an overall mean score of 3.87. This finding suggests that students generally view mobile learning as a beneficial platform for enhancing their Arabic speaking proficiency. The high mean scores obtained for items related to the use of innovative learning methods and positive attitudes towards technology indicate that students are receptive to integrating mobile technologies into their language learning activities. This finding supports previous studies that highlighted the potential of mobile learning in promoting learner engagement, motivation, and active participation in language learning (Alzieni, 2024; Li, 2024).

The study also found that respondents exhibited a high level of readiness towards mobile learning for Arabic speaking skills, with an overall mean score of 3.70. The findings indicate that students are willing to explore and adopt mobile learning as an alternative to conventional learning methods. The high mean scores recorded for the items related to learning more about mobile learning and viewing mobile learning as an alternative learning approach demonstrate students' openness towards technological innovation in education. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Eliza et al. (2024), which emphasized that learners' readiness is a critical factor in ensuring the successful implementation of mobile learning environments.

Furthermore, the positive perceptions and readiness demonstrated by the respondents suggest that there is considerable potential for the development and implementation of mobile applications specifically designed to enhance Arabic speaking skills. Mobile applications equipped with interactive features such as speech recognition, pronunciation practice, vocabulary enhancement, multimedia content, and real-time feedback can provide learners with continuous opportunities to practice speaking beyond classroom settings. Such applications may help overcome common challenges faced by Arabic language learners, including limited opportunities for communication, lack of confidence, and insufficient language exposure.

Overall, the findings indicate that mobile learning has strong potential to support the development of Arabic speaking skills among university students. The positive perceptions and readiness exhibited by the respondents provide a strong foundation for the integration of mobile learning into Arabic language education. Therefore, educational institutions, language educators, and application developers should collaborate in designing and implementing effective mobile learning applications that meet learners' needs and contribute to the improvement of Arabic speaking proficiency. However, it is recommended that future research uses a mixed-methods approach by combining surveys with interviews or focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into students' experiences with mobile learning, alongside expanding the sample to include students from various universities, educational levels, and different cultural backgrounds to increase the generalizability of the findings.

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