

The Integration of Mobile Phones in the EFL Class to Enhance Students Motivation and Engagement towards Learning

The case of first year English students at the ENS of Laghouat

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Abstract:

This research investigates the effectiveness of incorporating mobile phones into English as a Foreign Language classrooms to enhance student motivation. The study aims to explore students' perceptions of using mobile phones in the classroom. In addition, it seeks to determine the effectiveness of the integrations of mobile phones to elevate students' motivation. A survey was administered to 101 students of English. The findings reveal a positive impact of mobile technology on students' motivation. Students generally view this technology favorably in terms of language skill improvement. The majority of students confirm that integrating mobile devices in the EFL setting fosters motivation and eagerness to learn. Therefore, the study concludes that implementing mobile devices in EFL classes can effectively address the challenges of technological and pedagogical shifts in teaching

Keywords: EFL, Mobile phones, Technology, Motivation.

1.Introduction:

Technology has a significant impact on education, changing both the way we teach and learn. Mobile phones provide a various opportunities to transform the field of teaching/learning English as a foreign Language (EFL).This study investigates how this

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pervasive technology might help close the knowledge gap between traditional EFL training and the rapidly changing digital landscape, eventually leading to previously unprecedented levels of students' enthusiasm. Since, mobile phones are used very often for a variety of purposes, allowing students to use them in the classroom can be motivating for students. Therefore, it is crucial to explore how can smart phones be effective learning tools that enhance students' motivation.

Research Objectives

The study seeks to determine the actual effects of including mobile phones into EFL classes. Also, it aims to investigate students' perception and attitudes toward the use of mobile phones in the classroom. By dissecting how this technology influences both teaching and learning, the study seeks to identify key factors that contribute to increased student engagement and motivation.

Research Questions

This research is guided by the following questions:

How much does giving students access to mobile phones during EFL classes increase their inherent desire to study English?

Are there any particular applications or phone activities that work better than others at increasing motivation?

Does the amount of time students spend using their phones during EFL classes affect how motivated they are to learn?

Significance of the Research

Ultimately, this research seeks to equip teachers with valuable insights and practical strategies for effectively integrating mobile phones into their EFL teaching practices. By bridging the gap between technology and motivation, the research strives to enable EFL teachers to unlock their students' full potential and cultivate a generation of confident, passionate English language learners.

Methodology of the Research

By employing a questionnaire to collect data quantitatively, the study explores the viewpoints EFL students about the use of mobile phones to learn English. Through a thorough analysis of their perspectives and experiences, The study aims to determine the critical elements that lead to higher levels of motivation and engagement from students by analyzing the ways in which this technology affects both teaching and learning. the questionnaire used in this study was sent to first year students at the ENS of Laghouat as a Google Form. the questions aim to elicit responses about their attitudes and perceptions toward the integration

of mobile phones in the classroom. Most of the questions were formed according to a Likert scale manner to facilitate the process of responding to its statements.

Research Hypotheses

This research put forward two hypotheses:

H1: Including mobile phones in EFL classes will have a positive impact on students' language learning outcomes.

H2: Students will have positive perceptions and attitudes toward the use of mobile phones in EFL classes.

2. Technology and Foreign Language Learning

Technology is being integrated into a variety of educational fields including teaching foreign languages, for it can yield favorable results when it is properly utilized. A multimedia program becomes a successful educational tool when it is customized for each learner. Improved comprehension and interaction with the subject matter also contribute to this achievement in the form of motivated learners (Lytras MD, Gasevic D, Ordonez de Pablos P & Huang W , 2008). To have the desired outcomes, the different means of communication used in the classroom ought to be carefully selected and implemented by teachers. Nevertheless, the teacher remains a crucial element in the learning process. While technology will be used to help teaching and learning and may be integrated into lectures to optimize and expand knowledge, Bester and Brand (2013) contend that it cannot replace instructors (Bester, 2013).

3. The Accessibility of Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are becoming easily and more widely accessible than ever. Learners may now benefit from instructional resources that were previously difficult to obtain because to mobile phones' instant access to the Internet (Ababneh, 2017). Since they are attainable at any time, they can offer learners with the chance to use them as instructional means through which they reach the needed information with less effort than before. The most recent developments in mobile technology, particularly the expansion of wireless networks, provide learners with greater options to acquire the language regardless of when and where they are Mahgoub (2017). According to Park (2011), mobile devices are becoming incredibly commonplace, indicating that many EFL instructors and researchers have integrated technology into second language teaching and learning situations in recent years (Park, 2011).

It is important to note that the easiness and simplicity of using smart phones make their integration in the curriculum more effective. Using them, learners can easily utilize different applications to retrieve any sort of information they need as well as practice their various skills related to the target language (Bllaca, 2016). Thus, mobile phones can facilitate the learning process by simplifying the facilitating the ways through which learners look for different sorts of information that they need.

2.3 Potential Benefits of the Integration of Mobile Phones in the EFL Classroom

Any technology that may improve students' access to the language will have a significant positive impact on their progress, according to applied linguistics principles (Reinders, 2010). Mobile phones can be used as tools to reach a wide range of learning sources in a short period of time. For instance, because it has applications that provide a wide range of learning tools that students may download and utilize to better manage their study time, the use of mobile phones as learning tools can be a practical and efficient way for better learning (Abadi, S.M., & Saadi, F, 2015).

In addition, mobile phones can be very motivating to students due to their familiarity with using them for a variety of purposes. Therefore, beyond merely providing exposure to new languages, using mobiles in languages learning offers more. By offering lots of chances for practice and improvement, it gives students the tools they need to become proficient in the language. Due to the dynamic and interesting learning environment created by this interactive technique, students are able to actively refine their abilities (Ghasemi, Babak & Hashemi, Masoud & Bardine, Simin, 2011).

4. The Role of the Teacher

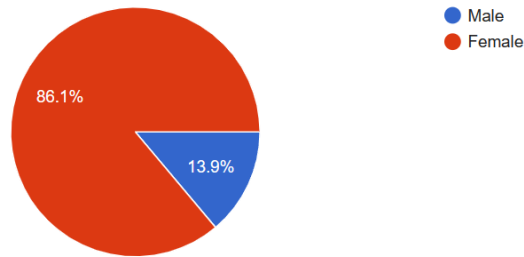
When it comes to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, teachers play an important role in utilizing mobile technology to increase student engagement. The use of mobile technology in English teaching provides students with a platform to engage in self-directed learning beyond the classroom. Teachers can provide personalized instruction that is suitable for the needs of each student. Additionally, mobile technology can provide immediate feedback to students, helping them to improve their performance. For example, teachers can use mobile applications to create quizzes and tests that are automatically graded and provide students with immediate feedback on their performance. In this way, teachers can ensure that each student is receiving the best possible instruction and support (Huang, Wang, & Li, 2024).

3. Results and Discussion of the Survey

Figure 1: Participants' gender

Gender

101 responses



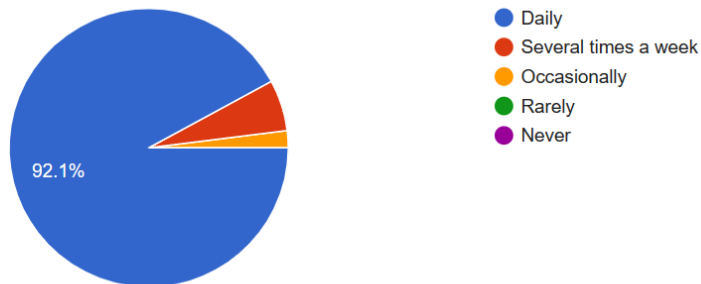
Source: Question one in the form

The participants are composed of 87 females and 14 males.

Figure 2: Frequency of using mobile phone

How often do you use your mobile phone?

101 responses



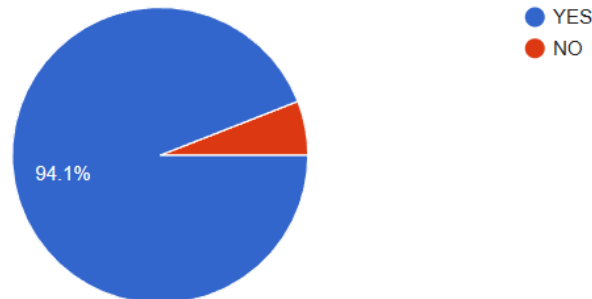
Source: Question Two in the Survey

The question above investigated mobile phone usage patterns among 101 participants. The responses indicate a strong reliance on mobile devices, with 92.1% of respondents reporting daily use. Notably, minimal use (5.9% several times a week, 1.0% each for occasional and rare) and complete abstinence were absent.

Figure 3: Frequency of using mobile phone

Do you utilize your mobile device for language acquisition purposes?

101 responses



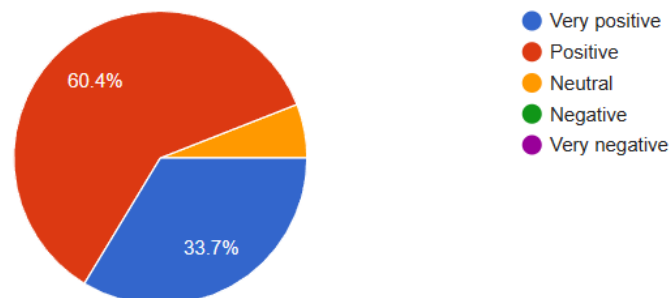
Source: Question Three in the Survey

According to the pie chart above, a majority of 94% of surveyed individuals reported using their phones, tablets, or other mobiles as means acquiring new languages. While based on a limited survey of 101 students, this trend reflects a wider shift towards mobile dominance in various aspects of their academic lives. The remaining 6% likely represent individuals who prefer different approaches, raising questions about specific app use and effectiveness compared to conventional methods. The answers lie in further research and understanding the motivations and experiences of users across the mobile-traditional spectrum. This image serves as a powerful reminder of the growing influence of mobile technology in language learning, and the exciting possibilities and challenges it presents for future generations of learners.

Figure 4: The role of mobile phones in facilitating English language learning

What is your perspective on the role of mobile technology in facilitating English language learning?

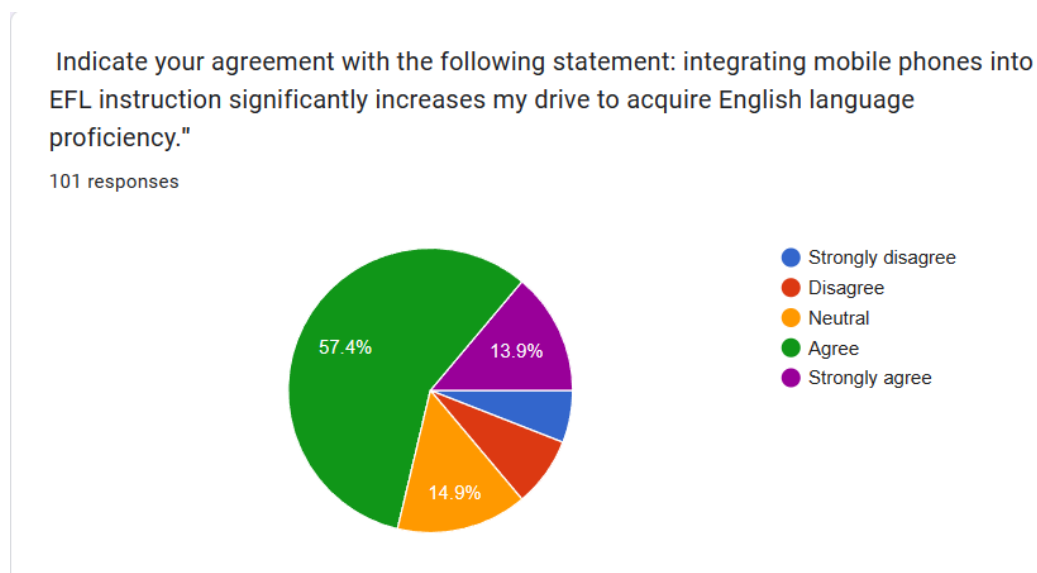
101 responses



Source: Question Four in the Survey

The image depicts a pie chart illustrating the results of a survey gaging respondent perspectives on the role of mobile technology in facilitating English language acquisition. Specifically, the chart indicates that 60. % of respondents maintained a very positive or positive outlook, 33. % held a neutral perspective, and 5. % expressed a negative or very negative view. These findings suggest the majority of individuals believe mobile technology serves as a useful tool for learning English. There are several rationales for why this may be the case. Portable mobile devices allow learners to access educational materials and practice their English skills at any moment and in any location. A wide range of mobile applications and resources are also available, enabling catering to different learning styles and requirements. Furthermore, mobile technology can help learners connect with other English speakers, providing opportunities to converse and hone one's abilities.

Figure 5: The integration of mobile phones to increase motivation to learn English



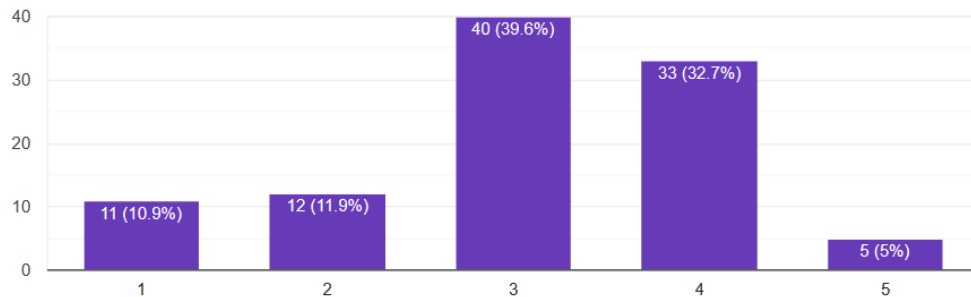
Source: Question Five in the Survey

While a sizeable 57.4% of respondents in the survey believe integrating mobile phones in EFL instruction boosts their drive to learn English, 13.9% disagree, showcasing divided standpoints. However, The majority likely appreciate the portability, app variety, and social connection opportunities mobile phones offer, potentially making learning more engaging and convenient. This highlights the need for careful implementation of mobile technology in language classrooms.

Figure 6: The effect of mobile phones on students' involvement in the EFL class

Evaluate the degree to which utilizing mobile phones affects your active participation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom activities.

101 responses



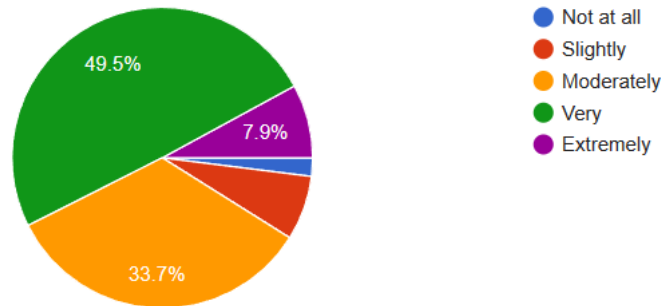
Source: Question Six in the Survey

The responses to this statement reveal that the majority of respondents, 57. %, believe integrating mobile phones into English as a Foreign Language instruction can increase students' motivation to learn, 13. % disagreed, indicating differing opinions on the topic. Those in the majority likely value the portability and variety of applications mobile phones provide, as well as the opportunities for social connection they enable, factors which may serve to make learning English a more engaging and convenient experience. However, some respondents also expressed concerns about potential distractions posed by mobile technology as well as inconsistencies in app quality, underscoring the importance of a thoughtful approach when implementing mobile devices in language learning classrooms to maximize their benefits and mitigate drawbacks.

Figure 7: The effectiveness of mobile phones in increasing students' comprehension

How effectively does the integration of mobile technology into EFL instruction facilitate your comprehension of English language concepts?

101 responses



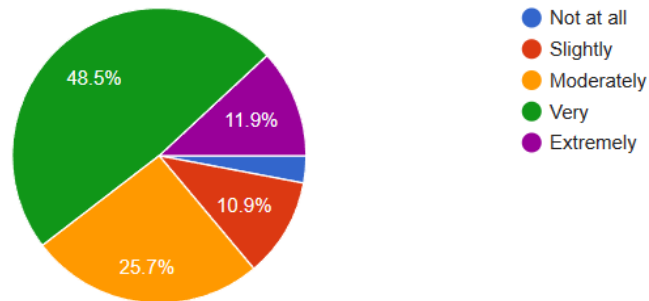
Source: Question Seven in the Survey

The vast majority of students (82%; $50 + 34 + 8 = 92$ replies) said that mobile technology helped them understand English ideas in a somewhat, very, or extremely effective way. This is a resounding confirmation of its potential as an educational resource. The responses point to a great deal of possibility for improving understanding in EFL classes with mobile technology. To maximize its advantages, it is still necessary to acknowledge and manage individual differences and make sure that integration is done properly.

Figure 8: Role of mobile phones in creating a more individualized learning environment

In your opinion, how effectively do mobile phones facilitate the creation of more inclusive and individualized learning environments for EFL students?

101 responses



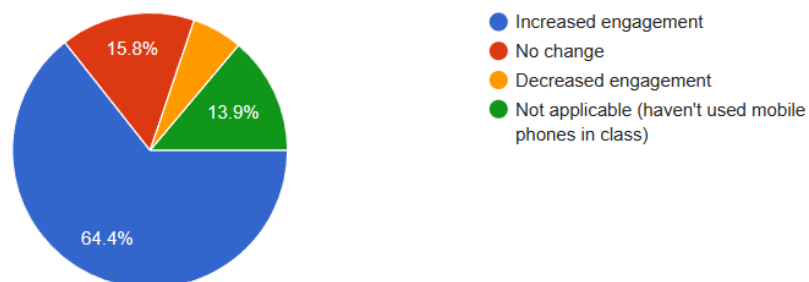
Source: Question Eight in the Survey

A remarkable 87% of students ($49 + 26 + 12 = 87$) believe that mobile phones are very, somewhat, or very good in promoting individuality and inclusivity. This is a strong recommendation of their ability to accommodate a range of demands and learning preferences. Even if most of the participants think mobile phones are useful, the fact that replies in all categories ("slightly" and "not at all") indicate that serious thought should be given to this. Individual experiences are probably shaped by individual characteristics including app selection, instructor implementation, and technological availability.

Figure 9: Role of mobile phones in creating a more individualized learning environment

10. In your opinion, how has the use of mobile phones in the EFL classroom influenced your engagement with the course material?

101 responses



Source: Question Nine in the Survey

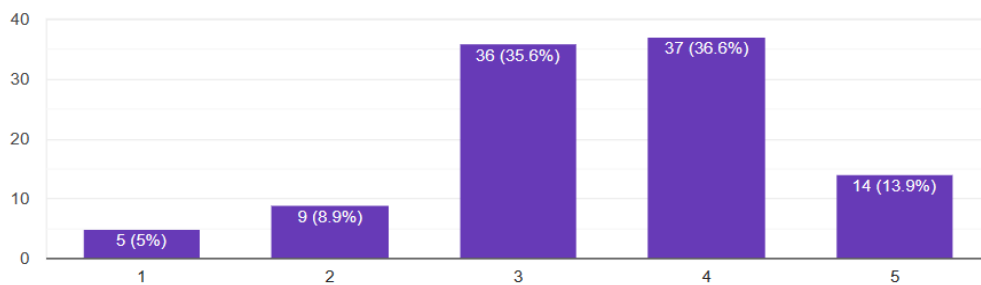
A clear majority (65 out of 101) of students reported increased engagement with the course material due to mobile phone use in the classroom. This is a strong indication that technology can be a powerful tool for enhancing learning in EFL settings. Sixteen students

reported no change in their level of involvement, indicating that mobile phones did not significantly improve or worsen their learning experience. Furthermore, fourteen students did not utilize them in class. A smaller group (6) reported decreased engagement due to mobile phone use. This highlights the potential drawbacks of technology and underlines the importance of proper implementation and student responsibility to maximize its benefits. According to the responses, mobile phone use in EFL classes has a lot of promise as a learning tool, even though it does not always result in more student involvement. Technology integration may be carefully considered to maximize its benefits and limit any possible negatives. This includes putting an emphasis on engaging activities and responsible student behavior.

Figure 10: The integration of mobile phones and students’ motivation

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest and 5 representing the highest, please assess your degree of motivation in EFL instruction environments where mobile technology is actively integrated.

101 responses



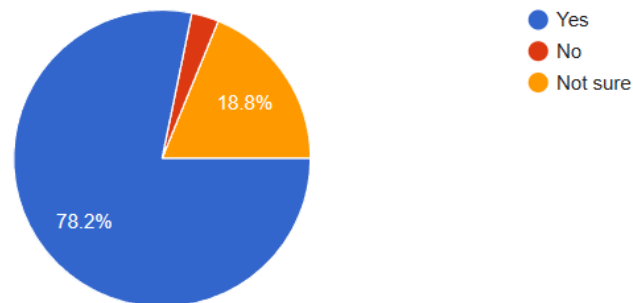
Source: Question Ten in the Survey

Neutral-leaning positive: Out of 61 individuals, 73 (36 + 37 + 14) evaluated their motivation as 3 or above, however this was not a clear majority. This shows that most students are not greatly demotivated by mobile technology, and in fact, it may even have a little beneficial effect on their engagement. The data is distributed with a moderate presence in the higher range (4-5) and a smaller group finding it less inspiring (1-2). The data tends towards the center (3). This suggests that different students have different perceptions of their level of usefulness of the integration of mobile phones in the classroom .

Figure 11: Views about the role of mobile phones in transforming learners’ experiences

With the rise of mobile technology, how do you envision its role in transforming the EFL learning experience and promoting increased student motivation?

101 responses



Source: Question Eleven in the Survey

The overwhelming majority of students—78 out of 100—believe that mobile technology may improve motivation and have a major influence on EFL learning experiences. This is a powerful recommendation for its possible application in the classroom. 19% said they were unsure or "not sure". This emphasizes the need for more research and conversation on how to use technology wisely, resolving any possible issues and optimizing its advantages. Regarding the revolutionary potential of mobile technology, 3% (3 out of 100) are dubious ("no"). To guarantee inclusive conversations and handle any negative effects, it would be beneficial to comprehend their worries and investigate other viewpoints. The data presents a positive picture of the possibilities of mobile technology in EFL instruction, but it is still important to acknowledge the differences in opinion and handle any possible issues. By implementing mobile technology thoughtfully, attending to individual needs, and encouraging open communication, educators may use it to change the EFL experience and inspire students in significant ways.

3.1 Further comments and insights about the use of mobile phones in the EFL class

The participants were asked to write any additional comments or suggestions regarding the use of mobile phones in EFL classrooms.

The responses were gathered and classified. Below, some shared attitudes are listed and quoted as they were received:

- The use of Mobile phones in EFL classrooms has positive and negative effect but at all I think that the positive side is more than negative one.
- I believe incorporating phones in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms would enhance the learning experience for students. Utilizing phones for

educational purposes in class not only helps us grasp the lesson effectively but also encourages independent study when used at home

- Mobile phones can be a convenient tool for students to access digital dictionaries and translation tools. Encourage students to use these resources responsibly and only when necessary to support their understanding of new vocabulary or complex language structures.
- If the use of mobile phone was in the purpose of learning it is a good thing and might increase the motivation of learning for the student, but if it is used for something else it is nothing but a distraction and a waste of time
- Using mobile phones in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms can be beneficial when incorporated thoughtfully. Here are some suggestions:
- Utilize Language Learning Apps: Integrate language learning apps that engage students and provide interactive exercises, vocabulary building, and grammar practice.
- Encourage Research and Collaboration: Encourage students to research English content online, collaborate on projects, or engage in discussions through messaging apps to enhance language skills.
- Set Clear Guidelines: Establish clear guidelines on when and how mobile phones can be used in class to minimize distractions and maintain a focused learning environment.
- Interactive Activities: Incorporate mobile phones into interactive activities like quizzes, polls, or language games to make learning more engaging.
- Digital Storytelling: Encourage students to create digital stories, record dialogues, or make presentations using their mobile devices to practice language skills in a creative way.
- Cultural Exploration: Use mobile phones to explore English-speaking cultures by watching videos, reading articles, or following social media accounts related to English-speaking countries.
- Tech Support: Provide technical support and guidance to students on using language-related apps or tools effectively for learning purposes.
- It is extremely helpful and useful especially if the student knows well how to use it and in what he uses it.
- The use of mobile phones in EFL classroom is better to improve learners' English skills.

- Using phones in EFL classrooms offers a lots of advantages students can access language learning apps for interactive exercises vocabulary building and pronunciation practice. They can also explore online resources like e-books, articles, podcasts, and videos to improve their listening and reading skills.
- Integrating mobile phones in EFL classrooms can enhance learning through interactive language apps, virtual language exchanges, and multimedia resources. However, it's crucial to establish clear guidelines to minimize distractions and ensure focused language acquisition. Teachers should leverage the technology to create engaging and purposeful activities, fostering a balanced and effective learning environment.
- The use of mobile phone in EFL classroom can help student get more knowledge , but that is not useful always , and the practice with the teacher still the efficient way to learn.

4. Conclusion:

This research aimed to investigate the role of integrating of mobile phones in the EFL classroom to enhance the learning outcomes. The study was based on a survey which targeted EFL students as a means of data collection. The responses of the participants were described with reference to the main questions of the research to reach useful conclusions. After the description and the discussion of the results of the research, the findings can summarized by the following:

The majority of the participants believe that mobile phones have a significant positive impact on their learning experience making it more enjoyable and effective.

Mobile phones can be used in a variety of ways to enhance the learning process, including dictionaries, writing, and others.

The use of mobile phones in the classroom can increase the motivation of learners, as they feel more comfortable.

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