

## **The Google Classroom mobile application as a learning tool in English language teaching for pre-service teachers**

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### **1. Abstract**

The smart phone has become a ubiquitously used item among young student teachers today and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has emerged as a potential tool in the instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The use of mobile applications has become a learning tool which makes the teaching process efficient and more convenient. Out of all mobile applications, Google Classroom provides much room to enrich the learning and teaching process through an enhanced involvement of both the lecturer and the student teachers. This paves the way for student teachers to improve their writing skills through error correction activities and film reviews. This research intends to examine the effectiveness of using a mobile application to improve student teachers' writing skills. For this experimental study fifty English student teachers were selected, and they were divided equally into an experimental group and a controlled group. A pre-test and a post-test were given, and mobile phone were used for the intervention process. The experimental group was given a number of activities through the Google Classroom App both inside and outside the classroom while the controlled group was taught using the pen and paper approach. At the end of the six months, both groups were given the same post-test. A comparative analysis of the results revealed that the experimental group had outperformed the controlled group. This provides evidence of the Google Classroom mobile app as a useful and effective tool in improving the writing skills of student teachers.

### **2. Sub-theme**

This paper belongs to the Digital Trends sub-theme. The effectiveness of the Google Classroom mobile application as a tool in teaching English and the effective usage of the app in error correction will be discussed.

### **3. Story**

The 21st century teacher looks forward to a future of integrating technology in teaching. As Huwang states, "Information and communication technology applications enhance the learning teaching process by providing it a suitable platform through the integration of many tools and make it more learner friendly and effective. Out of these tools the use of mobile phones is ubiquitous." (Huwang et al. 2010). Student teachers often can be seen using their smart phones aimlessly. Therefore, the study aimed at getting them to use their smart phones for academic purposes. Accordingly the Google

Classroom app and its function was introduced to get them involved in the learning and teaching process in a meaningful way. In addition, the provision of stationery for all the students is costly. In such a context the mobile app Google Classroom was introduced to fill this gap. As Azhar and Iqbal argue, "Google Classroom is a tool that is free of cost and has gained popularity within a short span of time" (Azhar K.A., Iqbal N., 2018) and it facilitates collaborative learning.

### **Significance of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of the Google Classroom app as a tool for error correction. The student teachers of English need to improve their accuracy both in speaking and writing in order to be fully fledged English teachers. They should be given more exercises on error correction and writing. Therefore, the study used this app to send study materials, exercises and assessments to them. Then a blended learning process was implemented in which the students were given the opportunity to study the materials sent, do the activities and come prepared for class discussions. The study aimed to measure the effectiveness of Google Classroom app on the students' learning process.

### **Objectives**

- To enable the student teachers to use the Google Classroom App
- To identify common errors made by them in writing
- To improve their writing skill minimizing language errors.

### **Methodology**

First year student teachers of two classes (50 students) were taken as the sample, that included two males and 48 females by using the purposive sampling method. The research procedure was conducted on the experimental basis. The target group was divided as the controlled group and the experimental group. Both groups were given a pre-test on error correction. The experimental group was given lessons, exercises and assessments using the Google Classroom app and were given opportunities to do film reviews and free writing activities through this app. The controlled group was allowed to continue their learning as usual with paper and pen. The achievement level of each group was evaluated through a post-test (an error correction activity). Then the improvement of each group was separately analysed according to their pre-test and post-test scores.

### **Findings**

Apart from the marks gained for the pre-test and the post-test, an oral feedback session was administered to the experimental group to explore the effectiveness of the mobile app. According to the participants, none of them had used this app before and they all agreed that it was an ideal platform for adult learners to improve their writing skills. They all agreed that they had improved not only their writing skill but also their handling of new technology. It had also enabled them to work in an interesting environment collaboratively with their colleagues.

The findings of the research revealed that the usage of the mobile learning app, Google Classroom for adult learners was a very effective learning teaching method. It improved not only their grammar knowledge and writing skills but also their technological skills. Frequent usage of this app enabled the student teachers to engage in the activities and exercises online outside the classroom during their free time at their own pace. It was very clear that the students who used this app had

improved their skill of writing by avoiding the frequent errors they used to make. The familiarity of this app grew over time which was a barrier for some of the students at their initial stage. Since two groups of students were selected, a comparison could easily be done to demonstrate the effectiveness of Google Classroom app over traditional teaching.

### 3. Lessons and/or recommendations

The study proposes several recommendations for the teachers and the lecturers who use this app with the students in their learning and teaching process. Google Classroom is a free tool that can be used in any tertiary level educational institute that doesn't have enough resources to develop its own Learning Management System (LMS). A number of writing activities also can be conducted, and the individual feedback can be given to students. Google Classroom is a very effective interface to improve the writing skills of the students since they can be involved in a variety of activities. It has a number of facilities to enhance the knowledge of the students. The teacher can schedule a writing activity and can give marks and comments on the progress of the work. It reduces the paperwork for the students and helps in enhancing both student-student interaction and student teacher interaction. Using this app promotes student centred, autonomous learning which cannot be expected in using the traditional jug and mug method.

### 4. References

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