

# Unveiling the Success of an Indonesian Self-Taught English Learner: A Case Study in Mobile Technology-Mediated Autonomous Language Learning

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the case of an Indonesian English learner who increased her linguistic proficiency through the self-taught use of mobile applications and identifies insights into the potential of mobile technology for autonomous language learning. Employing an instrumental case study approach, this qualitative research explores the strategies and features within mobile applications that were most effective in fostering self-taught language learning and developing communicative skills. The subject of the case study was an undergraduate teacher-trainee majoring in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) who demonstrated an exceptionally high increase in proficiency in English acquired independently using mobile applications over a three-year period. Data was collected through in-depth interviews to provide details of the subject's language learning journey. Thematic analysis revealed that a combination of interactive communication practices, immersive learning environments, social learning, motivation, and consistent practice were pivotal in enhancing the increase in the subject's language proficiency. Language input from Fondi's virtual spaces (Plaza, Lounge, and Bar) and a variety of English-language media significantly improved comprehension and fluency in speaking and listening. The study highlights the importance of incorporating interactive and gamified elements, real-time feedback, and personalized learning experiences via mobile language learning apps. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies and include diverse learner populations to expand the applicability of these findings. The insights from this study lay a foundation for further innovation and research, aiming to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of autonomous language learning technologies.

**Keywords:** *Mobile Technology; Autonomous Language Learning*

## INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by unprecedented technological advancements, the integration of mobile technology in education has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping traditional approaches to language learning (Chen & Liu, 2018). Foreign language acquisition, too, has witnessed a paradigm shift, with learners increasingly adopting autonomous strategies facilitated by their mobile devices (Stockwell, 2021). In tandem with the surge in technological integration in formal education, mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has garnered significant attention for its potential to enhance language acquisition (Godwin-Jones, 2011). MALL encompasses a diverse range of applications, including language learning apps, interactive multimedia resources, and online platforms which are all accessible through mobile devices (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008).

Current research focuses on the impact of open educational sources, including online platforms, on language learning and underscores the potential of online sources in fostering autonomous learning (Suryatiningsih, 2019). Additionally, a study by (Kim & Kwon, 2012) explores the use of mobile applications for language learning, emphasizing the flexibility and individualization that mobile platforms offer to learners.

Furthermore, the concept of personalized language learning experiences is echoed in the work of (Murray, 2014). The research describes how learners accessing online platforms and multimedia sources can tailor their learning environments to match their preferences and learning styles. These

*International Conference on Learning Community (ICLC)*

studies collectively affirm that mobile applications, online platforms, and multimedia content contribute significantly to the trend of personalized and self-directed language learning.

During a classroom observation for a research project at an Indonesian university, I encountered an undergraduate student whose English proficiency exceeded that of her peers. Intrigued by her advanced skills, I discovered that she had embarked on a personal journey of independent language learning using mobile apps as an 11th-grade secondary school student. This case study delves into her journey, exploring how mobile technology empowered her to increase fluency in English. It seeks to identify the specific teaching strategies embedded within these apps that were most effective. Understanding these strategies can improve the design and development of future mobile language learning tools to maximize their effectiveness for use by self-directed learners. Furthermore, the study explores which features within the applications proved most beneficial in developing the subject's communicative skills. This exploration can shed light on the specific functionalities that best support the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities in a mobile learning environment. This research seeks to address two key issues: (1) Through examination of the subject's experience, this study aims to contribute insights into the potential of mobile technology for autonomous language learning, and (2) to offer findings that will benefit not only educators seeking to integrate mobile tools into their teaching practices, but also independent learners seeking effective strategies to achieve their personal language goals.

### **Autonomous language learning**

Autonomous language learning, grounded in the principles of learner independence and self-regulation, has gained significant attention in the field of educational research. Henri Holec (1981), often regarded as the pioneer of the concept, defines learner autonomy as the ability to take charge of one's own learning. Instead of being a passive reception of knowledge, this type of learning actively engages in setting learning goals, selecting learning methods, and evaluating progress. This entails not just a passive reception of knowledge but an active engagement in setting learning goals, selecting learning methods, and evaluating progress. Holec's research laid the groundwork for understanding how learners can develop autonomy by emphasizing the shift from teacher-led instruction to learner-centered practices.

David Little (1991) elaborates on the concept by introducing the dimensions of self-direction and intrinsic motivation. According to Little, autonomous learners are those who take responsibility for their learning, a process that involves making informed decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and the pace at which to learn. This perspective underscores the importance of intrinsic motivation, where learners are driven by internal rewards and personal satisfaction rather than external pressures or grades. Little's contribution highlights that autonomy is not merely a set of skills but a learner's overall attitude towards learning, which is crucial for sustaining long-term engagement and success in language acquisition.

### **Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)**

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), a subset of mobile learning (m-learning), leverages the capabilities of mobile devices to enhance language acquisition (Banan, 2020). In the context of MALL, the theoretical foundations of autonomy become particularly relevant. MALL leverages the flexibility and accessibility of mobile devices to support autonomous learning. Jo Shan Fu (2021) discuss how mobile technology can facilitate learner autonomy by providing tools that enable self-paced, individualized learning experiences. These tools often include language learning apps, podcasts, and interactive media that allow learners to practice language skills anytime and anywhere, thus fostering a self-directed learning environment. Holec (1981) states that the convergence of mobile technology and autonomous learning principles creates opportunities for learners to take full control of their language learning journeys. Furthermore, Yan & Singh, (2023) argue that mobile devices facilitate situated learning, where learners can practice language skills in authentic contexts. This is particularly beneficial for language learners, as it allows them to apply what they have learned in real-world situations, thus bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. The portability and connectivity of mobile devices enable learners to engage with language learning materials anytime and anywhere, making learning a more integrated and continuous process.

## Empirical studies on autonomous English learners

Empirical studies reveal diverse and promising outcomes for self-taught English learners utilizing mobile technology. For instance, Zhang & Pérez-Paredes (2024) examined the autonomous use of mobile apps among Chinese EFL learners, reporting significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. Their study highlights how mobile apps, with features like spaced repetition and context-based vocabulary learning, help learners retain and apply new words more effectively. The flexibility of mobile learning allows learners to engage in short, frequent study sessions, which has been shown to enhance memory retention and language proficiency. Similarly, Almekhlafy & Alzubi (2016) explore the integration of MALL in informal learning contexts, noting the benefits of mobile tools in fostering communicative competence and practical language use. Their research indicates that learners who use mobile devices to access language learning sources, such as interactive exercises, podcasts, and language exchange platforms, develop better speaking and listening skills. The immediacy and accessibility of mobile learning tools enable learners to practice real-life language use, thus bridging the gap between classroom learning and everyday communication.

Additional studies further underscore the effectiveness of MALL for autonomous language learning. For example, Sung, et al., (2015) investigate the impact of mobile-based collaborative learning on EFL students' language skills. Their findings suggest that collaborative learning facilitated by mobile devices enhances learners' speaking and writing abilities through peer interaction and feedback. The study also notes that mobile technology supports synchronous and asynchronous communication, providing learners with various opportunities to practice and refine their language skills.

Another notable study by Burston (2014) reviews the effectiveness of mobile language learning applications across different contexts. Burston's meta-analysis reveals that mobile learning applications consistently lead to positive learning outcomes, particularly in vocabulary and grammar acquisition. The study emphasizes that the success of MALL is largely attributed to its interactive and engaging nature, which motivates learners to invest more time in language practice. Additionally, the personalized feedback and adaptive learning paths offered by many mobile applications contribute to more efficient and targeted learning.

## Challenges in mobile technology-mediated autonomous language learning

Despite the promising potential of Mobile Technology-Mediated Language Learning (MTMLL), several challenges persist that can hinder its effectiveness. One significant issue highlighted by Godwin-Jones (2011) is digital literacy. Many learners may lack the necessary skills to effectively navigate and utilize mobile learning apps and resources. This gap can prevent learners from fully benefiting from the available technologies. Digital literacy encompasses not only the ability to operate mobile devices but also the critical skills needed to evaluate and select appropriate learning materials, manage digital content, and engage in online communities.

Access to high-quality content is another critical challenge. While there is an abundance of language learning apps and resources available, the quality of these materials can vary significantly. Godwin-Jones (2011) emphasizes the importance of curating reliable and pedagogically sound content. Learners often struggle to identify which sources are credible and effective, which can lead to wasted time and effort on suboptimal materials. This challenge underscores the need for better guidance and support in selecting high-quality language learning tools and sources.

Effective scaffolding is also crucial in supporting autonomous learners. Lai (2015) notes that without proper scaffolding, learners may find it difficult to maintain motivation and self-discipline. Structured guidance helps learners set realistic goals, monitor their progress, and stay motivated. In the absence of teacher support, learners might struggle with self-regulation, leading to inconsistent learning efforts and potential dropout. Additionally, the lack of immediate feedback in some mobile learning environments can hinder learners' ability to correct mistakes and improve their skills in a timely manner.

Moreover, environmental factors can also pose significant challenges. For instance, Ally (2009) points out that the physical and social environment of the learner can affect their engagement with mobile learning. Distractions and interruptions in a learner's surroundings can disrupt the learning process, while a lack of a supportive learning community can lead to feelings of isolation. This highlights the need for learners to establish conducive learning environments and seek out supportive online communities or study groups.

Technical issues represent another layer of challenges in MTMLL. Burston (2014) identifies technical difficulties such as connectivity problems, software compatibility issues, and device limitations as common obstacles. These technical barriers can frustrate learners and impede their progress. Ensuring that learners have access to reliable technology and technical support is essential for the smooth functioning of mobile learning.

Lastly, the cost of mobile devices and applications can be a barrier for some learners. Although many language learning apps offer free versions, advanced features often come at a cost. This can limit access for learners who are unable to afford these resources. To address this, educational institutions and policymakers need to consider strategies for providing equitable access to high-quality mobile learning tools (OECD, 2016).

## RESEARCH METHODS

The present study delves into the success story of an Indonesian self-taught English learner who leveraged mobile technology to achieve linguistic proficiency. This case provides a vivid illustration of the theoretical and empirical insights discussed earlier, offering practical implications for learners and educators alike. By examining this learner's journey, we can gain a deeper understanding of the key factors that contribute to successful autonomous language learning through mobile technology. An instrumental case study is a qualitative research approach that focuses on understanding a specific phenomenon within its real-life context, providing an in-depth exploration of the intricacies surrounding the chosen case (Stake, 2005). In the context of this study, the chosen phenomenon is the impact of mobile applications on English proficiency, specifically examining the language learning journey of a standout student. An instrumental case study is particularly apt when the researcher aims to gain insights into the dynamics of a specific situation or phenomenon, allowing for a thorough examination of the variables and factors influencing the case at hand (Yin, 2018). This design provides a holistic view of the phenomenon within its natural setting, offering rich and context-specific data that can contribute to a nuanced understanding of the impact of mobile applications on language learning.

### Participant selection

The single individual selected for this study underwent purposeful sampling, chosen deliberately due to her remarkable English proficiency achieved independently using mobile applications. Purposeful sampling is a non-random sampling technique used in qualitative research to deliberately select participants who possess specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research focus (Palinkas, et al., 2015). In this instrumental case study, the standout student was purposefully selected due to her exceptional English proficiency, acquired independently using mobile applications. This intentional selection aligns with the research objective of understanding the impact of mobile applications on language learning and English proficiency. An undergraduate in her second year, she is an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher-trainee at one of Indonesia's universities. What makes her particularly compelling for this research is her journey of starting to learn English from scratch independently, solely utilizing online platforms on her mobile device. Her sustained engagement in this mobile-assisted language learning approach spans the past three years, starting from 11th-grade in secondary school, offering a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the long-term impact of mobile app usage in language acquisition.

### Data collection

In-depth interviews serve as a primary data collection method for this study, allowing for a detailed exploration of the standout student's language learning journey, with a specific focus on the role of mobile applications and their perceived impact on English proficiency. In-depth interviews are a qualitative research method that enables a comprehensive understanding of an individual's experiences, attitudes, and perspectives (Patton, 2015). The choice of in-depth interviews aligns with the qualitative nature of the research, aiming to delve deeply into the subject's unique narrative and insights. Through open-ended questions, the researcher can explore the standout student's motivations, challenges, and strategies in utilizing mobile applications for language learning. Probing into specific instances, preferences, and transformative moments provides a nuanced understanding of the subject's language acquisition journey.

During data collection, the researcher prioritized ethical considerations to protect the well-being of the subject, as highlighted by Creswell and Creswell (2018). Adhering to the guidelines set by the research ethics committee of the Language Pedagogy and English Applied Linguistics PhD Programme at Eötvös Loránd University, the researcher ensured compliance with institutional ethical standards. The subject was fully informed about her rights in voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality, consistent with Creswell and Creswell's (2018) principles. Explicit instructions on the consent form clarified that participation was voluntary and that the subject could choose not to partake in the study (p. 171).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the analysis process, a thematic approach was employed to scrutinize the rich data embedded in the in-depth interview transcripts, following the methodology outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The aim was to identify recurrent themes that encapsulate the subject's experiences, practices, and preferences regarding language learning through mobile applications. Based on the in-depth interview, the following results were observed:

### Interactive communication practice

Engaging in real-time conversations emerged as a highly effective strategy for fostering language learning, as highlighted by the subject. This strategy leveraged specific features within the Fondi app, a metaverse platform that provides digital experiences mimicking or complementing the real world. The app provides different virtual spaces, such as a Plaza for connecting with English learners worldwide, a Lounge for private discussions, and a Bar for one-on-one interactions, which are designed to enhance speaking and listening skills. These features enabled the subject to engage in real-life conversations with other users and receive real-time feedback, thus improving her fluency and confidence. The subject utilized this application for up to five hours daily, which allowed her to practice various conversation scenarios and reinforce her understanding of common conversation patterns. As she said:

“The interactive features really improved my communication skills. For example, the live chat in English helped me practice real-life conversations and get real-time corrections, which boosted my confidence and fluency. The interactive dialogue also helped me practice and reinforce conversation patterns in different scenarios.”

By providing opportunities for spontaneous interaction, these features created a dynamic learning environment where the subject could actively engage in speaking and listening practice. In addition, the live chat function allowed the subject to converse with native speakers and other learners in real-time, offering an immediate and authentic communication experience. This spontaneous interaction was crucial in enhancing her speaking skills, as it required her to think and respond quickly, much like real-life conversations.

This approach to language learning is supported by existing research, which underscores the importance of interactive practice in developing communicative abilities. Studies by Saito and Akiyama (2017) have shown that engaging in real-time conversations significantly improves both speaking and listening skills, providing learners with the opportunity to apply their language knowledge in practical, everyday contexts. Similarly, Lee (2008) found that interactive communication helps learners develop better fluency and comprehension, as it closely mimics the natural flow of conversation.

The effectiveness of real-time engagement in language acquisition is further affirmed by the subject's experiences. Through regular use of these interactive features, she was able to improve her fluency and confidence in English. The immediate feedback received during these conversations also played a crucial role, as it allowed her to correct mistakes and refine her language use in real-time. This iterative process of practice and feedback is essential in language learning, as it helps solidify understanding and improve accuracy.

“In this app, I get feedback indirectly from my online friends. When we chat, they sometimes correct my English mistakes. This way, I can learn from my errors.”

In addition, the sense of immediacy and authenticity provided by real-time conversations helps learners stay motivated and engaged. Unlike traditional language learning methods that may feel static and detached from real-world use, interactive communication offers a vibrant and engaging way to learn, making the process more enjoyable and effective. This alignment with real-world communication scenarios not only enhances language proficiency but also builds learners' confidence to use the language in various contexts.

### **Immersive learning environment**

Surrounding oneself with the language through multimedia content was another key strategy identified in the subject's language learning process. The subject utilized a variety of English-language media, including videos, podcasts, movies, songs, and vlogs, to create a rich and immersive learning environment. The subject mentioned that she watched a lot of English videos to immerse herself in the language, which helped her become more familiar with it and improved her overall comprehension and fluency.

“In general, I surround myself with English as much as possible. I try to find friends to practice with. Since it is difficult to find a partner in real life, I look for friends online. I also watch videos and other content like podcasts, movies, songs, and vlogs to become more familiar with the language.”

“...I also learn English by watching content in English. I watch a lot of English videos to immerse myself in the language.”

This approach is well-supported by Vandergrift and Goh (2012) argue that regular exposure to the target language aids in developing comprehension skills and cultural understanding. The subject's method of using diverse multimedia content aligns with these theories, as it provided her with a wide range of linguistic and cultural contexts. This exposure not only improved her listening and comprehension skills but also helped her understand the cultural nuances and idiomatic expressions of the English language, making her communication more authentic and natural.

The use of multimedia content also offered the subject a flexible and engaging way to learn. Unlike traditional language learning methods that can be rigid and monotonous, multimedia resources are dynamic and can be tailored to the learner's interests and preferences. This variety kept the subject motivated and engaged, making the learning process more enjoyable. For instance, by watching English movies and listening to English songs, she could learn new vocabulary and phrases in a context that was both entertaining and educational.

“When learning English with mobile apps, I look for ones that are fun to use. I don't really like apps that only focus on studying. I want to learn English while having fun. That's why I found some apps that let me talk to people from different regions. This way, I don't get bored easily and keep learning.”

The subject's immersion in the language through multimedia content provided her with numerous opportunities to practice listening skills, which are crucial for language acquisition. Listening to podcasts and watching vlogs allowed her to hear native speakers in different contexts and with various accents, thereby enhancing her ability to understand spoken English in real-life situations. This practice is essential for developing the ability to process and comprehend spoken language quickly and accurately.

### **Social learning and peer interaction**

The strategy of making friends through the app and engaging in regular conversations with them played a crucial role in the subject's language learning journey. Fondi's features like Plaza, Lounge, and Bar facilitated these interactions, providing both motivation and practical speaking opportunities. These features created a virtual space where the subject could connect with others who shared her goal of learning English, enabling her to practice speaking in a supportive and interactive environment.

“The feature that really helped me was Plaza. In this feature, I can find many people who are also learning English like me. This way, I can practice with them and make new connections.”

The significance of social learning in language acquisition is well-documented in educational theories, particularly in Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of social constructivism. Vygotsky posited that learning is fundamentally a social process, and knowledge is constructed through interaction and collaboration with others. This approach emphasizes the importance of social context and the role of more knowledgeable others (peers, teachers, or native speakers) in facilitating learning. The subject’s engagement with peers through the app’s social features underscores the importance of collaborative learning environments, which foster language development through meaningful social interactions.

By using the Plaza, Lounge, and Bar features, the subject was able to engage in a variety of communicative activities that mimicked real-life interactions. These virtual spaces allowed her to practice speaking in different contexts, ranging from casual chats to more structured dialogues. This variety of interactions not only helped her improve her speaking and listening skills but also enabled her to gain confidence in using English in diverse situations.

“The live chat helped me improve my fluency and confidence by letting me practice different conversation scenarios.”

“In these features, I don’t have to show my face and talk face to face, so I feel more confident to chat and keep learning English consistently.”

The collaborative aspect of these social features aligns with the findings of numerous studies on language learning. For instance, Swain (2000) emphasized the role of collaborative dialogue in language learning, where learners co-construct linguistic knowledge through interaction. This process helps learners notice gaps in their language use and provides opportunities for immediate feedback and correction, which are essential for language development. The subject’s experience of receiving real-time feedback from her peers during conversations highlights the effectiveness of this approach.

Furthermore, the motivational aspect of social learning cannot be overlooked. The subject mentioned that making friends through the app kept her motivated and excited about learning English. This aligns with Deci and Ryan’s (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which posits that social connections and a sense of belonging can enhance intrinsic motivation. By building relationships with fellow learners, the subject found a source of encouragement and support that sustained her engagement in the language learning process.

In addition to motivation, the social features of the app provided a practical context for language use. Engaging in regular conversations with peers helped the subject develop fluency and accuracy in speaking. This practical application of language skills is crucial, as it allows learners to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life situations, thereby solidifying their understanding and competence. Lantolf and Thorne (2006) also highlight the importance of sociocultural theory in language learning, which emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in the development of language proficiency.

## Motivation and enjoyment

Using enjoyable and engaging apps was a key strategy for maintaining motivation in language learning, as highlighted by the subject. The subject specifically mentioned the Fondi app, which incorporates gamified elements such as creating a personalized avatar to represent oneself in the virtual space. By using this avatar, the subject was able to engage in conversations on interesting topics, making the learning process enjoyable. This enjoyment transformed language learning from a daunting task into an enjoyable activity, thereby fostering sustained engagement and progress.

“I like the Fondi app because it has gamified elements. I created an avatar to represent myself in the virtual space, and I engaged myself by talking about interesting topics with others.”

The role of motivation in language learning is extensively supported by research. Dörnyei (2001) posits that motivation is one of the most critical factors in the success of language learners. His

work outlines various dimensions of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, integrative and instrumental motivation, and the influence of learner beliefs and attitudes. In the case of the subject, intrinsic motivation was particularly evident, as she derived enjoyment and satisfaction from using the language learning apps. The gamified elements and engaging interface of the apps provided a sense of achievement and fun, which are crucial components of intrinsic motivation.

Ushioda (2011) further emphasizes the importance of affective factors in sustaining language learning efforts. She argues that learners who enjoy the learning process and find it intrinsically rewarding are more likely to persist in their studies and achieve higher levels of proficiency. The subject's experience aligns with this perspective, as the enjoyable and engaging nature of the apps helped her stay motivated over time. The elements of fun and engagement acted as catalysts, turning language practice into a rewarding activity rather than a chore.

“Meeting many great people online motivates me to be like them, and the first step I need to take is to become fluent in English.”

Moreover, the engaging interface of the apps contributed to the subject's positive learning experience. User-friendly and visually appealing designs can significantly impact learners' attitudes towards the learning tool. According to Pandita & Kiran (2023) an engaging and well-designed interface can enhance user satisfaction and willingness to use the technology, thereby promoting consistent and effective learning. The subject noted that the intuitive and attractive design of the apps made it easier for her to navigate and access various learning activities, enhancing her overall learning experience.

The subject's emphasis on motivation and enjoyment also aligns with Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which highlights the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation. By choosing apps that she found enjoyable and engaging, the subject exercised autonomy in her learning process, selected activities that matched her interests, and engaged in a supportive learning community. These factors collectively contributed to her sustained motivation and success in language learning.

### Consistent practice

Regular use of the app and integrating practice into daily routines was essential for consistent language learning. The participant's dedication to using the app consistently underscores the importance of frequency and regularity in language acquisition. This approach is facilitated by features that ensure ease of access and a user-friendly design, making it convenient for the learner to engage with the app daily.

“I use the Fondi app almost every day for about five hours. I never get bored because in the virtual space, I always find interesting people to talk with.”

The subject's commitment to using the app regularly highlights a key principle in language learning: the significance of consistent practice. Consistent engagement with language learning materials helps reinforce newly acquired skills and knowledge, facilitating long-term retention and mastery. The subject's strategy of integrating practice into her daily routine ensured that language learning became a habitual part of her day, leading to sustained progress over time.

Research by Al-Zoubi (2018) supports the critical role of frequent exposure and practice in language acquisition, meaning regular practice is essential for the internalization of linguistic structures and the development of automaticity in language use. By engaging with the app daily, the subject was able to continually reinforce her language skills, leading to improved fluency and accuracy. This consistent practice also helped maintain her motivation, as she could see incremental progress and improvement over time.

Januarty (2018) further emphasize the importance of extensive and regular practice in developing language proficiency. Her research highlights that frequent exposure to the target language is necessary for learners to develop a deep understanding and intuitive use of the language. The subject's use of the app on a daily basis provided her with ongoing opportunities to practice and refine her skills, contributing to her overall language development.



The ease of access and user-friendly design of the app played a significant role in facilitating consistent practice. A well-designed app that is easy to navigate encourages regular use by reducing barriers to engagement. The subject found the app's interface intuitive and straightforward, which made it easier for her to incorporate language practice into her daily routine. This aligns with findings by Pandita & Kiran (2023), who suggest that user satisfaction and willingness to engage with educational technology are greatly influenced by the design and usability of the interface.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings from this study underscore the significant impact of mobile applications in fostering autonomous language learning, particularly through interactive communication, immersive learning environments, social learning, motivation, and consistent practice. The thematic analysis of in-depth interviews reveals that these strategies and features were instrumental in developing the subject's communicative skills and overall language proficiency.

Interactive communication practice, facilitated by Fondi's virtual spaces like Plaza, Lounge, and Bar, was highly effective in enhancing speaking and listening skills. The subject's fluency and confidence improved through immediate feedback and spontaneous interactions, aligning with existing research that highlights the importance of interactive practice. Additionally, the use of a variety of English-language media, including videos, podcasts, movies, songs, and vlogs, created a rich, immersive environment that significantly improved the subject's comprehension and fluency. This strategy is supported by literature emphasizing the benefits of regular exposure to the target language.

Social learning and peer interaction, facilitated by features like Plaza, Lounge, and Bar, provided motivation and practical speaking opportunities. The subject's engagement with peers underscores the value of social constructivist approaches in language learning, where collaborative environments foster language development through meaningful interactions. Moreover, the use of enjoyable and engaging apps, particularly those with gamified elements like personalized avatars, maintained the subject's motivation. This intrinsic motivation, driven by enjoyable learning experiences, is crucial for sustained engagement and progress.

Regular use of the app and integrating language practice into daily routines was essential for consistent learning. The subject's dedication to daily practice highlights the importance of frequency and regularity in language acquisition, supported by research emphasizing the need for extensive and regular practice.

Based on these findings, several prospects for the development of research results and future applications are identified. Future development of language learning apps should focus on incorporating more interactive and gamified elements that provide real-time feedback and create engaging learning experiences. Personalized learning experiences, driven by AI-driven adaptive learning technologies, can maximize the effectiveness of language acquisition by tailoring content and practice scenarios to individual learner needs. Additionally, creating more robust collaborative learning platforms within apps can enhance social learning opportunities, supporting language development through meaningful interactions.

Future research should conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of using mobile applications for language learning, providing deeper insights into the sustained impact of these tools. Expanding research to include diverse populations of learners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can help identify the broader applicability of these strategies and features, informing the development of more inclusive and effective language learning tools. The insights gained from this study provide a foundation for further innovation and research in this field, aiming to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of autonomous language learning technologies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Éva Szabó, my supervisor at Eötvös Loránd University, for her invaluable assistance in refining this article. Her guidance and insights have been instrumental in its improvement.

Furthermore, I also extend my gratitude to the organizers of ICLC 2024 for providing me with the opportunity to present this article at the International Conference on Learning Community, 'ICLC' 2024. It is an honor to contribute to such a prestigious platform dedicated to advancing educational research.

*Proofread for the use of English by Mr. Randall Martin, native English speaker, former lecturer at the American University in Cairo, Egypt.*

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