Attitude and Motivation of Undergraduate Students for App-Based Language Learning of ESL Learners of Howrah District of West Bengal, India: A Sociolinguistic Study

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Abstract

From the dawn of civilization, humanity's social evolution has been driven by the need for communication and collective survival. Language, originating from primitive gestures and symbols, gradually developed into complex linguistic systems, enabling the articulation of abstract thought and emotional expression. Among the world's diverse languages, English has emerged as a dominant global medium—renowned for its expressive power, vast literary heritage, and pivotal role in education and professional advancement. In multilingual nations such as India, English continues to exert significant sociolinguistic and economic influence, serving as a gateway to higher employment prospects, mobility, and social prestige. Yet, a paradox persists: despite centuries of English education and its institutionalized presence since the colonial era, many learners in India remain hesitant and underconfident in their communicative competence. This paper seeks to explore whether enhancing pedagogical standards through Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) applications can bridge this gap by offering flexible, learner-centred, and context-aware learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom. Through a sociolinguistic analysis of data collected from four undergraduate students in the Howrah district of West Bengal, the study examines learners' adaptability and openness toward ubiquitous mobile-based learning. The research aims to assess whether MALL can effectively foster autonomy, motivation, and proficiency in English language learning by integrating digital mobility with real-world linguistic contexts. In doing so, it contributes to the ongoing discourse on reimagining English language pedagogy in technologically mediated environments, emphasizing the transformative potential of mobile learning in contemporary higher education.