Usage of Mobile Applications as a Resource in Teaching Phrasal Verbs

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Popularity of the usage of smartphones is widely observed among young undergraduates, who are increasingly dependent on these devices (Yu, 2012). Although commonly used in written and oral discourses, phrasal verbs are often omitted if their correct usage poses a hurdle to the English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. As a substitute for the use of phrasal verbs, ESL learners tend to use single word units (Imrose, 2013). This negligence of the use of phrasal verbs is surmised as an issue in the ESL teaching/ learning process. Thus, utilising the omnipresent smart devices, this research aims at promoting a novel method to determine the effectiveness of teaching phrasal verbs by the use of one of the popular mobile applications designed for communication. Thirty undergraduates were selected for this experimental study. Pre- and post-tests consisting of 40 commonly used phrasal verbs in a study carried by Liu (2011) based on two corpora – The Corpus of Contemporary American English and The British National Corpus were conducted. The first test was given without any instructions on the phrasal verbs and the post test was carried out after instructions. The experimental group comprising 50 per cent of the selected undergraduates were instructed in phrasal verbs using the selected mobile application throughout a period of eight days while the controlled group was given traditional classroom instructions within one hour. A comparative analysis of the results of both tests revealed that the experimental group outperformed in the post test than the controlled group highlighting the use of mobile applications in the English Language Teaching (ELT) process as an effective recourse in the teaching/ learning process of phrasal verbs.

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