Best Practices in Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

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Outcome:

To identify the best practices for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning design, delivery, outcomes, and learning experience.
Select Benefits of MALL 1/2

• Communication support (all four language skills)
• Multimedia support
• Portability
• Access to language resources, supports, scaffolding
• Access to mentors, tutors and others learners
• Spaced learning in smaller chunks
• Situated language practice
Select Benefits of MALL 2/2

• Creativity, fun, engagement
• Rehearsal and practice - less threatening environment
• Student-centred and personalized learning
• Capturing of data, record of learning processes
• Language assessment tools
• Language games
• Scaffolds for group language activities
MALL: Built-in Tools

- E-mail
- Web browser
- Audio and video player
- Voice recorder
- Camera – photo and video recording
- Notes
- SMS/texting
- GPS
Built-in Tools and Their Application

- **Audio and video player**
  - podcasts
  - audiobooks
  - YouTube videos

- **Voice recorder (Voice Memos, Record)**
  - record and share speech sample
  - record parts of the class – replay, rehearse
  - create mini-stories
  - record speech for feedback

- **Camera – photo and video recording**
  - capture communicative situations
  - record speech sample for evaluation
  - be creative, e.g., role-play, stand-up comedy
MALL: Mobile Apps

• Feedback, polling, student response system
  – Polleverywhere, Socrative

• Vocabulary acquisition
  – Dictionary.com, WWAudioUS, Flashcard Machine, Flashcards

• Speaking and Listening (phlogging, pronunciation)
  – Audioboo, iPadio, Free Audiobooks, Sounds

• Integrated
  – Story creators, Evernote
Emerging Theoretical Framework: Ecological Constructivism

- Social Constructivism + Sociocultural Theory + Ecological Linguistics + Contextual and Situated Learning
- “The recent metaphor of ecology attempts to capture the interconnectedness of psychological, social, and environmental process in SLA” (Lam & Kramsch, 2003, p.144)
- active learning around real-life problems
- interaction mediated by “cultural tools such as language and technology” (Pachler, 2009, p. 5)
- community-based communication
- scaffolding and guidance
- feedback from facilitators and peers
Ecological Constructivism

- Learning mediated by communication and interactivity in social contexts
- Learning mediated by the tool
- Learning mediated by the context
- Learning mediated by the affordance in the context

- **Affordances:**
  - exist as an initial state in the dynamic environment
  - represent a relationship (reciprocal interaction) between the actors (learners) and elements of the environment
  - are for learners to perceive, construe and act purposefully upon, both individually and in collaboration with others

(Palalas & Hoven, 2013)


## Audio Tasks

### Essential Characteristic (Substantive Emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audio Tasks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balanced combination of individual and collaborative (group work) tasks</td>
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</table>

### Strategy (Procedural Emphasis)

1. Ensure communication with others in-person and via mobile-enabled channels
2. Build in interaction with others in person and via mobile-enabled channels
3. Include discourse with diverse interlocutors
4. Incorporate language problems requiring negotiation of solutions
5. Inject fun and challenge
6. Ensure dynamic meaning-making and negotiation
7. Maintain regularity of group/class activities
8. Build individual tasks to feed into the group tasks

### Rationale (in order to …)

- Mediate communicative practice and communication (language usage)
- Allow for cognitive and collaborative knowledge creation
- Enhance individual and group motivation
- Offer peer scaffolding and support in problematic situations
- Provide flexibility—time and place independent learning
- Accommodate different pace of learning and levels of language proficiency
- Support the learning network in and out of class
- Support cognitive processes with social process
- Glue the MELLES system together

(Palalas, 2012)
MALL Tasks

- Interconnected tasks
- Authentic communication challenges
- Co-learning: collaborative and individual
- Expert guidance
- Interaction: peers, L1 speakers, language experts
- Co-created multimedia artifacts
- Peer evaluation
- Evolving learning resource
- Aural focus but integrated all four language skills
Pedagogic Guidelines 1/2

1. Balanced combination of individual and collaborative (group work) tasks

2. Learner-generated linguistic artefacts (audio, video, photos, images)

3. Game-like real-life communicative tasks

4. Expert facilitation: scaffolding, feedback, and coordination

5. Feedback mechanism (immediate and delayed)

6. Focus on authentic listening tasks in the dynamic real-world communicative situations
7. Support of self-paced individual audio tasks feeding into/preparing learners for the real-life tasks

8. Integrate all four language skills but focus on listening outcomes

9. Linguistic resources (task-related): relevant vocabulary, dictionaries, pronunciation, clear task directions and explanations, examples

10. Support of out-of-class learning with in-class (f2f) instruction and practice (a blend of in-class and out-of-class context)
# MALL Procedures

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• Glue the MELLES system together |
1. Replay/re-listen
2. Record
3. Rehearse
4. Repeat
5. Redo
6. Remember
7. Reflect
Co-

1. Communicate
2. Collaborate
3. Connect
4. Co-create
5. Construct
6. Contextualize
Thank you!

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References:


• Palalas, A., & Hoven, D. (2013). Implications of using DBR to investigate the iterative design of a mobile-enabled language learning system. CALICO.