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The Projected Use of Mobile Applications for Adult English Language Learners' in Class Instruction

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THE PROJECTED USE OF MOBILE APPLICATIONS FOR ADULT ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNERS' IN CLASS INSTRUCTION

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts

Melissa Rachael Cowan

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August 2015

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The following research investigates uses qualitative and quantitative methods in order to review five language-learning mobile applications to use in the classroom for adult English Language Learners' advancement. The researcher aimed to provide a description of the content and design of the app, basic information as well as data analysis of 25 customer reviews for each of the five apps.

Findings included detailed descriptions of the design and content offered as well an analysis of the customer reviews, including an internal analysis of key words in order to provide final conclusions in using the apps in the classroom. This leading towards major and minor themes, methods and approaches the apps use and lastly theoretical teaching practices for the five apps. These teaching practice hope to encourage teachers to utilize apps in the classroom as well as provide additional resources for teaching English as a second language.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) or language-language applications (apps) have made an impact on how adult English language learners (ELL) search and acquire information in classrooms. “The widespread use of smartphones has brought numerous mobile applications to second language (L2) learners but discussion about its effectiveness has not been settled yet within the field” (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 31). Due to this, I have presented the following study on Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) applications. These Mobile apps have become reliable products for daily use, such as, but are not limited to searching for recipes, directions or translations. Mobile language-learning apps are easily accessible; they are affordable and are equally accessible to English as a second language (ESL) teachers/instructors and ELLs. As Demiray and Istifci (2011) stated, technology is a constant evolving product that many students can gain access to. However, this study focuses on a Western Pennsylvania University where ELLs have been observed to own and use multiple mobile devices. These devices provide “major changes in social and economic conditions..., [which] force[s] new needs and trends upon the technology” (p. 201). With this in mind, it is valuable for the mobile apps to be put to use as a tool within the classroom. The ESL applications should not only be promoted, but applied to classroom lessons through teacher theories and methods.

The trend towards user-friendly MALL has benefited ESL classrooms in the creation of free and affordable language-learning apps; more ELLs can download and use the language-learning app, but there must be an identification of how these apps are useful for the classroom based on consumer reviews and projected uses for the classroom. While the present study will examine language-learning apps, it will only concern iOS systems, specifically the iPad due to the availability of the device to the researcher. Therefore, the availability of the same language-

learning apps on additional platforms is not known. Populations that can benefit from these language-learning apps are adult ELLs coming to the United States to learn English as a second language as well as teachers/instructors looking for ways to integrate mobile apps into their lesson planning. Additionally, language-learning apps can benefit adult ELLs who are considered proficient in English but are still practicing and wish to acquire more knowledge.

With the assistance of mobile educational language-learning applications a meaningful education can be attained through the possibility of individualized-learning created by certain language-learning apps. The individualized-learning can enable ELLs to work at their own pace with ESL instructors or independently. With a possible increase in the number of adult ELLs in a general classroom, disconnects that occur in acquisition of English may result from not having that individualized education apps can provide. Using mobile language-learning apps as a tool in the classroom can be beneficial, as presented in this study. This study will look at the language-learning apps available for ESL instructors which can be utilize in their daily lessons, based on consumer reviews and the researcher's descriptions of the app's content. According to Ransdell (2013) and Iacob (2009), ELLs have a higher participation rate and emotional response to using Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) or MALL within the ESL classroom. Adult ELLs who use MALL and CALL perform higher on exams, succeed in daily participation and enjoy the learning process.

The Problem

There are a plethora of language-learning apps available for adult ELLs, but ESL teachers/instructors either do not utilize or are not aware of the tools that are available or do not know how to effectively use these tools. Previous studies have focused only on CALL and few focused on MALL as represented in the relevant literature. Recently there has been a shift

towards MALL; this shift, however, lacks a focus on the usefulness of language-learning apps and how to integrate them into lessons. Additionally, there are limited lists available to describe these language-learning mobile apps and fewer studies focus on theories of using said apps. Even fewer explain the importance of language-learning apps for ELL's advancement. The lack of information on language-learning apps that are useful for language learners is evident, therefore, the necessity for a study on the available language-learning apps is essential to present theories of use and consumer reviews for the advancement of mobile technology in the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to present the available, affordable ESL apps, to educators for the potential use in lesson planning and to show the views of those whom have used the five apps selected in this study. This is important for showing that “The effective design and use of language-learning mobile applications should continue to be studi[ed] in order to suggest the right direction to effective MALL” (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 31). Therefore, detailed descriptions of five language-learning apps will be provided as well as the positive, negative and neutral reports of consumer reviews. These reviews will further allow the researcher to identify components of the apps that can be useful and pertinent to teaching theories concluded in chapter five. A thorough description of each language-learning app will show the uniqueness of the apps as well as indicate where certain features or content items will contribute towards learning. The purpose will inevitably be to provide teachers with theories of ways to implement and utilize the five apps in the ESL classroom. The findings will shed light on the important implications of the content within each app and will eliminate hours of searching for age-appropriate language-learning apps with appropriate content. The study also aims to provide ESL instructors with a list of reliable and applicable language-learning apps for instruction as well as student use.

Researcher Motivation

In early fall 2013, I began working for an Intensive English Language Program as a tutor, where I was responsible for helping international adult ELLs with practicing reading, writing, speaking and listening skills as well as with homework given by ESL instructors in the program. At times, ELLs would come to sessions with little or no homework/assignments. This is when I began to look for accessible and affordable resources to use for tutoring sessions. After many sessions of ELLs using iPad apps, I noticed a big change in the ELLs' attitudes towards English learning. They began to look forward to the use of language-learning apps in tutoring sessions and occasionally these adult learners and their friends would approach me outside the normal session and inquiring about new language-learning apps for practicing their English skills. The ELLs I worked with in the tutoring program went from having little interest in participating in tutoring to seeking me out for additional help. This indicated to me that mobile language-learning apps not only assist in the learning process, but also gains the attention of the learner. These language-learning apps create an entertaining environment and allow ELLs to feel independent while being guided by the mobile app. The mobile language-learning apps were not only appealing for their practical use and straight forward content, but these language-learning apps can be affordable, even free.

The biggest challenge I faced in tutoring sessions was the age-appropriateness of the mobile language-learning apps. In reference to age-appropriateness, I wanted a language-learning app that did not seem childish, such as photos and voice-overs that appeared to be more for children than for adults. This is why I am presenting a detailed description of my own experience of using the five language-learning apps in the study to show that there are language-

learning apps available to adult ELLs and there is in fact a need for these language-learning apps in the classroom; more importantly to be utilized by teachers.

Local Context

As seen in the Intensive English Language Program at a Western Pennsylvania Higher Education Institution, some ELLs use mobile devices to look up information, check emails, participate in social media and translate. With this in mind, there has been a rise in using mobile technology in the classroom for reading assignments as well as renting digital textbooks for convenience and affordability. Some ELLs use translators, take pictures of notes, or even record sessions. As a result, I have learned from the ESL instructors at the Intensive English Language Program that many ESL instructors have encouraged ELLs to buy translators and recording devices. While separate devices are available for purchase, it is more affordable to purchase an app for translation and recording. Due to this, the local context is within the Intensive English Language Program where adult ELLs are tutored and thrive on using mobile language-learning apps and therefore it is logical that ESL teachers should continue to promote the use of mobile language-learning apps in the classroom. Although the translator apps were extremely useful in the Intensive English Language classrooms, some teachers have identified mobile devices as a disturbance or distraction when used in the classroom. This can be a concern, but I believe that adults should be given the benefit of using mobile device language-learning apps and trusted that they will stay on task. While there is some disagreement between instructors, I believe that by allowing ELLs to use mobile language-learning apps in the classroom, they are able to complete more than the basic translations. Mobile language-learning apps, when put to better use in the classroom are efficient and if viewed by professors/instructors as a tool or additional learning material can be effective. Through using language-learning apps, ELLs would benefit by looking

up terms, translating words and even more importantly, continually acquiring their second language through the unique features and content as well as the independence the apps provide. As Ransdell (2013) reports, “The iPad has been a great contribution to the class” (p. 9). Yet, many ESL classes still do not utilize mobile device apps. By utilizing these apps, a gap can be filled by having knowledge readily available and the opportunity for ELLs to move at their own pace. Due to the stigma of apps and mobile devices being a distraction as mentioned in the above sections. Going forward, classrooms need to start encouraging ELLs to use language-learning apps inside the classroom (Ransdell, 2013). The mobile language-learning apps need to be integrated into lessons and promoted by the teacher.

Practical Orientation

As a researcher, I must consider the relevance of the research and how my view of using language-learning apps in the classroom is driving the current research. In addition, existing methods, predetermined standards as well as expectations of ESL instructors inspire me to investigate language-learning app content. As Kazanci and Okan (2009) stated,

The use of educational software in the school is not a simple task. Evaluating the software before applying it is even more difficult especially if the software claims that it blends education and entertainment in order to create a motivating and successful environment for learning. (p. 36)

Kazanci and Okan (2009) make a good point that the claims of software or app developers cannot be solely trusted on the description of the creator/seller. Thus, there needs to be a researcher in the field to identify the materials provided as being useful and successful in providing the content intended as well as theorizing the use in the classroom. This leads to the following questions in search for successful language-learning apps.

Research Questions

Within this literature review, after reading through and analyzing research articles and book chapters that address my research focus, I will be answering the following research questions:

1. What language content and communicative skills do free iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

2. What ESL learning methods and approaches do these iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

3. What are some iPad language-learning app features that would enhance the learning experience in a classroom for adult English language learners?

4. In what ways are consumer reviews indicating how to utilize the apps in leading towards theories of practice for language-learning apps?

In addition to these questions, the intent of the present study is to provide a clear and concise description of each language-learning app to show its significance and learning potential.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant due to addressing the content of the app, unique features, consumer reviews and the theories of using the five apps in the classroom for adult ELLs. The study contributes towards identifying methods and approaches that the apps might use, as well as possible uses for the researched language-learning apps in the classroom. There are thousands of language-learning apps that offer a variety of content topics, unique features and methods, these mobile device applications are constantly developing new content that can be used in multiple settings and in a combination of methods to introduce new knowledge or practice for prior knowledge. As Kim and Kwon (2012) stated, “The popularity of mobile devices has changed the

way we learn, communicate, and live” (p. 32). Additionally, a detailed description of its content will be provided for each of the five language-learning apps. An app’s content will only include the content, such as: phonetics, morphology, lexicology/semantics and syntax, and, then, later, will be analyzed further based on the customer reviews.

Organization of Thesis Chapters

The following four chapters of the thesis are split into four main categories. After the introductory first chapter, the second chapter reviews the literature related to CALL and MALL. It shows the importance of using mobile language-learning apps inside the classroom. Chapter Two aims to provide clear identification of the importance in using language-learning apps as a tool for educational purposes. The third chapter describes the methodology and steps taken in selecting and analyzing the language-learning apps as well as the steps taken in order to review and analyze the customer reviews. Chapter Three will also reveal a deeper thought process of the researcher as well as the importance of using the language-learning apps selected. The fourth chapter describes each data set with details of the content/design. Additionally an over of the data will be provided for the five applications, each providing up to 25 customer reviews which are to be identified by positive, negative and neutral, then an internal analysis of language used in the reviews will be completed. The fifth chapter is organized to summarize the research into three main sections: themes, methods and approaches, and theoretical practices.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The use of mobile language-learning apps on portable mobile devices that are accessible at a glance are accessible by most ELLs that come to English Intensive programs in the United States. ESL instructors are in a technologically advancing society that is continually adapting and changing its methods and tools used within the classroom. The Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) technologies are presented throughout the following reviewed literature. Mobile devices, or more specifically, MALL, are important to the education of adult ELLs. ESL instructors, most importantly adult ELLs, can use language-learning apps within the classroom which is entertaining and educating while still promoting language-acquisition. The following review of literature will show the importance of MALL and CALL, specifically language-learning apps for adult ELLs in reference to grammar, phonetics, morphology, lexicology/semantics, syntax, pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

Relevancy of the Issue

Mobile language-learning apps have become a tool that ELLs can use to practice English through translation, vocabulary, and social media apps among others provide communicative skills for adult ELLs. Social media apps have contributed to developing conversation and writing skills by allowing ELLs to interact with those whose first language is English. According to Kim and Kwon (2012), “new technologies such as social networking, podcasting, or speech recognition embedded in mobile applications accelerate the changes occurring in MALL environments by extending opportunities and reshaping learning styles” (p. 32). Kim and Kwon’s (2012) study’s main purpose was to update information regarding available language-learning mobile applications (apps) and provide reviews and extensive research on each app. The

framework for their study was based on both quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide overall patterns of common distinctive features, functions and then to examine each for its effectiveness on specific language skills. The researchers searched for available language-learning apps and reviewed over 100 designed specifically for young adult and adult ELLs. Then 87 of the language-learning apps were selected for further in-depth analysis. Kim and Kwon's (2012) findings showed a positive view of language-learning apps and proved that a large number were in fact targeted for adult ELLs. Even though they looked at each app's content type, such as vocabulary representing 41% of app activities, they, however, did not provide detailed descriptions for each app. Due to their research, "ESL apps seem effective in that they provide a personal and learner-centered learning opportunity with ubiquitously accessible and flexible resources and activities" (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 53). The study reinforces the importance of researching language-learning apps to educate ESL teachers/instructors and adult ELLs on language-learning apps available.

Since Kim and Kwon's (2012) study, very little literature on the topic of language-learning apps has been produced. This is not discouraging; however, due to the increase of mobile device users and number of language-learning apps being created, therefore there is an importance in my research presented within this thesis. More ELLs are using mobile devices, as presented in a study by Ally et al (2007), showed that "40% of their participants indicated that they used some form of mobile device (cellphone, smart phone, PDA) on a regular basis", additionally, as a tutor and teacher, I have identified many students who attend Intensive English Programs in the United States own one or more mobile devices and are willing and eager to use them in the classroom.

Literature Review Methods

The review of relevant literature is essential for showing the importance of using language-learning apps inside the classroom. By showing CALL and MALL related literature, a link between the two forms will show the importance of language-learning apps for learning grammar via mobile language-learning apps. With this in mind, MALL research shows a limited interest in language-learning apps, which implicates the importance of resources like mobile language-learning apps and the current research of this study. Therefore, I chose to highlight the following literature within categories as follows: grammatical content with sub-categories: phonetics, morphology, lexicology/semantics and syntax. Additional categories of pragmatics and sociolinguistics are presented as well. In the following sections, I will look at CALL and MALL that was used in studies across the area of ESL/EFL and show how they support the use of language-learning apps.

Importance of Grammatical Content in Relation to the Apps

There are hundreds, if not thousands of language-learning apps available to download through the iTunes app store “The widespread use of smartphones has brought millions of mobile applications to L2 learners [, ELL]” (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 32). However, a description of an app’s content is often lacking, such as grammatical content that is essential in deciding which language-learning apps to use. While moving forward into the literature review, this section aims to give clarity on grammatical content and the grammar items looked at within the language-learning apps. My goal is to identify literature that best represents the importance of using MALL and CALL in the classroom. While grammar includes many subcategories, it is important to remember the definition of “grammatical competence”: the ability to identify and

produce distinctive grammatical structures of language and to use them effectively in communication (O'Grady, Archibald, Arnoff & Rees-Miller, 2010).

Regarding the grammatical content to be defined in the language-learning apps, the definition of grammatical competence is important to keep in mind in order to understand how the researcher looks at each individual application. Grammatical competency is not the ability of the app, but the ability of the ELL after using said app. The fact that language-learning apps have a set content allows ESL instructors to plan their lessons as well as educate ELLs. In fact, language-learning apps presented within this study could be used as an additional tool for ESL instructors and adult ELLs. Language-learning apps have many advantages in facilitating productivity and effectiveness, while allowing more flexibility, accessibility and personalization to learning activities and the environment (Kim & Kwon, 2012). The apps' components that provide content, methods and approaches, and unique features are essential to increasing an ELLs' competence in English.

It can be difficult to find the right app to function for a specific area of grammar; therefore, prior identification of each app's content focus is important due to the limited descriptions provided through the iTunes app store. Additionally, through the App Store, a description of the age/proficiency level and skills are not provided. Therefore knowing a description of the content as well as a basic description should be made available for ESL instructors.

Language-learning apps continue to grow and become more popular, and newer mobile language-learning apps become available while continuing to play a growing part in instruction (Demiray & Istifci, 2011). The use of meta-communication, or secondary communication, plays a key role in language learning and teaching. Meta-communication is the way that a piece of

information could be interpreted, or presented. According to the authors, "...meta-communication is something that goes beyond communication, and all language learners and ESL instructors should be familiar with its existence." "[Additionally, the use of apps] creates a platform for L2 learners and ESL instructors to interact in a context with no boundaries of time and distance" (Demiray & Istifci, 2011, p. 201). The main purpose of Demiray and Istifci's (2011) study was to enable communication in English via social media, video blogs, Skype and additional mobile language-learning apps. Meta-communication is an important concept in looking at educational technologies, especially MALL, as to it provides ELLs with content to be interpreted by the given rules. As identified, language-learning apps play a key role in education by providing additional support required. Though ELLs could use language-learning apps independently, teachers are still important in guiding and suggesting appropriate language-learning apps. ESL instructors who use apps for practice still need to prepare lessons and use the app as a material or tool, rather than an actual answer to taking over the classroom. This can lead ESL instructors to look for new ways to implement mobile language-learning apps by the fact that communicating with people at any time, from anywhere, can promote prompt access to learning English (Kim and Kwon, 2012).

In looking for new ways to introduce or encourage ELLs to practice grammar, language-learning apps can easily assist in everyday practices. Textbooks can cause adult ELLs to become discouraged or lose interest quickly; on the other hand, language-learning apps have functions that keep ELLs engaged and interested for longer periods of time. These apps can provide a sense of independence and growth necessary for real-life experiences (Kim & Kwon, 2012). An affordable language-learning app is desirable, easy to use and not overwhelming when introducing new knowledge. There are hundreds of language-learning apps, many are grammar-

related and available to ELLs in providing the following content: Phonetics, Morphology, Lexicology/Semantics and Syntax.

Importance of CALL and MALL Phonetics Content

While phonetics can be learned through conversation practice, there are many new and innovative mobile language-learning apps in the pursuit of oral competence. With the availability of social media, which many ELLs access on a daily basis, lessons can be created with social media apps to support the practice of speech. As Nisbet and Austin note “Apps ... are available for both smartphones and tablets can be an effective tool for promoting vocabulary development among adult [English] learners” (Nisbet & Austin, 2013, p. 1). Social media is a useful part of learning phonetic components for in the classroom, by providing the ELL with speaking and listening exercises allowing them to post their success on that social media (e.g. Facebook or Twitter) (Kim & Kwon, 2012). The following phonetic section shows how ELLs can indeed improve their language speech skills through social media, distance education, and collaborative learning, among the forms of CALL and MALL.

Mobile language-learning apps can consist of different content related to phonetics. With this in mind, there are many types of learning tools that present ways of learning to speak, such as social media and collaborative learning tools. Due to the growing use of distance education, online tutoring and social media, language-learning apps allow for “collaborative learning [which] creates a positive social atmosphere and facilitates perception... was fulfilled via planned or unplanned social interaction process” (Demiray & Istifci, 2011, p. 202). It is both collaborative and individualized through mobile language-learning apps in addition to allowing for rapid growth and development in language acquisition (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 35). Resources and tools available with collaborative learning can include the use of social media

applications that use video and sound. With social media apps, ELLs are given the opportunity to converse in English with peers who are also ELLs or native English speakers; this promotes natural speech while promoting a way of learning that feels natural and limits difficulty and pressures of other conversations.

Though the use of social media can be difficult for beginner ELLs, there is room for potential development for apps to function as an audio/visual component. According to Chen and Liu (2012), "...learners thought that "text" and "audio" annotation types were particularly useful for online reading" (p. 80). Although a major problem for ELLs in a similar context was computer anxiety, as described by Matsumura and Hann (2004), the actual anxiety has more to do with the feedback given to ELLs than using the computer, but some anxiety was present at the start of learning new technology. In the end, the student's feedback method varied according to their levels of computer anxiety. This was due to providing the choice of using or not using computers for feedback. The less-anxious ELLs were those who refrained from all forms of feedback to improve their essay writing (Matsumura & Hann, 2004, p. 413). Though there was anxiety among ELLs, this does not limit ESL instructors and ELLs from using mobile language-learning apps. Mobile language-learning apps allow adult ELLs to work independently as well as collaborate with one another to complete tasks. Few of the language-learning apps presented in my study allow for teacher feedback; however, ELLs could post their progress online for their peers to see. This is a choice that the ELL can make, rather than requiring the student to show fully completed work. The anxiety that follows feedback from ESL instructors can cause ELLs to become withdrawn, as represented in Matsumura and Hann's (2004) study, but by using the mobile language-learning apps, ELLs can have a sense of control over their own education.

MALL has become a popular topic among researchers and ESL instructors, pushing them to study the different tools available, yet mobile language-learning apps for adult ELLs are still an untapped genre (Kim & Kwon, 2012). Without CALL, MALL would not exist, yet many forms of MALL are underrepresented in the classroom. Mobile language-learning apps available on devices like the iPad or iPhone allow for convenience of use in classroom. This has spurred wide growth in use of MALL while coinciding with studies like White and Gillard's (2011), *Technology-Based Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners*. Their study used CALL and CAPT (computer-assisted pronunciation training) programs in the ESL-based study. White and Gillard (2011) compared two groups of children; one group was the control group that underwent traditional teacher-led, face-to-face learning and the second group used the CAPT system. The group using CAPT spent a specific amount of time per day doing English pronunciation through a computer-based speech recognition system. The control group spent the same time per day with face-to-face learning. According to White and Gillard (2011), result showed a more enriching experience and higher development among those who used the speech recognition system. There are certain language-learning apps that allow the learner to speak into the microphone that do similar speech recognition and then allow them to listen back to their own recording and compare it to a native speaker's recording. While there are additional software types, I find mobile language-learning apps to be more affordable, easily accessible and offering an audio for words, phrases and even lengthy articles. These language-learning apps help ELLs hear sounds, and practice speaking to contribute to competency in phonetics.

As the use of CALL has helped ELLs perform better on exams and improve skills that are required for real world experiences. Within studies, ELLs themselves found an increase in their ability to understand the materials in the classroom through the use of MALL (Kazanci & Okan,

2009; White & Gillard 2011). As ELLs work MALL inside the classroom as well as independently, they become competent within areas of English grammar, vocabulary, testing and conversation. The way ELLs acquire language is important, especially since each learner acquires language in their own way and at their own pace. By using language-learning apps, ELLs can have fun while they learn how to read, write, speak and listen, while filling a gap that textbooks leave behind. Language-learning apps can be game-like to engage the learner and their ability to enhance skills, according to White and Gillard (2011). The availability of ELL technology-based interventions is expanding for ESL instructors and ELLs, allowing them to add variety and fun into language learning, apart from the monotony, which grammar textbooks can induce.

The Importance of CALL and MALL Morphology Dynamics

As language learning is complicated by the need to learn root words, affixes, intonations and stresses or implied context, there are many ways that a learner can become overwhelmed. Morphology is the identification, analysis and description of the structure to which the above language units relate. As discussed in *The Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Classes for English as a Second Language*, the usefulness and challenges of using CALL in the classroom are present. Jacob (2009) specifically observed ELLs under the age of 12 while using CALL programs and allowed for a “dynamic combination of sounds, music, images, and combines in an attractive computer screen” (p. 144). These methods can be adapted to use for adult learners, regardless of the study participants’ age. The most important factor is the learner’s proficiency level as well as the app’s being age-appropriate. While some language-learning apps can be used for children as well as adults, language-learning apps can appear to be childish and lack the

entertainment factor due to being overly enthusiastic (boarder-line talking down) or by becoming too easy to be a challenge for the student.

While CALL has been developed into various types of language-learning apps, most apps use sounds and the structure of the word in sentences to demonstrate how words are pronounced. Some use root words to show how words are developed, and other language-learning apps might only identify parts of speech as a noun (N) or verb (V). Language-learning apps provide specific content for a specific goal towards identifying certain morphology units, rather than showing all items like root words and affixes versus intonations and stresses on a word. Each set might work independently within an app or together to prove that to stress a certain part of a word is important for pronunciation and intonation. Language-learning apps that allow ELLs to have fun while learning are optimal and have higher ratings but with less complicated functions.

The unique features and content for language-learning apps are composed for specific tasks, according to Meurant (2011), “More effective EFL/ESL learning can thus be achieved if students are provided with an adequate spatial morphology of English tenses and forms (p. 63-64). The term “spatial Morphology”, is not only used in the normal linguistic sense, but in a traditional sense of spatial organization of form, which shows the complexity as well as the simplicity of these language-learning apps. Meurant (2011) supports the increase of “having [ELLs] use the proposed App [because it] should significantly assist their learning of correct linguistic cognitive structures” (p. 65). The purpose of Meurant’s (2011) article is to educate readers on the development of a new app that uses spatial morphology, allows the learner to choose a verb base and combine it with the appropriate “intelligent word recognition/completion” (p. 67). This concurs with the point of my current study and main goal of educating ESL instructors and adult ELLs about the available mobile language-learning apps.

Meurant (2011) showed the use of apps and featured language-learning apps in a positive light while indicating various outcomes for learners and “encourages playful exploration of the effects of varying the values of different grammatical categories and a deepening appreciation of the structure of the English Language” (p. 71). However, there are limitations of apps and of spatial morphology, primarily with the complexity of language and the general use of the English language. Due to the many rules of English grammar, ELLs can become overwhelmed, and this should be kept in mind when evaluating any and all language-learning apps for adult ELLs. In the app created by Meurant (2011) the named restrictions that exist can include the exclusion of verbal objects and only allowing simple sentences; therefore, compound and complex sentences are often not dealt with (72). Despite a lack of certain functionalities in language-learning apps, the unique features and the content available can be useful enough. Language-learning apps engage learners compared to textbooks and include functionalities that promote important linguistic knowledge as well as acquisition. In many cases, no one single app can accomplish all grammar-related learning processes that ESL instructors may seek as identified in Meurant’s (2011) study. Therefore, I will identify language-learning apps that will be useful towards ELLs accomplishing tasks of learning to speak, read, write and listen in English.

Importance of Lexicology/Semantics for Content in Apps

Lexicology focuses on the study of the word as a basic unit of language. More specifically, it addresses word selection, presentation and practice. In addition, semantics, a broader study of word meanings and meaning in general, includes the study of the connotations of phrases and the correct use of words in a sentence (O’Grady et al, 2010). While there are books that explain connotation and word selection, more efficient ways to help ELLs complete these tasks are presented through mobile language-learning apps (Kim & Kwon, 2012).

Numerous language-learning apps provide ELLs with a hands-on approach and independence while completing tasks. As supported by Meurant, (2010a) the iPad can be useful in a number of ways, including online exam and quiz taking. Semantics was discussed in Meurant's (2010a) article, to identify how ELLs can choose appropriate words and use them within an online test environment. With digital literacy gradually being encouraged in L2 learning, implementation of other such language-learning apps that allow short message services (SMS) promote vocabulary use as well word choices (Meurant, 2010a; Kim & Kwon, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, the use of Moodle and D2L (desire to learn) to develop digital literacy skills in English has become useful. The iPad can help develop these skills through its optimal operating system that not only stores data to the site and device, but externally saves information to the Cloud. The overall purpose of Meurant's (2010a) article is to inform ESL instructors of the specs and usefulness of the iOS device. Additionally there are descriptions given by the ELLs in their study gave feedback about the device. These ELLs found the devices easy to use, and small enough to travel with and to use within groups. The actual usage of the iPad for Moodle and D2L is desirable and worthwhile to try, as well as for language-learning apps in the advancement of understanding grammar for adult ELLs.

Importance of Syntax Content in CALL and MALL

Using language-learning apps to support and expand ELLs' English skills is extremely helpful towards a better understanding of grammar, particularly, syntax. The importance of using language-learning apps is supported by Lee's (2006) examination of ESL students' achievement in effective learning outcomes through MALL and how it can be infused with constructivist pedagogy. Lee's (2006) exploration of alternatives for schools that lack advanced technological learning tools consists of two ESL instructors from Indian River Central School district located

in New York. Initially “[the] researchers observed ESL students as they used simulation and authoring software” in order to see how students react and interact (p. 89). As certain types of MALL software become more readily available to schools, a more independent version appeared which offered freedom and affordability. Additionally, classrooms observed by the author emphasized correct sentence formation in ELLs from extended use of the programs. While CALL software has played a large role in assisting language-learning classrooms, researchers like Meurant (2010a, 2010b & 2011) are leaders in promoting MALL. These grammar apps help ELLs acquire knowledge towards being able to write well-structure sentences and allow them to become self-sufficient through the idea that language-learning apps allow for an interaction between experiences and the learners’ ideas. The positive attributes of grammar apps for adult ELLs enhance the learning environment through the engagement and interactive properties. With this, many students I have observed using similar grammar apps have reported them to be challenging but fun, also less stressful compared to using textbooks.

Language-learning apps are additionally important in teaching or improving sentence-writing skills. They can include sentence completion, sentence diagramming and mixed methods, such as combining lexicology and morphology within one app. The unique features and content of an app change depending on the methods and intent of the app. The software represented in Lee’s (2006) study allowed ELLs to create stories based on a theme of their own choosing. Independence was important for developing skills for work, school and everyday activities. For them, writing sentences was an important part of learning grammar. The idea of forming sentences properly is pragmatically and socio-linguistically important for developing communicative skills, and language-learning apps also contribute to ELLs’ independence, due to

the flexibility to work in any location. The choice of where and when to use the app, is one advantage for adult ELLs using mobile language-learning apps.

Just as important, creativity stands out among the needs for ELLs; Lee's (2006) study offered visual/audio components as well as the creative visuals, and reading through computers by using programs like Oregon Trail. Learning games like Oregon Trail allow ELLs to be exposed to real-life experiences. In addition, widget workshops were presented and simulated electrical, biological, and mathematical connections. Through these types of CALL programs, Lee's (2006) study infused constructivist pedagogy with the software to allow ELLs to think, create, and visually demonstrate their work. Not only does Lee's (2006) study show the usefulness, creativity and independence of CALL and MALL, but shows the diversity of programs and the unique aspect that ESL instructors can combine them with previous methods. Language-learning apps can bring more to the table, and further investigation will identify additional uses and the apparent need for mobile device language-learning apps for adult ELLs.

Pragmatics of App Content

The importance of the way language is used in communication was represented among the previous studies in this literature review, yet many studies did not explicitly mention how CALL and MALL are practiced in the classroom. Other studies, however, imply that there is an importance and acceptance of MALL and CALL programs (Meurant, 2010a, 2010b, 2011; White & Gillard 2011; Kazanci & Okan, 2009; Kim & Kwon, 2012; Matsumura & Hann, 2004; Demiray & Istifci, 2011; Harrington 2014).

Adult language-learning apps enable writing/reading discourse markers to become apparent for items that require tasks, such as writing a proposal for a class assignment versus writing a text message to a friend. The discourse used in class is much more professional

(O'Grady et al, p. 595). Items like discourse, reference resolution and spoken dialogue can be guided by apps. ELLs can use language-learning apps to overcome the stigma that boring formal writing is stiff, whereas writing to a friend via Facebook is fun and stress-free. While many language-learning apps require more professional writing and speaking to gain points or to advance within the app, there are apps that promote casual speaking and conversation. For writing, the same standards are held and all grammar rules must be followed. Additionally, for spoken dialogue, ELLs can use language-learning apps to record or speak to one another in a professional manner in settings such as the classroom or independently. ESL instructors can pre-record lessons or additional notes for ELLs to listen to in any location. These additional tools have unlimited useful applications toward communicative skills for use in a classroom setting or other, brings up the topic of the apps' purpose and status in the classroom.

Purpose and Relative Status of Apps

Reasons why ESL instructors decide to have ELLs use tablets in the classroom are related to the purpose of learning English. According to Trinder (2005) as cited in Kim and Kwon (2012), "Mobile technology also enables users to perform many different kinds of social-interactive functions including communication, organization, applications (e.g., e-book, database, tools, and office), information, or relaxation (p. 33). The authors also state that, with the mobility of language-learning apps, there is a more learner-centered situated environment for collaborations between students due to the mode of delivery.

The constant mobility of these language-learning apps allow for practice to attain a level of competence that can be measured by standardized tests, to be proficient in everyday tasks and to move forward in students' own knowledge. Due to the requirement of TOEFL and IELTS exams to gain entrance into universities, it is important to continue working on language

proficiency. Language-learning apps make this task possible and allow ELLs to become aware of their grammatical errors, which is a huge step in becoming competent in a language. Though these standardized tests are only required to pass and then enter the university, ELLs still need to retain the English knowledge and apply it to everyday life. While these language-learning apps can help adult ELLs learn new knowledge, it is also important to remember that they assist in practicing and sustaining their competence.

As the purpose for using mobile language-learning apps increases, it is important to become educated on how language-learning apps can be applied in these settings. Prior to using language-learning apps, ESL instructors should be required to have knowledge of digital literacy and the MALL and CALL technologies available towards the acquisition of English. This digital literacy, as mentioned by Meurant (2010b), is important for ESL students' overall education. Additionally, Sheppard's (2011) study showed that ELLs who used iPads increased their knowledge while increasing their digital knowledge, "There was no doubt that the use of the iPad was hugely engaging for the ELLs in our project" (p. 3). Although the study by Sheppard indicated that iPads can create distractions, perhaps the age level of ELLs was partly a factor. Language-learning apps are affordable, often free, and easily attainable through downloading. Knowing which language-learning apps to use and making it possible for ELLs to learn independently while being able to reflect and adapt their English is important.

Topic Area and Situation of Apps

There are many different ways in which one can learn and many of these ways can be combined or used separately, such as: visual with audio; reading with writing, speaking and/or listening, or through using language-learning apps together. The idea for language-learning apps has been created for one of today's means of self-learning while using mobile devices. For

example, Demiray and Istifci (2011) used “web 2.0 tools [to] increase creativity for ELLs to make films, video and publish them within wikis or blogs and have collaborative learning possible to support learner-centered learning” (p. 202). Creativity is an important factor as well as keeping the attention of learners. This is a struggle with basic textbooks, and using MALL in the classroom bridges the gap of visual and audio learning as well as being interactive and independent while still being collaborative in learning. “The growing use of mobile technology at colleges and universities is the most current trend forcing educators to evaluate the merits and limitations of a new technology” (Rossing, Miller, Cecil, & Stamper 2012). Additionally, the total data the university collected through surveys of 209 L2 learners in nine courses showed that:

Mobile information and communication technologies such as tablet computers will feature prominently in the future of learning and classroom environments. Mobile tablets such as iPad[s] offer benefits such as seemingly boundless access to information and advantages for collaboration learning. However, these devices also carry the potential to distract learners and create frustration in the classroom. (Rossing et al, 2012, p.20)

Supporting mobile language-learning apps in the field of ESL is shown as a changing one, allowing for new and innovative ways to instruct (Harrington, 2014; Rossing et al., 2012). The frustrations of limited tools are no longer an issue and the barrier of expensive software no longer exists. The expansions of mobile language-learning apps allow ESL instructors and ELLs to have access to apps as long as they have a device that support them. Additionally, Apps are required to have a standard of social content to be used in many settings, not limited to the classroom.

Sociolinguistics of App Language Content

Sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to interpret language in a social setting and use appropriate language for communication by applying an appropriate linguistic style (O'Grady et al, 2010). While apps do not directly state the intentions of the content towards social meaning;

The popularity of mobile devices has been rapidly changing learning, communicating, even our daily life styles. Use of technologies remarkable extends learning opportunities, needs, goal, and have profound effect on many learning activities and learning styles.

(Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 33)

The appropriateness of the content is an important component within an app. The appropriateness might be related to the level of competence to complete a task within the app. Some content might not be mature enough for adult learners, whereas some content might be too advanced for the level of proficiency the ELL might have. With this in mind, ESL instructors need to know the capability of the ELL in addition to the app content in order to match them appropriately.

Use of Apps in Society

Many articles describe the use of MALL and CALL, only a few actually state mobile devices as the main tool used, however, many articles do not discuss how these tools promote language use in social settings. In looking at the articles that provide information on MALL, White and Gillard (2011) as well as Meurant (2011) used alternative methods to teach basics of grammar to ELLs by computer. The outcome of both studies was positive resulting with the iPad given higher ratings and support by ELLs versus those using computers. Due to the fact that iPads are preferable for travel as well as provide alternative learning apps, ELLs are more likely

to use this form. Mobile language-learning apps bridge a gap from in the classroom to life outside. Another reason to use language-learning apps is represented by Lee (2006), who used mobile devices for L2 learning and proposed that the usage of tablets/apps would allow ELLs to travel and continue using these educational games at home. Kim and Kwon (2012) support the continual use of apps in the classroom but suggest that apps lack a form for collaborative learning that the regular classroom environment provides. While this is their view of apps, other researchers in this literature have supported that apps and software promote collaborations via social media apps and relevant communicative apps. For adult ELLs there can be difficulties in daily conversation, especially if those around them do not speak English constantly, language-learning apps can provide a unique self-reliance. Language-learning apps not only provide ELLs with translations, also opportunities to acquire new knowledge.

Conversation Analysis of App Language Content

The literature on CALL and MALL clearly showed the importance of using language-learning apps to aid students' educational needs. As stated by Ransdell (2013), "[ELLs] were excited about coming to class to work on their projects; in return this increased the L2 learners' education and technology skills." As seen in the Intensive Language Program, ELLs wanted to use new and interesting resources/tools and crave some form of fun and creativity that MALL provides. Mobile language-learning apps used on devices like the iPhone or iPad stand out and show that conversational analysis is possible through MALL.

Throughout the literature review, Moodle and D2L were used to show new ways to give and receive information for course work. These two major websites provided information for ELLs to acquire through the language-learning apps as well distribute exams (Meurant, 2010a, 2010b; Genc, H. 2012). As the language-learning apps were reviewed for this study, the

literature showed that CALL and MALL had a positive effect for ELLs as well as ESL instructors. The importance of using MALL goes beyond the simplicity of entertainment and being popular, but it greatly enhances the learning process by employing specific content and methods/approaches, to allow ESL instructors to apply their own methods with the app. The real target is not to analyze a person's ability, but rather their continual progress towards proficiency in the use of real-life skills, vocabulary, speech, reading and writing as well as socio-communication skills.

Defining the Gap

Within the field, CALL has been important in contributing to creating lessons and mixing content and methods to make a better tool for ELLs to use. Recently, MALL has been a rising research topic, but "...only incidentally, as a part of large studies looking at Computer-Assisted Language Learning" the research lacks the focus on language-learning apps (Kim & Kwon, 2012, p. 32). Additionally, there are few studies indicating the language-learning apps available to use and more importantly for language content, reoccurring themes, and methods or approaches all culminating into theoretical practices. To identify this gap, the relevant literature has been reviewed, and shows that only a handful of MALL actually focus on language-learning applications. Therefore, the identification of exactly which language-learning apps is essential in providing a thorough presentation of the available MALL technologies. With this study on iPad language-learning applications, the gap is bridged through an identification of ideas related to content, design and a thorough investigation of customer reviews which, in the end, will assist in proposed ways to use the apps in the classroom.

Chapter Summary

The literature review revealed the importance of topics of CALL and MALL in relation to language-learning apps and the grammar related content. As referenced above, the key terms presented throughout the literature review are to assist in reading the reviews of the apps as well as the final chapter. Each key term help focus the literature review chapter on the importance of the content, design and meaning of the content of each app. These ideas directly link to the methodology and analysis of the language-learning apps for identifying unique features, level of involvement, content and other general information (proficiency level, popularity, brief description). Overall, the literature shows the importance of using CALL and MALL towards helping learners thrive in acquiring knowledge through using mobile devices language-learning apps in the classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to ultimately provide teaching theories for using language-learning mobile applications in the classroom. The researcher examined five language-learning mobile application for customer reviews and determine the positive, negative and neutral reviews. These reviews will shed light on what ELLs want and need from a mobile language-learning app. Furthermore, a description of the five apps will be provided based on the content. The content includes features, language skills offered, pragmatic and sociolinguistic skills they can provide. The final five apps were chosen after careful deliberation and testing of many other apps, they were narrowed down based on the criteria described in the research design section.

With the information gathered, I hope to provide ESL teachers/instructors with a short list of language-learning apps that are useful and unique per the content as well as useful towards teachers creating lessons for in class instruction. This chapter seeks to define the research design of the study and show the criteria that were used to adequately review each language-learning app. The review process includes identifying consumer reviews, content, teaching theories and methods that contribute to the instruction of ELLs.

Rationale for the Study

The rationale for using a mixed method analysis (qualitative and quantitative) was to provide detailed descriptions of each of the five apps' language content, features and methods as well as utilize customer reviews to assist in the creation of teaching theories. The teaching theories are necessary for teachers to use the language-learning apps in the classroom. Without the content and framework description as well as the positive, negative and neutral points of view, the research cannot theorize ways to incorporate apps into lesson planning.

With the qualitative method, it enables viewing the relationship between language-learning apps and the language content, sociolinguistic/pragmatic, and unique features as well as methods evident from using the apps. While there are hundreds, if not thousands of language-learning applications, this study used a very narrow key search in order to eliminate expensive apps. Ultimately, five apps were chosen in order to make it possible to closely observe and learn what these applications are capable of. The descriptions and data analysis done in this study goes beyond what the iTunes App Store provides. Minimal description exists in the iTunes store, forcing learners to purchase English language-learning apps with little knowledge about them. While customer reviews are extremely useful, a further investigation of what the users are saying and suggesting are perhaps the most important towards determining what these applications can offer. The aim of the study is to provide ESL teachers/instructors with a list of five language-learning apps that have at least 25 customer reviews, are affordable, can also provide unique features, and language content relevant towards English language acquisition. Furthermore, the study aims to provide a deeper analysis into the way a language-learning app presents the language content (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, speaking, listening, reading, etc.) through current methods and allowing communicative skill development. An emphasis on the social acceptability of the language content as well as the practicality is important towards showing how the language content could be used in English language teaching.

Research Context

Primarily, the research done in this study is to inform professionals in the field of TESOL (Teaching to Speakers of Other Languages) and similar fields of the mobile apps available and useful for the classroom. With this in mind, the research used each app as if the researcher was the student. The researcher gradually gained knowledge of the type of language content

presented within each app. By using each app, I was able to provide detailed descriptions of what each of the five apps actually do and provide the ELL. This is important for the fact that the seller of the app does not provide a detailed and exact description, therefore possibly misleading teachers and students as to what the app offers. This is why the importance of downloading and fully using and understanding the app is valuable but it also provides a deeper understanding of the language content and structure each app has to offer.

The population using language-learning apps would be adult ELLs at a college or university in an English intensive program. The language-learning apps are useful for those learning English as a second language, and are most useful when paired with teacher instruction. Out of the hundreds of language-learning apps available, five were selected to be researched and described. These language-learning apps were chosen due to their useful and unique properties (methods, language content, presentation, etc.) to the overall ESL education community for furthering ELLs' competence and knowledge.

Second, a deeper look into the target audience for the language-learning applications is required for deeper analysis. This required the researcher to look at customer reviews posted on the iTunes app store. The first 25 reviews in order from most recent date were selected, transcribed and finally analyzed. A more in depth review of the analysis will be shown later in this chapter. The importance of the reviews will be shown in chapter, 5, which will look at teacher theories, among other themes.

Overview of Research Design

The design of the study started with the detailed description of the design and content available in each app. Next I transcribed the customer reviews from the five selected apps. Then, I categorized each customer review as Negative, Positive or Neutral. Finally, I analyzed the

language in each of the reviews. This analysis consisted of finding keywords and then determining categories for each of those.

Data Sources

The following data sources listed in the Chapter Four Findings section provide a deeper look into each app studied and reviewed by the researcher. Each source is different in its own way; for instance, language content changes drastically, from asking the learner acquire vocabulary words and being able to correctly choose the part of speech a word belongs to. Additionally, the level of proficiency the ELL must have changes from app to app as well as the level of involvement by the student or teacher and the features that are present in each app. The features or uniqueness of an app can be defined by whether an app can provide text recognition, voice recording, score marking, control setup, downloading of external information, and visual recognition. Each of these features are important towards a thorough analysis of each of the ten language-learning apps, and are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1

List of Data Sets

App Name	Content Type
SuVoBi	Vocabulary
Learn English	Vocabulary/photo recognition
Listening Drill	Audio/visual learning
Vocab Lite	Vocabulary
English Pronunciation	Speaking/Recording/Listening

Rationale for Data Sources

As previously stated, each app has its own unique features and content which contribute to the final selection to be studied. The main qualification for selecting a data source was that it must be for ELLs, must be free and must be for adults. The language-learning apps were not chosen because they were easy, hard or fun, but for the fact that they provide a service for adult ELLs and have the ability to expand their knowledge. The choice of each app (data source) was due to the lack of focus on language-learning apps as a genre in MALL. Additionally to show the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) that language-learning apps exist, are free and useful for in class instruction. The selection of language-learning apps was based on the research questions, as well as the researcher's own determination to provide a well-rounded sample for the following domains of language teaching: reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In the end, the apps were narrowed down by the number of customer reviews available to be analyzed.

Criteria for Data Sources

The five language-learning apps were selected due to the popularity of the app on the Apple iTunes store, though there were very few ratings of all language-learning apps listed. Then the next selection criterion was the price of the app, including free language-learning apps and excluding language-learning apps that require an initial purchase but did not exclude language-learning apps that provide in-app purchases. These language-learning apps are then chosen by a combination of how Apple describes the age level and whether they were age-appropriate for adult learners. From the top twenty of these language-learning apps, I narrowed down the language-learning apps to the top ten that provide different language content and design, or have a different intent for the ELL, such as preparation for standardized testing, grammar reviewing,

vocabulary builders etc. Finally, I was able to narrow those down ever further to five based on there being 25 or more written customer reviews

Data Analysis

In selecting the language-learning apps, first a search for “ESL apps” was done in the iTunes App Store, which produced hundreds of results. The search was then narrowed to “free” and sorted by “most popular.” Then the first 30 ESL related apps listed were selected and downloaded. After downloading age-appropriate language-learning apps, 12 were selected. To define age appropriateness, language-learning apps were chosen that did not appear to be specifically for adolescents, such as those including photos or speech that misconstrued as inappropriate speech for adults (childish). Then the 12 apps were played, in order to identify themes that could emerge, the content, and the overall set-up of the app. The reason for personally investigating each app prior to choosing it for the study was to identify whether the language-learning apps were legitimately free for adult learners and were in fact for adult ELLs. Finally the selected language-learning apps were narrowed down to 10, but an additional criteria was required. The apps must have at least 25 customer reviews, therefore, five apps were finally chosen for this study.

Due to the fact that there were two separate analyses represented in this study, I have divided the below sections to delve deep into the process in which I selected, analyzed and presented the data. First I will look at the quantitative analysis, the steps taken theories behind the format of analysis. Then I will look at the qualitative analysis procedures, tools used and explain the uses of the tables.

Process 1: Quantitative Analysis

While the number of language-learning apps was limited, it was not limited to a specific content type, nor was it restricted to proficiency level. The goal of this design is to provide language-learning apps that can be used as a resource to aid in any proficiency level for in class instruction for adult ELLs. After each language-learning app was selected, a format was created to explain the language content and design of the language-learning apps, and is represented in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Data Set Format

Title
Author/Designer:
Cost:
Target Audience:
Language Proficiency:
Purpose of app:
Level of involvement:
Design and Content

For this format to be successful, the researcher first used the app as an ELL using the language-learning app for the first time. Information, such as author, title and cost was attainable in the basic description of each app. Language proficiency level was not indicated, therefore, this was selected based on the level of work/knowledge an adult ELL would need prior to using a language-learning app. The level of learner involvement is determined by the time required to complete a task in the app. For instance, a low level of involvement might only require the ELL

to complete three to five minutes of work at one time. The medium involvement would require five to 15 minutes and the high level of involvement would be 15 to 25 minutes. The levels of involvement include more than one task at a time, therefore a low level of involvement would be one to two, medium three to four and high can be anywhere from one to six. Finally, within the design and content section, I describe the app's features, type of content, design of how the content is presented and the pragmatics. These items all contribute towards chapter five.

Process 2: Qualitative Analysis

In the qualitative analysis section, I will be describing the process in which I collected the data from the customer reviews. First, I searched on the iTunes app store under the name of the app for the reviews. Then I broadened the search by view all the reviews for all the versions of that app. Next, I arranged the reviews by most recently posted. Lastly, I took the first 25 reviews and transcribed them.

Transcribing. The transcribing was a tedious task, but easily acquired. I required the following information from the reviews: Screen name, Date, Rating Title, Start Rating, and Review. These items were required in the case that a reference was needed to the original source. Though the reviews are constantly changing in number, a person could search for the review based on the Screen name or date. The transcription is available in the appendix 1.

Calculating percentages. In calculating the percentages, I first needed to categorize the apps based on a positive, negative and neutral status. All apps with a four and five star review from customers received a positive status, all apps with a three star rating were given neutral, and one and two received negative. In table 3, you can see the format in which the positive, negative and neutral comments are portrayed in chapter four. The importance of the table below shows

how customers identify good and bad apps. Ultimately this information will contribute to a deeper analysis in chapter five.

Table 3

Blank Example: Percentage of Reviews

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	#%	#%	#%

Keyword and Frequency Analysis. In the internal analysis of the reviews, I required a set type of comment in which I would use to tally the number of times an app is reviews using that term or a similar one. Though it is difficult to find set of words in order to determine what users are saying about an app, I was able to decide upon types of comments in the below table. The table also shows the key words in which the type of comment was search by. The keyword match is meant to allow for a broader, yet concise representation of what users are saying. In the end, the format of the table will allow for further analysis of teaching theories in chapter five.

Table 4

Internal Analysis of Reviews: Defining Key Words for Types of Comments

Type of comment	Key Words
Entertaining	Fun, interesting, effective, boring, engaging
User Friendly	Helpful, functionality, can't find, annoying, clean and clear, cannot restore, no way to go back, easy to use, navigation features, crashes, fix, useful, works,
Content accuracy	Grammar errors, spelling errors
Review/Practice	Cycling words, practice, reviewing, exercises, refresher, studying, repeats words, drills
Vocabulary	Words, vocab, vocabulary, learn words, new words
Speaking Skills	Pronunciation skills, intonation, improve accent,
Provides examples	Sample sentences, sentence examples, prompts
Recording of user voice	Recorded, recording, voice modulation,
Sound/Audio	Audio Pronunciation, pronunciation, sound quality, fix sound, sound functions, audio, reads the sentence
Analysis	Tests, quiz, Analyzes
Listening skills	Practice listening, improves listening,
Instructive	Guided study, teach(ing), taught, instructive, learn, language learning
Visuals	Choosing picture, visual

Limitations of the Methodology

With any study, limitations of a methodology do exist. First, the apps are studied by a native speaker, which could skew the description. While I would have liked to have ELLs use and report their findings of the apps, the limiting time was a factor in this. This is also the reason for reference to customer reviews. These reviews, while useful, only give a small amount of information which needs to be inferred. If there was direct contact with the users, perhaps the researcher could conduct follow up questions in order to understand certain responses better.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the reader with a clear and concise description of the steps taken to complete the study on language-learning apps. The process of selecting the language-learning apps was time-consuming due to the necessity of using each app and then choosing a select number to look at even closer in providing the study with greater details of language content. As explained, every part of the research design was chosen to enable a thorough investigation of the language content and methods within the app and to show the importance of the language content and how it can be used in the classroom. Moving forward into chapter four, the findings, the data sources are revealed and described in detail.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Data Set Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the five selected language-learning apps. Each of the five apps are represented by basic information, the construction/design and content of the app, customer review data and an internal analysis of the reviews. These items are important for contributing to the search for theoretical practices using apps in the classroom, determining the major themes of the apps, determining the skills the apps can promote and enhance the learning experience. The applications reviewed in this chapter are also known as the data sets in which aim to answer the following research questions:

1. What language content and communicative skills do free iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

2. What ESL learning methods and approaches do these iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

3. What are some iPad language-learning app features that would enhance the learning experience in a classroom for adult English language learners?

4. In what ways are consumer reviews indicating how to utilize the apps in leading towards theories of practice for language-learning apps?

Data Sets

A: SuVoBi

Author/Designer: SuVoBi

Cost: Free and additional test preparation can be purchased on this app.

Target Audience: English language learners

Language Proficiency: High/Advanced Proficiency/High school or higher

App Type: Vocabulary, Test Preparation

Purpose of App: Formatted for test preparation such as: GRE, SAT, ACT, GMAT, IELTS, TOEFL.

Level of Involvement: Low to High. This depends on the length of time the adult ELLs spends per day using the app.

Content of App: SuVoBi requires the ELL to read vocabulary words and match them to the definition. The SuVoBi app prepares the ELL for exams such as IELTS and TOEFL among other exams not specifically related to ESL. The vocabulary is advanced and most likely too hard for many ELLs below the high proficiency level. The language would unlikely be seen outside the classroom or on standardized tests. The words are academic in level and not typically heard in everyday conversation but could be useful in an academic environment, depending on the major topic. The app uses a multiple-choice format, with four definitions to choose from, only one of which is correct. If the correct answer is chosen the first time, the ELL will move forward to the next word and question. If an incorrect answer is chosen, the learner must review the word's definition to learn and memorize it. The app allows the learner to continue to the next word at his or her own pace. At the end of all new word sets, the incorrect words are repeated to see if the ELL has acquired the words they previously did not know. When the ELL completes 10 or more words correctly in a set of questions, SuVoBi congratulates the learner and rewards them by granting them the option to publish their success on social media (Twitter or Facebook). Different levels of phonetics within SuVoBi will allow the ELL to hear the vocabulary words given, but sometimes words are hard to hear and are not

pronounced properly or clearly. SuVoBi does promote word recognition, in other words, the app helps ELLs develop a “phonological awareness” of word sounds, spelling and definition through basic modes of written and spoken language. The app uses a “spectrographic phrase” for each word when the ELL selects the wrong answer to the questions. A spectrographic phrase as described by O’Grady et al (2010) when a word is broken down by the phonetic alphabet for the learner to spell out the word and understand how it is pronounced. The app includes the part of speech in the definition and review of the word by having the learner identify and learn how the word is used in a sentence. This requires them to use the word appropriately later when reviewing the word again. Though the app does not provide syntax rules or methods, it does use the defined word in a sentence to show how it can be used.

Data Collection: In table 5, comment percentages are provided. It is shown that there is a much higher positive comment trend in comparison to both negative and positive combined. In table 6, all types of comments are listed, then the positive and negative tally for each key word. Only eight of the types of comments can be seen in the positive and negatives for SuVoBi.

Table 5

SuVoBi: Positive, Negative and Neutral Comment Percentages

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	80%	8%	12%

Table 6

SuVoBi: Internal Analysis of comments

Type of comment	Positive	Negative	Total
Entertaining	5	1	6
User friendly	7	5	12
Content Accuracy	0	0	0
Review/Practice	5	2	7
Vocabulary	11	0	11
Speaking Skills	0	0	0
Provides examples	1	3	4
Recording of user voice	0	0	0
Sound/Audio	0	5	5
Analysis	2	1	3
Listening skills	0	0	0
Instructive	5	1	6
Visuals	0	0	0

B: English Pronunciation

Author/Designer: Otterwave

Cost: Free

Target Audience: English language learners

Language Proficiency: Low to High

App Type: Communicative/Conversational

Purpose of App: practice for speaking and listening

Level of Involvement: Medium to high for students and medium to high for teachers

Content of App: English Pronunciation has listening and speaking features that contribute towards real life and academic practice. The language can be for: job interviews, telephone, negotiations, management, sales, socializing, meetings, travel, presentations, and communications. There is very little misleading language. The app promotes fluency and timing of phrases in order to assist with appropriate language

conversation. It also assists with word construction and topics for conversation. Due to the lesson creation feature, the social situation can vary and be adapted to the necessary requirements.

On the Main screen there are nine options to choose from, “speaking, create lesson, results, sentences, help, settings, twitter and games”. The first option, “Speaking”, instructs the ELL to choose a category, such as: “job interviews, telephone, negotiations, management, sales, socializing, meetings, travel, presentations, and communications”. When the ELL selects a category, they are instructed to “1) Tap on the start button to listen, 2) Tap the microphone button to record, 3) Read sentence above, finally 4) Tap the microphone again to stop”. After these steps are completed, the app shows a detailed visual report of the recording. Pronunciation and timing are calculated by the app’s algorithm in order to score or rate the performance from A to F, A being the highest rating and F the lowest. The recording is visually represented by vocal waves or oscillations which shows where words ended in the recorded versus where the oscillations should be. The ELL can listen to their own recording as many times they need and then move on to more challenging listening and speaking exercises.

The second option on the main screen is the “create a lesson”. This option allows the teacher/instructor to create sentences. This function is simple and easy. First, it asks the teacher to enter words for the lesson. When the teacher enters the sentences, the recording function automatically produces the sentences with a pre-recorded voice (not British). This function can be used an unlimited number of times.

The third option shows the results of each lesson and test given. The fourth option shows each sentence that is offered on the app as well as the score the ELL has acquired.

The “help” option shows the ELL how to operate the app. The “settings” option allows the learner to change the voice style, whether to show help popups at the start of the lesson, the ELL’s name, password and additional privacy settings. The last two options allow you to post the progress via Twitter and play related games.

Data Collection: Table 7 lists the positive, negative and neutral comments for English Pronunciation. Still having a high positive rating from reviewers, this also reflects on the internal analysis in Table 8 listed below. Table eight shows six different comment type, mostly positive reviews indicated the key words for the comments types.

Table 7

English Pronunciation: Positive, Negative and Neutral Comment Percentages

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	87%	9%	4%

Table 8

English Pronunciation (Otterwave): Internal Analysis of Comments

Type of comment	Positive	Negative	Total
Entertaining	2	0	2
User friendly	5	5	10
Content Accuracy	0	0	0
Review/Practice	2	0	2
Vocabulary	0	0	0
Speaking Skills	4	0	4
Provides examples	0	0	0
Recording of user voice	1	1	2
Sound/Audio	0	0	0
Analysis	2	0	2
Listening skills	0	0	0
Instructive	0	0	0
Visuals	0	0	0

C: Learn English With Lingo Arcade

Author/Designer: Alligatorapps.com

Cost: Free, offers in-app purchases

Target Audience: English language learners

Language Proficiency: Beginner

App Type: Vocabulary, Communicative

Purpose of App: word association to pictures in order to learn English

Level of involvement: High- requires hours of practicing time for successful learning.

Content of App: Learn English with Lingo Arcade provides important reading and listening skills for academic and other situations. It could be especially useful for those ELLs that have a low English proficiency level in listening and spelling. It provides important words to know, such as “man,” “woman,” “child,” “sleeping,” and “laughing” as these words can be used on a daily basis. The images portray social norms as well skills towards visual identification of an action or object and learning the spelling and sound words make. The language-learning app is set up like an arcade game, with a circle consisting of six categories. Out of the six categories there are only three available, the other three require points to unlock them. The first three categories available instantly for playing are, “Does it match?” “Photo hunt” and “Review.” The additional three categories are unlocked as the learner earns points in the first three stages, and then there are levels within each category that can be unlocked through points or purchase. Each of the categories is unlocked after 100% of the first three are completed successfully. For each time an ELL plays the first category level, “Photo Hunt,” a variety of images are shown and a recording says the word out loud through the device. The ELL must select

the correct image to match with the word said out loud. During this time, there is a countdown from the time started, once this time is finished, the level ends. When the level is complete, it will indicate how many matches were correct. The goal of the level is to complete as many word association drills as possible. These words can include, but are not limited to objects, action words, people, and places. The same images are shown over and over again for certain words or phrases. The level is mainly for practicing listening skills and word recognition. As the levels get harder in this category, the exercise is repeated but the words are spelled out. Additional levels for harder photos are available later with purchase or to unlock with points.

The second category, “Does it match?” is a matching exercise that requires the learner to confirm that the word given matches the photo. The goal is to get as many correct answers in the time given. Each number of correct answers adds up to a score that indicates the completion of a level.

The third category, “Tag it!” has an audio component where the word is said out loud by the app and the learner must select the correct photo that goes with the word. Again, this must be done as quickly as possible to get as many correct answers. The words and corresponding photos become harder as the levels become more advanced. The levels can still be unlocked with points or by purchase.

The fourth category, “Word Puzzle” requires the learner to rearrange the letters to form the word that corresponds with the photo. If the learner completes the spelling, the app will say the word out loud.

The fifth category, “Challenge” is much harder than the previous categories. It is a combination of all the categories. After the ELL accumulates 120 points they can continue to the next level and start learning new words, the point system may vary.

The Sixth and final category, “Review”, shows all the words that the learner had used within the other categories. The learner can choose a word to practice in this category, there doesn’t seem to be different levels in this category.

Data Collection: Table 9 shows the positive, negative and neutral ratings of reviews for Learn English with Lingo Arcade. This is the highest rated app for positive reviews out of the five. It has no negative comments and very few neutral. Table 10 shows that six of the comment types are present in the reviews; most of the reviews still rated positive.

Table 9

Learn English with Lingo: Positive, Negative and Neutral Comment Percentages

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	96%	0%	4%

Table 10

Learn English With Lingo: Internal Analysis of comments

Type of comment	Positive	Negative	Total
Entertaining	2	1	3
User friendly	2	0	2
Content Accuracy	0	0	0
Review/Practice	2	0	2
Vocabulary	0	0	0
Speaking Skills	0	0	0
Provides examples	0	0	0
Recording of user voice	0	0	0
Sound/Audio	0	0	0
Analysis	0	0	0
Listening skills	1	0	1
Instructive	2	0	2
Visuals	1	0	1

D: Listening Drill

Author/Designer: Neointro

Cost: Free

Target Audience: English language learners

Language Proficiency: Beginner to High/Advanced

App Type: Communicative/conversational

Purpose of App: To download TED talks, school listening drills etc.

Level of Involvement: Downloads and listening

Content of App: Listening Drill provides a unique platform for teachers to utilize content and features towards adult ELL's listening skills. The audio books and additional audio/visual components allow for a realistic ability to communicate in different contexts. The ability to use this app independently depends on the available downloads through TED talks among others. With the plethora of topics for TED talks, lessons can cover

hundreds of topics, possibly individualizing the lessons. The app can increase communicative skills depending on the files available. The app allows the teacher/instructor or ELL to upload additional files. The files uploaded can be related to improving reading, writing, speaking and listening skills as well as other science and humanities topics important for future studies in the United States. Audio and video files to be uploaded can be audio books, TED talks, and sample files, as well as other that instructor-created ones. The content of the app is by the discretion of ESL instructors/teachers and adult ELLs.

Data Collection: Table 11 shows the positive, negative and neutral comment ratings for Listening Drill; still showing a higher positive rating than the negative and neutral combined. In table 12 below, the type of comment is listed as well as the positive and negative times appeared throughout the reviews.

Table 11

Listening Drill: Positive, Negative and Neutral Comment Percentages

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	84%	8%	8%

Table 12

Listening Drill: Internal Analysis of Comments

Type of comment	Positive	Negative	Total
Entertaining	0	1	1
User friendly	3	1	4
Content Accuracy	0	0	0
Review/Practice	1	0	1
Vocabulary	0	0	0
Speaking Skills	1	0	1
Provides examples	0	0	0
Recording of user voice	1	0	1
Sound/Audio	3	0	3
Analysis	0	0	0
Listening skills	3	0	3
Instructive	4	0	3
Visuals	0	0	0

E: Vocab Lite

Author/Designer: Knowji Inc

Cost: Free

Target Audience: English language learners

Language Proficiency: Beginner to High

App Type: Vocabulary, Test Preparation

Purpose of App: To learn and practice new vocabulary words for academics/testing.

Level of Involvement: Low for ESL instructors, High for ELLs.

Content of App: Vocab Lite provides a very straight forward product; to be able to study words using examples, phrases, audio and visual components. The practical application of the words available, make it possible for the ELL to use words academically and in regular conversation. The words, photos, sentences and audio are intended for advanced learners as well as for low-level learners depending on the category chosen.

Vocab Lite is set up to provide the adult ELL with a list of assignments listed on the “My Library” page. In this library, the ELL can choose the type of vocabulary they would like to learn from the 15 categories listed. The 15 categories include: Favorites (pick and choose words go in this category), SAT Top 500(500 words with 10 samples that are most common SAT words), PSAT (300 words with 5 samples that are the most common for the PSAT), and AWL: “Academic Word List (570 head words with 10 samples), TOEFL (500 words with 10 samples of most essential TOEFL words), Vocab 3-6 (common core- 1000 words with 10 samples ages 8-99), Vocab 7-10 (common core- 1600 SAT/ACT words with 10 samples, ages 12-99), Vocab 3 (common core- 200 words with 5 samples, ages 8-99), Vocab 4 (common core- 200 words with 5 samples, ages 9-99), and Vocab 5 (Common Core- 300 words with 5 samples, ages 10-99), Vocab 6 (Common Core- 300 words with 5 samples, ages 11-99), Vocab 7 (Common Core- 400 SAT/ACT/GRE words with 5 samples, ages 12-99), Vocab 8 (Common Core- 400 SAT/ACT/GRE words with 5 samples, ages 13-99), Vocab 9 (Common Core- 400 SAT/ACT/GRE word with 5 samples, ages 14-99), Vocab 10 (Common Core- 400 SAT/ACT/GRE words with 5 samples, ages 15-99).

For the category labeled “TOEFL”, there are 5 sub-categories to choose from. The first sub-category is called “View and Hear All Words”. In this section there are 10 samples available that are free to use and practice. When you choose a word on the list, for instance, “endorse”, the word is said out loud by the app as soon as it is opened. Under the word, the part of speech is indicated for the word, then the definition is listed. Under the definition, there is a photo that corresponds to the word and then a few

sentences appropriately use the word. To follow, there are synonyms, antonyms, tenses, word family, collocations and the word parts listed.

The second sub-category is called, “Learn and Remember”, which has a multiple choice section where the adult ELL reviews the previously studied word(s). The “Learn and Remember” section has four words listed at the top of the screen with the related sentence shown below that. Additionally there is a photo to visually describe the sentence. In order to include more description, there are three to four sentences listed below the photo, the objective is to match the word correctly with the corresponding sentences. Lastly, synonyms are listed to help the ELL choose the correct answer through context clues. When the correct answer is chosen, the ELL can advance to the next word. When an incorrect answer is chosen, the app reveals the correct answer and states the answer through the audio feature, the answer is heard out loud as well as showing the additional descriptions of the word from the “View and Hear All words” section.

When all words in a section of sub-category two are completed successfully, the app will indicate for the ELL move forward and review the words without photos or any description. The only item listed on the page is the word, the tense indicator and three possible definitions or answer. As the learner moves forward into the third level of the “Learn and Remember” subcategory, word memory and correct spelling of words is required.

The fourth level presented, speaks the word slowly, and then asks “Can you recall the definition” or “does this sound familiar”. If the learner selects “yes” then he/she will move to the full definition as listed in “View and Hear All words”. Regardless of a yes or

no given in the fourth level, the same outcome is shown by allowing the learner to see the original “View and Hear All words” definition.

After the fifth level of the words, the app includes a message saying “good job! You’ve reached your learning goal for today. What would you like to do? –Learn 5 new words- Review Learned words- or done.”

The third sub-category is called “Quiz.” When selected, it shows two levels, the first being “choose a quiz,” and the second “quiz reports.” In the “choose a quiz” section, there are three options to choose from. Option one includes “words to quiz,” “All words in lesson,” “All words learning,” and “New words learning today.” Option two allows for customizing the quiz, i.e., “quiz mode” has four options, “Multiple Choice,” “Spell,” “Spell (no images),” and “flashcards.” Option three offers customization of “Time,” with “30 seconds,” “20 seconds,” “10 seconds,” “5 seconds,” and “No Timer.” The quiz customizations are the same style as represented in the previous TOEFL learning sections. The “quiz reports” section shows all previous and current quizzes taken and compares scores and shows improvement.

Within the “Learning Goal” Sub-category, the ELL can choose how many words per day they would like to learn. The numbers range from one to ten and the ELL can choose to set a “learn by” date.

Lastly, the “status” section shows all statistics for learning through the app and represents “Drill Time,” “Words Drilled, and “Drill Date.” This section breaks down all the words practiced by day and week. Additionally an ELL can email the report to an instructor/teacher. Though this content description only shows the set-up for the TOEFL

words, the same format is also used in the additional word categories to provide uniform formatting as well as consistency.

Data Collection: Table 13 and table 14 below both show data for Vocab Lite. With a high percentage of positive comments, Vocab Lite also has a large number of comment types listed. Table 14 indicates 10 of the comments as being positive or negative.

Table 13

Vocab Lite: Positive, Negative and Neutral Comment Percentages

	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
Percentage of Reviews	84%	12%	4%

Table 14

Vocab Lite: Internal Analysis of Comments

Type of comment	Positive	Negative	Total
Entertaining	7	0	7
User Friendly	8	0	8
Content Accuracy	0	1	1
Review/Practice	4	0	4
Vocabulary	12	1	13
Speaking Skills	2	0	2
Provides examples	0	0	0
Recording of user voice	0	0	0
Sound/Audio	3	2	5
Analysis	1	0	0
Listening skills	0	0	0
Instructive	5	0	5
Visuals	1	0	1

Chapter Summary

Chapter four aimed to show the detailed language content descriptions of the five apps, the basic information, and statistical analysis of customer reviews in order to provide evidence towards the discoveries shown in the following chapter 5, Discussions, Implications and Conclusions. The following chapter will take a closer look into the theoretical uses of the apps based on the customer reviews as well as the researcher's views of the apps. This will also be based on the methods and approaches determined to be used in these apps. Additionally the unique features and content of the app will ultimately contribute towards answering the research questions and provide teachers with a list of unique and relevant apps for teaching adult ELLs.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The descriptions and data analysis provided in chapter four contributed in answering the research questions by revealing the language content/design, underlying themes and features, methods/approaches and communicative skills, which all ultimately lead to theoretical practices. The following chapter, five, is designed to clearly show the features and design of the applications as well as look at the customer reviews and how these two important parts of research contribute towards creating theoretical practices for using the five application in the classroom. Each of the following sections are presented in order to answer the research questions:

1. What language content and communicative skills do free iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

2. What ESL learning methods and approaches do these iPad language-learning apps offer to English language learners?

3. What are some iPad language-learning app features that would enhance the learning experience in a classroom for adult English language learners?

4. In what ways are consumer reviews indicating how to utilize the apps in leading towards theories of practice for language-learning apps?

Research Summary

The following chapter is organized to answer the research questions thoroughly and concisely by utilizing the above mentioned data analysis; as well as look at and interpret the customer reviews based on the key words and percentages of positive, negative and neutral reviews. First, I will introduce themes in order to understand how the language content was

interpreted. The major and minor themes will then be presented; including the language content (grammar, vocabulary etc.), unique features, and the realization of two major themes. Next, I will introduce methods and approaches that the language-learning apps can be categorized in for instructional purposes. The methods and approaches section will look at the communicative, scaffolding, task-based and presentation, practice and production (PPP) approaches. Then an explanation of the qualitative analysis will be provided. Finally, the descriptions of the theoretical practices will be described. The intent chapter five is to go beyond the descriptions of chapter four, and describe how the applications can be useful in the classroom

Themes in Data Sets

The themes are identified through trends in the content of the app section which also described the unique features and communicative skills. In addition to those minor themes, two major themes were recognized. The first major theme provides the adult learner with new knowledge and then practice, while the second only provides practice and assumes the learner has prior knowledge. The first major theme, “knowledge for practice” indicates that an application’s language content provides the adult ELL learner with new knowledge and then practice with that language content. The second major category, “prior-knowledge for practice”, identifies applications that only provide adult ELLs with practicable language content that requires prior knowledge. The two terms coined in this study are not in reference to any other study or to terms familiar to this researcher, therefore they are to be defined within the themes section below.

Defining the Language Content

The language content is broken down into four sections. First, vocabulary identifies three out of the five apps. The second, parts of speech or grammar, is represented by two of the five

apps. The grammar content consists of sentence structure, parts of speech identification as well as tenses. The third section, conversation, is present in two out of the five language-learning apps which promote conversational practice. The conversational content can include reading and listening, listening and speaking or only reading. The last section, exam preparation, is present in three of the five language-learning apps. The exam preparation can include test-like features/language content and possibly overlap with other themes.

With the obvious overlap of categories listed in Table 15, Language Content, apps like, A: SuVoBi can provide vocabulary, grammar and exam preparation. This application also falls into the category of “knowledge for Practice,” whereas app C: Listening Drill only presents a conversational component, and falls into the “prior-knowledge for practice” category. The continued identification of the presented themes to data sets is listed below in Table 15. A more in depth analysis of the themes and apps can be viewed in the analysis of apps in relation to themes section.

Table 15

Language Content

App Name/ Content	Vocabulary	Parts of speech (grammar)	Conversational	Exam Prep
A: SuVoBi	X	X		X
B: English Pronunciation			X	X
C: Learn English with Lingo	X			
D: Listening Drill			X	
E: Vocab Lite	X	X		X

Note. The “X” indicates that the content type is present within the language-learning app.

Unique Features

The unique features are separated into six categories as listed in Table 16. The first feature, sound recognition is a term that indicates that the app can recognize voice and indicate if a word is spoken correctly. The sound recognition feature is only present in one out of the five of apps. The second feature, voice recording, is a term that indicates that the ELL can record their voice and play it back; it is only present in one of the five apps. Third, Score marking, is a term that indicates the provision of a system that can examine, give points or provide feedback per correct or incorrect answer. The score-marking feature occurs within two out of the five apps. The control setup, allows the ELL to make changes for time allotted in an exercise, also allows for changes in the number of questions asked at one time. The control setup occurs within three of the five apps. The audio feature and provides the capability of playing back audio that was prerecorded for listening of words, phrases and sometimes full paragraphs, it is in all five apps. The visual aids unique feature offers photos or images that contribute to learning words or phrases and occurs within three out of five apps. For the five apps, only one comes close to having all six unique features. Many of the apps have more than one unique feature, which is shown directly below in Table 16. A more in-depth view of these features is presented in the analysis of apps in relation to themes section, apps A through E.

Table 16

Unique Features

App Name/Features	Sound Recognition	Voice Recording	Score Marking	Control Setup	Audio	Visual aid
A: SuVoBi			X		X	
B: English Pronunciation	X	X	X	X	X	
C: Learn English with Lingo				X	X	X
D: Listening Drill					X	X
E: Vocab Lite				X	X	X

Represents the five language-learning app features and overlaps between the features.

Analysis of Data Sets in Reference to Themes

The analysis of data sets in reference to themes will reveal information in regards to the unique features and the content being taught or reviewed in the applications. The two themes will be described for how they contribute towards communicative skills. Additionally, the coined terms, “knowledge for Practice” and “prior-knowledge for practice” will apply to each language-learning app.

A: SuVoBi

SuVoBi is mainly a test preparation application that provides new language content, such as vocabulary that the ELL can practice within the test preparation format. The unique features of score marking and audio are recognized, with the audio feature contributing specifically towards communicative skills. Due to the new vocabulary being offered, this app would be categorized among the “knowledge for practice” theme. With sub-themes like score marking, shows the correct and incorrect answers as well as words that need to be studied more. The

audio feature of the app only plays back the word pronunciation. The audio pronunciation is not always correct. Vocabulary can aid in everyday speaking and listening communication skills. While traditionally, vocabulary exercises offer a brief description of the word, SuVoBi offers learners the word's function within a sentence is especially important for context/semantics of the word.

B: English Pronunciation

English pronunciation provides conversational content that uses five out of the six unique features. By providing sound recognition, the learner can record themselves with the voice recording feature and then the app will recognize if the speech patterns follow the phrase provided for the lesson. The app will then give a score marking, A through C, and indicate where the learner should practice. Additionally, there is a control setup provided, allowing the ELL to input additional phrases of their or instructors' choice. When the phrases are first introduced to the learner, the computer uses the recognition software to convert the written language into an audio aid. The phrase is written for the ELL to read and they can listen to the recording as many times as they need to. The communicative skills gained from this app aid in speaking and listening skills. Though this app does not promote new knowledge, it encourages ELLs to practice their speaking skills through voice-recognition software. Due to no new knowledge acquired, the app is categorized as a "prior-knowledge for practice" application.

C: Learn English with Lingo Arcade

Learn English introduces words and phrases that can be considered an early stage of vocabulary and spelling for new English learners. The language content offered to beginner learners can be considered new knowledge and requires the learner to practice. Due the new knowledge and practice, this app falls into the "knowledge for practice category for major

themes. Vocabulary for this app has three key unique features, control setup, audio and visual aids. The control setup allows for changes in the time of each level and change in user. It also allows the progress to be sent to friends and post to social media. Audio is available for every level and for each word presented; the audio is a main feature, which is how each word is presented. Some words are spelled out on the screen but photos are used more often to offer a link between the image and word sounds. As words are presented, the word is spoken by the recording and a corresponding image is shown. The communicative skills associated with this app are provided by the audio portion contributing to listening skills, such as pronunciation of words.

D: Listening Drill

Listening Drill provides conversational practices by listening to phrases or paragraphs. The main purpose of this listening drill app is to provide a platform for ELLs to download video or audio files like TED Talks, Audio books or teacher created assignments. Due to the teacher being able to create new content, the app is hard to categorize, but with the assumption that the video/audio files can provide new knowledge, but perhaps have no way to practice. This app falls outside the two major theme due to this unknown/unlimited content topics. The unique features like audio, visual and control setup are critical for the app's function for downloading files. While the language content of the app is controllable by the instructor and ELL, the language content is always changing. This allows for appropriate language to be used in the audio recordings.

E: Vocab Lite

Vocab Lite has three out of the four language content themes, vocabulary, parts of speech and exam preparation. The vocabulary has audio and visual aids as well as indicates the part of

speech for the word. For each category listed, the first section reviews words and plays a recording of the word with a corresponding image. Later in the category, a quiz feature is available and after quizzes are completed, the ELL can view their learning goals and status of learning. Here they can identify words they need additional practice. Since this app presents new knowledge and expects the ELL to practice this, the “knowledge for practice” theme is appropriate for Vocab Lite.

Analysis of Customer Reviews

In the analysis of customer reviews a percentage of positive, negative and neutral comments were calculated based on the formulation defined in chapter three. The below chart shows the differences between the percentages for the types of customer reviews, such as positive, negative and neutral comments in order to show the high number of positive ratings. As seen in table 17, the app Learn English with Lingo holds the highest percentage, 96%, for positive comments, followed by English Pronunciation with 87%, Listening Drill and Vocab lite with 84% and SuVoBi with the lowest or positive comments at 80%. The percentage of comments helps the researcher identify which applications are viewed more negatively towards learning, while this is important for knowing which apps may be useful, there is not huge number of negative reviews, and therefore all apps will be considered in the theoretical practiced section in this chapter.

Table 17

Cumulative data of positive, negative and neutral comments

Percentage or Reviews	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Neutral Comments
SuVoBi	80%	8%	12%
English Pronunciation	87%	9%	4%
Learn English with Lingo	96%	0%	4%
Listening Drill	84%	8%	8%
Vocab Lite	84%	12%	4%

In looking at the internal analysis of comments, a clear and concise method was chosen to assist in creating table 18 listed below. The table helps the researcher identify key items that the customer reviews were saying in order to categorize them into positive and negative types of comments which can be viewed in chapter four. Although the below chart does not separate the positive and negative comments, I believe that it is most useful in identifying key functions, content or skills that the app has to offer. The chart and the methods and approaches previously introduced will be utilized in assisting the researcher in the descriptions of theoretical practices. Table 18 is available below, which indicates the total positive and negative comment types for each of the five apps.

Table 18

Totals for the Internal Analysis of Comments

Type of comment	SuVoBi	English Pronunciation	Learn English with Lingo Arcade	Listening Drill	Vocab Lite
Entertaining	6	2	3	1	7
User friendly	12	10	2	4	8
Content Accuracy	0	0	0	0	1
Review/Practice	7	2	2	1	4
Vocabulary	11	0	0	0	13
Speaking Skills	0	4	0	1	2
Provides examples	4	0	0	0	0
Recording of user voice	0	2	0	1	0
Sound/Audio	5	0	0	3	5
Analysis	3	2	0	0	0
Listening skills	0	0	1	3	0
Instructive	6	0	2	3	5
Visuals	0	0	1	0	1

Theoretical Practices

When educating ELLs, it is important to know which apps to use along with which methods and approaches they have to offer. Furthermore, it is equally important to know how the applications could be used in the classroom alongside which methods and approaches. While some apps present new language content or others require students to tap into their prior knowledge, these two items assist in developing ideas for teaching practices. As previously stated, the language-learning apps fall into one of two categories, new knowledge and prior knowledge, with this in mind, I am able to categorize apps and place them into categories in addition to the approaches that match. I have researched the apps as well as the approaches and methods in the TESOL field and the specific methods and approaches used to deliver the information appropriately for adult English language-learners attending an Intensive English Program. While this section aims to identify types of methods and approaches related to the ESL

field, it also aims to identify theoretical practices for each of the apps to be used in the classroom. It is important to remember that each app has a purpose and intent for the ELL, but as the app store description does not explicitly state the approaches used, the current findings are based on the chapter four analyses.

Cooperative Learning

While it may seem unlikely that mobile apps can fall into the cooperative or collaborative learning category, it is far from impossible. This is mostly due to the idea that cooperative learning "...is the way that students and teachers work together..." it is most importantly thought of learning strategy training (Freeman-Larsen, 2000, p.164). With the concept of learning strategy training, mobile apps can provide teachers with a resource to utilize in this manner. The teacher can utilize the application's information and learning strategies towards learning how to learn more effectively. The Cooperative learning method is suggested for app instruction because I believe cooperative learning (Jacobs, 1998) method, as cited in Larsen-Freeman (2000) could become a key element in using applications in the classroom. As seen in classrooms, there is limited time but an immense amount of language-learning to be accomplished. Applications can provide additional learning strategies in the classroom as well as at home. The applications can be introduced in the classroom, practiced and then the teacher can troubleshoot any issues with content, or features that the application may or may not provide. Furthermore, the learner training strategies can provide confidence and expedited progress among students who lack the learning strategy foundation as well as prepare adult learners for university level learning.

According to Chomot and O'Malley (1994) (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 164) Metacognition strategies can be "... used to plan, monitor, and evaluate a learning task." In order to arrange conditions that help one learn. One of the metacognition strategies includes cognitive

strategies. In this stage, students can interact with the applications, possibly add content or manipulate it, this can only be accomplished with certain apps, like in English pronunciation or Listening Drill. While the second strategy might prove a little more challenging, the idea that students can interact via applications is not impossible. There are features that allow students to post their progress on twitter or Facebook as well as email their results. Additionally, teachers can allow students to access other blogging features where students can respond in forums related to the application progress. Thus, bringing me to a realization, there can be a technological cooperative learning method for using language-learning apps in the classroom. Applications that fall into this category include Learn English with Lingo Arcade, SuVoBi, English Pronunciation, and Vocab Lite. The Learn English with Lingo Arcade, SuVoBi and Vocab Lite all provide learners with repetition, audio and visual stimulation. For those students who lack learning and studying skills, this app provides practice and repetition while including two significant components from communicative skills. While they also offers new content, they also provide a steady and consistent study environment to help towards student's response and word identification skills. The English pronunciation app helps students to be able to develop listening, reading and speaking skills by modeling the sentence through audio and written form and then requiring the user to speak the sentence back into the app. This helps students gain confidence and listening and reading strategies over time. As the student develops their skills, they create their own sentences, the teacher can or they can move up to a harder level.

Communicative Approach

The communicative approach is known for focusing more on the meaningful communication rather than the structure (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The English pronunciation app provides the user with a numerous amount of topics in which they can pick from. This promotes

meaningful communication by allowing student to choose a topic they feel is important and then requiring them to listen, read and speak the conversation topics. Even though the app does offer explanation of the recorded content, students can use this to assist in focusing on the meaning of the conversation rather than if they said the word correctly. English pronunciation provides an unlimited number of practice. The listening Drill app provides TED talks, audio books and more, but does not require any additional work other than reading and listening to the content they download. Depending on how the teacher presents the work, it can be solely looked at for meaningful communication instead of for structure.

Content Based Approach

The idea that language courses use content from other academic disciplines has been a common occurrence within my own classes. With the term “content based” an instructor can expect to use not only language related items, but materials related to other topics that students can learn to listen, speak, read and write about additional topics in subjects such as the humanities or sciences. With this idea, one of the apps provides features and content that could be used in this format. The Listening Drill app allows for new TED talks, audio books among other things to be uploaded to the app and students can learn about different topics across different academic disciplines.

Scaffolding Method

With Scaffolding, each app selected for this method is to meet six requirements. Those six requirements are to be present within each of the selected apps. The first requirement should model the language content. Second, it should tap into prior knowledge, own experiences or ideas. Third, the app should offer hints or suggestions to the learner, leading them to connect ideas. Fourth, the app should pre-teach (Front loading) vocabulary if introducing vocabulary (new

or previously learned). Fifth, the app should use some form of visual aids. Six, the app should ask questions and allow time for processing (Alder, 2011). Though all of these items might not necessarily be met by an app, I believe that apps can contribute towards the scaffolding method, by folding in ideas and new language while in combination with other materials in the classroom. This ultimately is combining not only the content available in the app, but also bridging the content being taught by the instructor. When ideas and meanings connect in the classroom, students are able to make additional mental connections and acquire language more naturally.

Task-Based Language Learning Approach

This approach focuses on the task of learning; the idea is that specific apps provide educational tasks that ultimately lead to learning or a competency within the related content (vocabulary, conversation etc.). “The approach aims to provide learners with a natural context for language use... learners work to complete a task they have abundant opportunity to interact” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 144). This idea was seen most in the app, Learn English with Lingo Arcade, which provides constant review of the same words, images, sounds and phrases until the user completes a certain amount of exercises correctly. The Listening Drill also provides constant reviews of the same tasks and users can choose to review the same phrases over and over again to gain fluency in speech.

Theoretical Practices Based on Survey Data

The following section aims to answer how the customer review internal analysis indicates what useful features and content are offered through each of the apps. It will take a deeper look at the key words identified for the app and how those translate into useful tools for the classroom.

SuVoBi

While this app has a variety of vocabulary available, all indications of vocabulary by reviews indicated a unanimous positive review. Additionally, reviews showed that SuVobi provides practice and reviews of vocabulary in order to assist in the learning process. While some other problems occurred in the app, such as audio problems (mispronunciation of words and low volume) limited examples given and an almost split positive to negative of the analysis provided to users. Overall, the 25 reviews analyzed showed 80% to be positive, 8% negative and 12% neutral.

This translates into theoretical teaching practices by showing that the most beneficial feature of the app is towards TEFL or ILETS prep course. While there is a clear indication of problems with audio, the instructor would need to review and speak the words used in SuVoBi. This would most definitely assist with confusion and teachers could even use other recordable apps to record word pronunciations for students. Additionally, more practice can be done with these test prep words. Many of the reviews indicated a lack of examples for the vocabulary, therefore instructors can provide synonyms, antonyms and practice sentences as well as require students to use the words more often in class, whether it be in class discussion or in recorded speaking exercises. The difficulty of some words provided by SuVoBi would require some initial preparation. Scaffolding would be required for more challenging words. Constant practice is important in order to aid in successful exam prep.

English Pronunciation (Otterwave)

English Pronunciation has a high percentage of positive reviews, showing that 87% of the customer reviews in some way liked the application. With reviews indicating in some way that the app has entertaining features as well as split views of the user friendly capabilities. The

application offers a lot more than just a basic speaking and listening app by allowing the user to listen, speak, record, listen again and be rated on the skill level. With this in mind, positive reviews indicated a satisfaction with the unique speaking skills provided, review and practice as well as the recording feature. Even though the reviews do not mention the “create lesson” function of the app, I find this to be most important alongside the ability to choose from multiple speaking topics. Teachers can include this application for in class speaking lessons and through creating new lessons relevant to the topics being taught in the classroom. Additionally, instructing students to input certain sentences into the “create lesson” function and enable additional practice would be a way to increase confidence without creating anxiety of speaking in front of the entire class. Of course there are many topics to choose from, but the most important feature for the classroom is the ability for students to hear how to pronunciation words. The audio function was not mentioned in the reviews, but as the researcher, I was able to play with this and understand the accuracy of the pronunciation as well as the grading. Though the pronunciation app does not focus on grammar in any way, the communicative approach allows for direct focus on speaking and listening skills important towards language acquisition and fluency.

Learn English with Lingo Arcade

Learn English with Lingo Arcade provides a variety of functions and features, leading to a high number of 96% of positive comments, no negatives and 4% neutral. Not only does the application provide new content, but it starts from the beginning. Many of the other apps provide a service for higher level proficiency students, while Lingo provides lower level learners something practice. The user friendly format as well as entertaining platform encourages users to

continue to harder levels. While the later levels require a purchase, the beginners can use the app for free.

The teaching component of the application also provides practice; with the high number of positive reviews, very few actually provided useful information regarding the content and feature. I came across a similar response of “great app” repeatedly; but few reviews shed light on the pressing issue of what the positive and negative features and content really are. With this in mind, I was able to identify the review function, listening skills, instructive and visuals as all positive. Additionally, I would like to add the audio production as a positive feature. These features all contribute to student practice and learning. Many low level students struggle in the classroom during big class discussions, instead of long class discussions, teachers could promote the use of Learn English with Lingo Arcade in the classroom and for homework to supplement a lack of speaking at home. The audio function is great for student’s fluency and pronunciation and potentially raise ability within a few times of using the app. The app constantly reviews and repeats words and requires students to complete certain tasks successfully prior to moving to harder levels.

Listening Drill

Reviews for Listening Drill indicated a high percentage of positive comments at 94% with an equal amount of negative and neutral at 8%. The positive reviews indicated specific key words such as: user friendly, review/practice, speaking skills, recording of user voice, sound/audio, listening skills and instructive. The positive key words link well with enhancing communicative skills as well as promoting meaningful conversation. This apps contributes towards learning how to communicate through practice with the given content, most of which is meaningful towards certain real life situations and some examples of topics for conversation.

Listening Drill can be used for listening comprehension in the classroom by having students watch a content topic video by TED talk and then asking them questions about the main idea, or more specific questions about the topic/content of the video. The videos can be combined with grammar lessons. For examples, students write down all the comparative words they hear in the video or all of the adjectives. This will help listening skills as well as assess their skills in grammar. There are many more teaching ideas that this application could work for.

Vocab Lite

Vocab Lite provides very specific content, and allows for a very small number of in class uses. It could easily become useful for students who are quick learners in the classroom and are looking for additional practice of vocabulary. The customer reviews indicated an 84% positive reaction, 12% negative and only 4% neutral. A large number of reviews indicated that vocabulary was the most positive element of the app, with entertaining and user friendly following close behind. Additionally, reviews indicated that the instructive component and the review/practice feature assisted in learning. With fewer positive reviews, the visuals, analysis. Sound/audio, and speaking skills are also revealed. With these types of comments, I am able to come up with theoretical practices utilizing the positive features of the application.

Teachers can use this application for vocabulary use, but also use the instructive portion of the app in order to assist students with their learning techniques. Students must be aware of how they learn and begin to develop additional language learning skills through studying. The application provide audio for the words and allows for quizzes (analysis) in order to show assessment of the learned study skills and content. The application is a great way to prepare for the TOEFL and provide additional prep in the classroom or a class sessions could be based

around the words listed on the app. Then students can bring the app home and continue to practice outside of class.

Conclusions and Implications of the Study

The study revealed that the free iPad language-learning apps provided language content related to vocabulary, conversation, exam preparation and grammar. The free language-learning apps descriptions indicated communicative skills through features that promote practice for reading, writing and speaking. The methods and approaches that apps offer promote learning and practice while accomplishing similar goals. While only a handful of methods and approaches were presented in this study, this does not limit the app's use within the classroom. In fact, a clear outline of teaching theories has been provided based on reviews as well as research of the app.

While major themes presented in chapter five indicate ways to enhance the learning experience, the two major themes, “knowledge for practice” and “prior-knowledge for practice” provide two clear identifications of how the applications can be viewed for in class practices. The two major themes bring a new view of applications and sheds light on how the ten language-learning apps can be applied to in-class instruction. Apps that require prior knowledge, and in the end do not provide this might prove difficult for students and with the tools in the classroom, teachers can teach prior knowledge, utilize the application's features, functions and content alongside in class teaching methods. Though the ease of use from apps providing knowledge and then practice for adult ELLs might prove to be more efficient for those who are working alone or for additional knowledge, these applications still require additional practice or functions that only the in class environment can provide. I believe that both themes of applications can provide instructors with methods and approaches, such as: communicative, scaffolding, and task-based

(though not limited to those three). The unique features like sound recognition and voice recording are limited to one of the apps, English Pronunciation indicates the uniqueness of the features, whereas score marking, control setup, audio and visual aids are among many of the other apps and seem less unique among language-learning applications.

Recommendations for Future Studies

For future studies, I would propose using the applications in the classroom alongside classroom practices. Teachers would keep journals of the progress made through using applications. Optionally, students could keep logs of their use of the apps as well as be interviewed for follow-up questions. Prior to performing such procedures, I would distribute a survey to indicate which adult English language learners own mobile devices and use language-learning applications. Finally I would follow-up with students who own mobile devices and form two groups, one for those students who have used language-learning applications and another for those who have not.

Limitations of the Study

While the customer reviews provided unique and insightful information, they also lacked other components. The customer reviews are limited in their style of review. They do not ask additional questions to follow-up and do not provide a deeper look into the application's extensive use. The review style was extremely basic and provided very short comments, some useful, while other lacking depth. Therefore the customer reviews limited the study by not having actual human subjects to contact for additional thoughts or comments. Additionally, the study only views five applications with hundreds of more applications still readily available for review and analysis. The limited sample size of the applications is a limitation of this study.

Final Comments

This study is only the beginning of future studies on the topic of Mobile applications in the classroom. With the state finally acknowledging the importance of technology in the classroom, specifically mobile devices, I hope to someday soon find more tablets readily available for adult English language learners. While many students I have taught have owned some form of mobile device, not every student owns the same type of platform. Luckily, most apps are found on multiple device platforms. As stated in the research, many of the apps are applicable in the classroom, but have yet to be tested by students of mine. Eventually, I would like to continue this research and find which are actually useful and make the theoretical practices become a reality in the classroom.

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APPENDIX A

Transcriptions for Applications from the iTunes app Store: Customer Reviews

Negative (1-2) Neutral (3) Positive (4-5)

SuVoBi

1. Screen name: Foxboxxer

Date: 01/20/2015

Rating title: A true must have

Star Rating: five

Review: "Very helpful. First flash card app that gives me the words I miss frequently, while cycling in words I got correct but may have forgotten over the weeks. Must have for any word studying."

2. Screen name: Yixiuga

Date: 12/29/2014

Rating title: Good overall

Star Rating: four

Review: "Like: Clean and clear interface. Group words according to certain test or level. Well guided study path. Celebrate your improvement every 50 words or so. Dislike: Pronunciation could be better. Some words only provide sample sentence using synonyms. Overall a good attractive application, I purchased unlimited credit and will be using it from time to time."

3. Screen name: Dirtyboy123

Date: 11/7/2014

Rating title: Problem and question to developer!

Star Rating: One

Review: " can not restore my purchase before. Do I have to click on purchase again. Does it charge once again?"

4. Screen name: Wendyc921

Date: 06/20/2014

Rating title: Not working

Star Rating: One

Review: "I am a professor of literacy, and I reviewed this for possible use with adult literacy tutors. The premise was inviting. But, when the words are pronounced, sound quality is unacceptable. Whether you press SKIP, or PRACTICE, it still goes to the next word, so there is

no practice. The Context offered is scant on some words to achieve any learning. I cannot find where the actual learning is supposed to take place.”

5. Screen name: none

Date: 05/20/2014

Rating title: Bad choice of words; wrong pronunciation

Star Rating: Three

Review: “It’s so called SAT words are for primary school students, and its so called GRE words are for junior high school students. But they threw in some uncommon words in between. Also, most of the words are pronounced incorrectly, so I have to look at online dictionaries for correct pronunciation. In addition, once I skip a word, there is no way to get it back, and if a word enters into practice list by mistake there is no way to get rid of it”.

6. Screen name: Tomuchfor

Date: 03/13/2015

Rating title: Testing World

Star Rating: Five

Review: “Prepare for the real world.”

7. Screen name: u4toieyhrkth

Date: 01/04/2014

Rating title: Almost Perfect

Star Rating: Five

Review: “Tried it and promptly bought the full version. Fun, easy, painless. No wasting time on vocab I already know. If they were to improve it, however, I would recommend a part in the reviewing where you are given a sentence with a blank, so you have to choose the word in context. I would also add more sentence examples because some words don’t have any.”

8. Screen name: Hahaker

Date: 11/20/2013

Rating title: Very helpful

Star Rating: Five

Review: “Easy to use, fun, totally word it even for \$5.99. Defiantly will recommend for anyone who need to improve English vocabulary.”

9. Screen name: crystal yt shi

Date: 10/14/2013

Rating title: Very good for Chinese users

Star Rating: Five

Review: "Bringing learning so much fun."

10. Screen name: 5ef

Date: 10/01/2013

Rating title: Improvements necessary

Star Rating: Four

Review: "Good app for learning and review. Necessary improvements: 1. Add an option to view single list of all words to be reviewed. Clickable for definitions. 2. Add dictionary list of all words to be learned for the test in question. 3. Add arrow keys in all sections to see or reassess a previous word. 4. During drills and tests, add prompts for word antonyms.

11. Screen name: Backslider069

Date: 08/26/2013

Rating title: The best vocabulary app for me

Star Rating: Five

Review: "This app is totally awesome. It will make you learn words. It will not make you bore. I bought the unlimited vocabulary pack for 6 dollars. Totally word it!"

12. Screen name: Unamed King

Date: 08/14/2013

Rating title: Best

Star Rating: Five

Review: "This app should add a Game Center support! It really helps a lot!!!!!!"

13. Screen name: Rholzack

Date: 08/13/2013

Rating title: It works

Star Rating: Four

Review: "Exercise for the mind is what this app delivers."

14. Screen name: Hi

Date: 07/29/2013

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Five

Review: "Exercise for the mind is what this app delivers."

15. Screen name: Crgenduser
Date: 07/21/2013

Rating title: Great App!

Star Rating: Five

Review: "This app is amazing! Easy to use, and even fun. A great resource, I highly recommend this app."

16. Screen name: Bearphilocat
Date: 07/12/2013

Rating title: Good program but too pricy.

Star Rating: Three

Review: "It is a nice program, but it is quite pricy after the trial period. Many other learning programs available online. Why spend too much..."

17. Screen name: JupiterSkies89
Date: 07/02/2013

Rating title: Extremely helpful!

Star Rating: Five

Review: "This is an amazing app. It does exactly what it is supposed to. Very easy to use. Definitely worth 5 stars. If you want to expand your vocabulary give this a shot."

18. Screen name: Bryan024
Date: 06/28/2013

Rating title: Just what this app needed

Star Rating: Five

Review: "I started using this app and thought it was great. And it is. It really helps with learning vocabulary BUT it would give you common words that were easy and there was no way to skip them. Now that there is functionality to skip words I'm ready to invest more money and knock at this GRE exam. Nice update."

19. Screen name: Annakiss
Date: 03/24/2013

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Five

Review: "I learned a lot of new words."

20. Screen name: Ally Means

Date: 03/14/2013

Rating title: The computer generated voice is...

Star Rating: Three

Review: "Down right terrible! I'm pretty sure some words are not even being pronounced correctly. Other than that this is a great practice method. A few words here then quiz, oh you missed that it tells you what it is, then back to quiz a few more questions. Wash, Rinse, repeat. I'm not sure what the buy more feature is, but I'm pretty sure it's to get them money and get more words to practice on. Can't just sell the whole app for \$4 bucks, I'd pay that."

21. Screen name: Nickmanstickman

Date: 03/14/2013

Rating title: Great way to learn vocabulary

Star Rating: Five

Review: "This app is magnificent and does a great job teaching vocabulary words. If you don't have a strong vocabulary like myself then this is a great way to learn. I never payed attention in school and now I'm not the most educated person and it makes me not was to converse with others. I wanted to better myself so I searched for a vocab app and found this. It's honestly an awesome app and the pace is perfect. The app drills the vocab into your head with quizzes, repetition of the words, synonyms and example sentences. I believe it deserves every star, and it's FREE! I definitely recommend it if you were like myself or just need the help."

22. Screen name: Jesse Ashcraft

Date: 03/13/2013

Rating title: Neat but skips reviews

Star Rating: Four

Review: "I would give this game five stars, but whenever you close the app (as in actually eliminate the running process) it will have introduced one or two new words to the quizzes without ever having taught you them. I have to try to remember to leave this app open all the time when I'm closing my other apps. Super annoying. Developers please fix."

23. Screen name: Alonso Trejo

Date: 01/09/2013

Rating title: Great Structure.

Star Rating: Five

Review: "The way this app is built is simply amazing. Vocabulary isn't thrown at you like other resources, but is instead gradually blended with vocabulary you already know."

24. Screen name: Cool Dude

Date: 12/26/2012

Rating title: I like it, pretty good.

Star Rating: Five

Review: "Good."

25. Screen name: Lollipops crew

Date: 12/02/2012

Rating title: Great App.

Star Rating: Four

Review: "Could the voice of the gentleman who pronounces the terms sound ANY more depressed?? Other than that, great app all around."

English Pronunciation- Otterwave

54 Ratings

1. Screen name: Masin7171

Date: 03/09/2015

Rating title: It's a good app but it has something to be fixed

Star Rating: Three

Review: When I create a new lessons. I can't find a way to delete it.

2. Screen name: Sparkle500

Date: 02/07/2015

Rating title: The best!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Best app out there for nonnative speakers. It lets you know what word needs more practice. It tells you the sentence, let's you recorded it and then gives you your score... but you have the option to analyze every single word you said. Perfect! Just what I need it! Thank you!

3. Screen name: Victhorator

Date: 12/20/2014

Rating title: Good

Star Rating: Five

Review: Crash fixed, now working great!

Previous review: The app is not updated and crashed when stopping recording; no answer from support.

4. Screen name: doola3

Date: 12/14/2014

Rating title: Crashes

Star Rating: One

Review: App crashes every time I record. Every time.

5. Screen name: JuliaPalt

Date: 09/22/2014

Rating title: Great app

Star Rating: Five

Review: Great app! Please fix back button on ipad air. I have to delete and reinstall app every time.

6. Screen name: Maru20

Date: 08/10/2014

Rating title: Awesome

Star Rating: Five

Review: Very useful and interesting.

7. Screen name: Rosa Maria Coronel Garcia

Date: 06/01/2014

Rating title: Super excellent

Star Rating: Five

Review: Repeat: Super Excellent. And also it works perfect. Congratulations for this great work. Thank you very much.

8. Screen name: Moe.Khan.usa

Date: 05/05/2014

Rating title: Perfect but need to fix many things

Star Rating: Five

Review: Being a non-native speaker this app had helped me to improve my pronunciation skill. However, there are couple of problems. 1- Headphone does not work. So people next to you will listen to you or you practice in your bedroom. 2- When I choose male voice I still get female

voice. Some small fix. Other than that this app is worth every penny. Thanks for developing such technology. Highly recommended.

9. Screen name: ddeadlyygq135il”!

Date: 03/05/2014

Rating title: Nice

Star Rating: Four

Review: Effective for non English person

10. Screen name: KentaHi

Date: 02/21/2014

Rating title: Great App

Star Rating: Four

Review: Great app

11. Screen name: Unknownly known

Date: 09/25/2013

Rating title: Very good app

Star Rating: Four

Review: I like it

12. Screen name: Rajeshcr

Date: 09/25/2013

Rating title: Excellent!!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Very good app for voice modulation

13. Screen name: Carmenmb

Date: 06/11/2013

Rating title: Great app

Star Rating: five

Review: Great to learn language, good tool to test pronunciation, I really recommend this app for people who like to learn to speak English.

14. Screen name: TORLPR

Date: 06/16/2013

Rating title: Very bad app

Star Rating: One

Review: I regret had bought this application. It does not worth the price.

15. Screen name: iPraveen

Date: 05/04/2013

Rating title: Good one

Star Rating: Five

Review: Like it

16. Screen name: Betzabe86

Date: 04/20/2013

Rating title: Application

Star Rating: Five

Review: Excellent application is worth it for pronunciation and entonation is an A+. thanks much!

17. Screen name: Myatic

Date: 03/03/2013

Rating title: Good app

Star Rating: Four

Review: Great idea! Great app! However, I'm a native speaker and the app was making my scores at 90% accurate. Also, the in app buying, change your pricing and be upfront with the pricing. Advertising for free and then changing is again for those who want to use the app to improve their English. Make a website so we can try it and then choose whether or not to purchase the app.

18. Screen name: Stappstu

Date: 02/28/2013

Rating title: Cool thing

Star Rating: Five

Review: like it, really helpful.

19. Screen name: Kavafianos

Date: 02/26/2013

Rating title: Amazing application

Star Rating: Five

Review: After practicing with this application for a week I can actually talk, dictated to my iPhone and iPad and been understood. Really good application for anybody who wants to improve their accent and speaking skills even if it is good and needs just a little touch up.

20. Screen name: IngridDeane
Date: 02/14/2013

Rating title: Nice app Pro!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Love it! Very Helpful!!!

21. Screen name: Malsawan
Date: 01/27/2013

Rating title: 1

Star Rating: Five

Review: Nice pro

22. Screen name: Juihua Kopko
Date: 01/09/2013

Rating title: Sheena

Star Rating: Five

Review: Love it, very very helpful for people who like me from other country...

23. Screen name: HangsNav
Date: 12/27/2012

Rating title: Awesome App!

Star Rating: Five

Review: I like.

D: Learn English with Lingo Arcade

865 Ratings

1. Screen name: Jeffymando
Date: 04/10/2015

Rating title: Love it

Star Rating: Five

Review: My first language is Spanish and even though I know English, I use this app as a refresher. Awesome job Lingo!

2. Screen name: Yo12135
Date: 04/05/2015
Rating title: Good
Star Rating: Three
Review: It's good but need something more.

3. Screen name: BusyMomNY
Date: 04/02/2015
Rating title: So in love with this app!
Star Rating: Five
Review: I'm so happy I have found this app in the AppStore!

4. Screen name: Vero122
Date: 04/02/2015
Rating title: App Para Niño's
Star Rating: Four
Review: Excellent App

5. Screen name: Kaka578965
Date: 03/26/2015
Rating title: Very good app
Star Rating: Five
Review: Great app I've ever seen.

6. Screen name: Aruolga
Date: 03/22/2015
Rating title: Program
Star Rating: Five
Review: Great program for children. Thanks for crafting it.

7. Screen name: Roben forever
Date: 03/19/2015
Rating title: Congratulations
Star Rating: Five
Review: Its very nice.

8. Screen name: El guiler
Date: 03/14/2015

Rating title: Guiler

Star Rating: Five

Review: very great

9. Screen name: Evelyn
Date: 03/11/2015

Rating title: Great Vocab

Star Rating: Five

Review: that app is amazing rate: 10000.

10. Screen name: luj
Date: 03/06/2015

Rating title: Cool

Star Rating: Five

Review: love this app it's veryyyyyy helpful.

11. Screen name: Mshahbazi
Date: 03/05/2015

Rating title: Good

Star Rating: Five

Review: It's very good application

12. Screen name: Jjdelarosa
Date: 02/25/2015

Rating title: Nice

Star Rating: Four

Review: Nice and it should be free

13. Screen name: Chal3
Date: 02/22/2015

Rating title: Good

Star Rating: Five

Review: This is a good app.

14. Screen name: 1111111111
Date: 02/20/2015

Rating title: Fun

Star Rating: Five

Review: Fun cool

15. Screen name: Joden12342
Date: 02/20/2015

Rating title: Awesome

Star Rating: Five

Review: it's a great app

16. Screen name: BONI21
Date: 02/14/2015

Rating title: Super fun!!

Star Rating: Four

Review: I like this app a lot.

17. Screen name: DT3162
Date: 02/11/2015

Rating title: Great for English learning

Star Rating: Five

Review: My student has great practice listening to the words and choosing the correct picture.

18. Screen name: Chikungunlla
Date: 02/08/2015

Rating title: Excellent

Star Rating: Five

Review: Thank you for a wonderful instructive game.

19. Screen name: Dormes
Date: 02/08/2015

Rating title: Buena

Star Rating: Four

Review: entertaining.

20. Screen name: bryteside
Date: 02/07/2015

Rating title: Excellent for beginners

Star Rating: Four

Review: Useful tool for supplement to classroom instruction.

21. Screen name: Sonikkuislikegreatjs
Date: 02/06/2015

Rating title: Awesome

Star Rating: Five

Review: This app is worth every cent I spent on it and my mother love it to death. It teachers her so well and it's fun too.

22. Screen name: Edgar S-D.
Date: 02/05/2015

Rating title: Good Start

Star Rating: Four

Review: This is a good app for beginner (newcomers) ELL students.

23. Screen name: Banderaj
Date: 02/05/2015

Rating title: Good app

Star Rating: Five

Review: I think this is good app.

24. Screen name: Asvteacher32
Date: 01/30/2015

Rating title: Awesome Game

Star Rating: Five

Review: Love it

25. Screen name: YesicanRamirez
Date: 01/30/2015

Rating title: Great app

Star Rating: Five

Review: I tried and I like it's fun to learn a new language (English).

E: Listening Drill

293 Ratings

1. Screen name: Stella3100

Date: 04/08/2015

Rating title: Good app!

Star Rating: Five

Review: I like it. Thanks.

2. Screen name: Locopilot

Date: 03/06/2015

Rating title: Ted

Star Rating: Five

Review: Excellent app!!! No complaints.

3. Screen name: Prince1994

Date: 02/23/2015

Rating title: Almost perfect

Star Rating: Five

Review: This is the best app that you will find to improve your listening! The only problem that I can see is you just can practice with ted talks and some boring books.. But out of it, it's perfect who made this app really wanted to teach English. (I can't wait any longer for the next update).

4. Screen name: Matnic17

Date: 02/22/2015

Rating title: Only English?

Star Rating: Three

Review: Seems like it could be a good app but all the included material is for learning English.

5. Screen name: Pngpeang

Date: 02/12/2015

Rating title: Good reason for learning

Star Rating: Five

Review: I always listening every night before sleep.

6. Screen name: Loceisrael
Date: 02/14/2015
Rating title: Good
Star Rating: Five
Review: It's nice studying English well.

7. Screen name: wordz_5th
Date: 12/13/2014

Rating title: Has potential

Star Rating: Four

Review: It is an interesting concept. I am still playing around with it, but I can myself using this help with my language learning. Unfortunately it seem to only be for those learning English. I was hoping to use it for my French and Japanese studying.

8. Screen name: Crazy
Date: 12/11/2014

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Five

Review: It's very nice app really.

9. Screen name: unknown
Date: 12/11/2014

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Five

Review: Very great app literally.

10. Screen name: Dhyunjdhuhhejh
Date: 11/05/2014

Rating title: Not

Star Rating: One

Review: Needs to be fixed subtitle ASAP.

11. Screen name: unkown
Date: 11/02/2014

Rating title: What to write...

Star Rating: Four

Review: its very useful thanks.

12. Screen name: Om Alhoor
Date: 11/01/2014

Rating title: KSA

Star Rating: Five

Review: This is a great app.

13. Screen name: Yen-Chun
Date: 10/31/2014

Rating title: Great App

Star Rating: Five

Review: It's a great app! It helps me to improve listening skills in fast speed. I realize that there is a way to listen in 2X speed because of this application.

14. Screen name: About App rewiev
Date: 10/23/2014

Rating title: Useful

Star Rating: Four

Review: I think useful app.

15. Screen name: Salmanaanaa
Date: 10/23/2014

Rating title: I like it

Star Rating: Five

Review: Wonderful this app.

16. Screen name: Ferrrrrrri
Date: 10/15/2014

Rating title: ESL

Star Rating: Four

Review: Super Cool.

17. Screen name: Terse2010
Date: 09/30/2014

Rating title: Great tool to improve pronunciation

Star Rating: Five

Review: Thank you for a great application. I wish I could have it sooner. At least now I have a good tool to work on my pronunciation. Please add topics from medicine full of medical terminology. Would be great help for medical students and nurses who are second language speakers. Can you add dialogs from Dr.House Series? One thing: When you listen to someone's talk, record yourself and listen to your voice the program otherwise- great tool! Thank you!

18. Screen name: 3boyss

Date: 09/28/2014

Rating title: It is amazing app. Thank you

Star Rating: Five

Review: Learning English and also my son can have a bed time story every night.

19. Screen name: Someayeh1234567890

Date: 08/23/2014

Rating title: Bad

Star Rating: One

Review: It doesn't work.

20. Screen name: LeiaNita

Date: 08/09/2014

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Three

Review: Really helpful!

21. Screen name: Sunfloweryellow

Date: 08/09/2014

Rating title: Very helpful app

Star Rating: Five

Review: I like this app and thank you the creator of this app!

22. Screen name: Neal R Hoage

Date: 08/03/2014

Rating title: I love it!

Star Rating: Five

Review: It's an excellent app for improving English listening skill!

23. Screen name: Unknown
Date: 07/29/2014
Rating title: This app is very good for language.
Star Rating: Five
Review: Very simple. Very Gooooood!!!!

24. Screen name: Hmm14
Date: 07/13/2014
Rating title: Fantastico
Star Rating: Five
Review: Fantastic app!!

25. Screen name: jdbsusbxizji
Date: 07/06/2014
Rating title: Like it
Star Rating: Five
Review: The sound and the functions are so strong.
G: Vocab Lite
126 Ratings

1. Screen name: 4rewood
Date: 02/14/2015
Rating title: Misleading
Star Rating: Two
Review: I got this in hopes of an amazing free vocabulary app to help me

2. Screen name: sar toghhf
Date: 02/02/2015
Rating title: don't get it
Star Rating: One
Review: it is badest app ever

3. Screen name: HappyMeili
Date: 01/27/2015
Rating title: Highly recommended!

Star Rating: Five

Review: I am a visual audio learner so the rich content on this app really helps me learn. I also really like how the app repeats words that I don't know. I highly recommend it!

4. Screen name: MikeyWChan

Date: 12/29/2014

Rating title: Great app for studying vocab!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Studying for the GRE's was the bane of my existence. I used flash cards to learn the vocabulary words through rote learning. Talk about tedious and boring. This app is definitely a game changer in terms of learning vocabulary words. It sticks with you and it is fun. Highly recommended! Also, glad to see the continued updates and constant support from the developers.

5. Screen name: VillagePat

Date: 12/23/2014

Rating title: Awesome

Star Rating: Five

Review: Holy moly! So easy to learn and remember.

6. Screen name: Annkitsz

Date: 12/12/2014

Rating title: Great vocabulary builder

Star Rating: Five

Review: I love this app. It's the only one I've found that has less common words (haven't gotten too far yet). It helps me to learn different word that's I would like to use in my novels/stories. It's fun, too, and reminds you to review stuff you've already learned. I've learned more words in two days from this app than I have in school for a whole year. (It was actually that bad with education before I moved to another school.) I'd be willing to buy it if I could.

7. Screen name: All min nick names r taken

Date: 12/07/2014

Rating title: Helping a lot

Star Rating: Five

Review: It is so helpful to get this app. It is good and fun! It helps my 8 year old son learn vocabulary words in a way he enjoys. Please get this. You would not believe how awesome this is. I went to a lot of websites and all there was was stuff like "rare" but this actually has challenging words.

8. Screen name: jasoncollette
Date: 12/03/2014

Rating title: awesome app

Star Rating: Five

Review: wow! Really effective in helping me remember words. I am really impressed.

9. Screen name: abhijit sharma
Date: 11/23/2014

Rating title: fantastic!!!

Star Rating: Five

Review: If I had this when I was in school, I could have saved so much time and learning words could have been so much more fun. I'm genuinely jealous of kids in school now. This is a lot of rich, useful time-saving content. Nicely packaged in the palm of your hands. Fast. Fun. Fantastic!

10. Screen name: Manor Lake Starbuck
Date: 11/22/2014

Rating title: Awesome App!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Fun and useful. Amazing app to learn new words!

11. Screen name: Ninda nada
Date: 11/21/2014

Rating title: Totally awesome!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Learning made fun by this app! Well-designed and I love how it reminds me to review words. Well done! 5 stars!

12. Screen name: Coach Cecilia
Date: 11/12/2014

Rating title: Health Coach

Star Rating: Five

Review: I'm utterly impressed by how easy it is to learn on this app. I will definitely check out other learning apps by Knowji.

13. Screen name: Mel Yu
Date: 11/09/2014

Rating title: Unique and effective

Star Rating: Five

Review: There's a lot of different word lists available, and the learning method/algorithm is unique and really drills in the words that you initially get wrong. Pretty neat and something different from other flash card apps I've tried! I also really like the interface of this app- its really easy to navigate and gives different options of how to see the word lists. The lite version is a sneak peak to all the different word lists this company offers.

(new edit after recent update 10/23/2014) I'm really loving the new layout of the app... it's clearer and more organized and makes it easier to navigate.

14. Screen name: Coach Jane

Date: 11/09/2014

Rating title: Cute, fun and helpful

Star Rating: Five

Review: This app is incredibly cute and fun. I normally have a hard time concentrating on learning. This app kept me engaged for hours! As a non-native speaker, the pronunciation really help me learn. Highly recommended to both students AND parents who are also learning the language.

15. Screen name: Sara Tse

Date: 11/09/2014

Rating title: Love this App!!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Knowji is so effective and very easy to use. It really does what it says- to help you learn more in less time!

16. Screen name: MobiAmy

Date: 11/07/2014

Rating title: Wow! The best vocab app!

Star Rating: Five

Review: I am so glad my tutor told me about this app. This is the best vocab app in the app store. We purchased 7-10 and love it!

17. Screen name: Minetafish

Date: 11/02/2014

Rating title: Knowji app is the best!

Star Rating: Five

Review: This app is exemplary! Learning vocabulary is very easy now! I recommend others to buy this app!

18. Screen name: Mowog67

Date: 10/03/2014

Rating title: Omnipotent!

Star Rating: Four

Review: Can I buy a “T”? the apps pronunciation guide says “om nip a ten”.

19. Screen name: Klauvia

Date: 09/24/2014

Rating title: Great

Star Rating: Five

Review: It’s a really good app! Helped a lot!

20. Screen name: Willinet

Date: 08/28/2014

Rating title: poor pronunciation, etc.

Star Rating: Two

Review: This looks good at a glance but at the same time I found 2 basic pronunciation errors that show a lack of familiarity with the words) clearly no “t” on the end of omnipotent for example) and grammar errors in the description. All that from evaluation a 5 word sample. I worry about the accuracy of the content. It does look fun but needs massive checking by someone whose English is better. Too bad.

21. Screen name: EWL***=AWESOME

Date: 08/18/2014

Rating title: Pretty good

Star Rating: Four

Review: It’s great but the reason I put 4 star is because I wish it would read the sentence. Anyway I LOVE this app.

22. Screen name: Rai_Magnolia

Date: 07/12/2014

Rating title: Audio

Star Rating: Three

Review: I've been desperately looking for a vocab app that includes audio, so I was relieved when I had found this app. However, if you can't have actual people pronouncing the word, or at least check the computer's pronunciation, then I would rather there have been no audio at all. Other than that, the memorization strategy within this app is truly effective.

23. Screen name: Herbert George Wells III

Date: 06/03/2014

Rating title: Recommended!

Star Rating: Five

Review: All the Knowji apps are a great way to learn new vocabulary words. You can choose vocabulary word sets organized by level of difficulty. There is the learning phase where you start learning the words, including how to pronounce the word (you can hear the words), and then there are quizzes and reminders to make sure you remember what you have learned. I definitely recommend this application.

24. Screen name: Sexy Bald Guy

Date: 05/23/2014

Rating title: Awesome!

Star Rating: Five

Review: Best vocabulary game ever, made my kid 100 percent smarter!!!!!!

25. Screen name: Hong Kong Globetrotter

Date: 05/18/2014

Rating title: best vocabulary app

Star Rating: Five

Review: I spent a lot of time looking for an app. This definitely the best.