

The effectiveness of electronic mobile applications in teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers.  
"An analytical evaluative study of some smart applications."

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**The effectiveness of electronic mobile applications in teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers.  
"An analytical evaluative study of some smart applications."**

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**Abstract:**

This article discusses the role of smart mobile apps in teaching Arabic to non-native Arabic speakers, as these apps have become mainstream in recent years. To achieve this goal, the researcher provided a general description and analysis of many smart apps (Busuu, Arabits, AlifBee, Rosetta Stone) and highlighted their features to evaluate and show their advantages and disadvantages. It is known that the evaluation is of great importance to identify the best and most appropriate options for the implementation and management of these applications, or to determine their inadequacy and exclude them for scientific reasons.

**key words:** Arabic language education, speakers of other languages, smart applications, mobile phone, mobile learning.

**Introduction:**

Since the emergence of mobile phones, there has been a significant shift in people's lives. Life has been marked by mobility and has introduced educational, linguistic, social, and cultural concepts that have emerged from this characteristic, which technology has rapidly presented to us in various ways. Language education was not exempt from this influence, as specialists capitalized on the concept of mobile education to design applications for foreign language learning, later known as "language learning with the help of mobile devices." Arabic was one of those languages for which there was a high global demand for learning, and this demand continues to increase.

The process began early at a number of Western universities that adopted the teaching of foreign languages with the help of modern technology. It moved with the rapid technological advancements from one wave to another, and the research in this direction increased until these universities established branches, scientific

disciplines, and academic programs for it. With the emergence of the era of the information and communication revolution, there was a technological breakthrough in the teaching and learning of foreign languages, especially with the spread of the Internet at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, along with the positive effects. With the rise of smart mobile phones and their inclusion of amazing technological features, the possibilities of programming have become unlimited.

It can transfer any educational idea with a scientific methodology from the realm of thinking and imagination to the realm of actual implementation, making it available to Arabic learners in an attractive, enjoyable, and easy way. Gradually, it takes the learner by the hand and considers their real level, by providing level placement tests, and in a sequential manner, the learner progresses smoothly from one piece of information to another without feeling bored or overwhelmed. That accompanied it, encompassing all fields and domains.

It is a new door that is not sufficiently hammered to improve the quality of Arabic language education, and to give it a global character through increased reliance on modern technologies with unlimited capabilities in communication, in order to confront the strong winds of globalization and defend Arab cultural privacy, and to preserve identity, especially since the suitable ground and environment for this digital transformation have become prepared and available with our entry into the third decade of the twenty-first century. Now, it is possible to take this step to make a qualitative leap in the development of education.

In the past two decades, there has been a significant increase in interest in the Arabic language and its culture for various reasons. This includes academic and scientific research, which attracts many researchers and scholars interested in Middle Eastern studies, history, civilization, as well as the Arabic language, its sciences, and culture. It also includes diplomatic work, which interests a considerable number of experts and politicians. Additionally, there are purposes related to the market and the economy, attracting those interested in trade or investment in Arab countries.

Moreover, there is a significant category of Muslims in the East and the West, Arabs and non-Arabs, who have a great interest in learning Arabic for the sake of belonging, identity, understanding the Quran and the Prophet's traditions, performing other religious rituals, all of which require knowledge of Arabic.

This has led to an increase in the number of those wishing to learn the Arabic language and discover its culture for these purposes. This requires the provision of educational programs and curricula that respond to scientific and cognitive developments in the field of applied linguistics, as well as in the field of communication and information technology.

As the increasing demand for learning Arabic calls for the completion of new and advanced programs and curricula that respond to the needs and goals of learners in the world, especially since their numbers are increasing and diversifying, and therefore the trend for e-learning in general and mobile education in particular is the most prominent option to provide some effective solutions, in order to provide materials and programs And interactive functional curricula that benefit those wishing to learn Arabic according to their needs.

And their goals, levels, and circumstances, and electronic mobile applications are important interfaces for designing educational programs and materials that contribute to enhancing communication and interaction between Arabic and its learners, regardless of their countries and needs.

It is strange that some of them still doubt the availability of the conditions for this transformation, relying on sources and references that were authored several years ago, without taking into account the digital transformations that occurred in the past few years.

And others have weakened, if not to say that they are on the verge of extinction in many countries, especially the developed ones, as in Japan, North America, South Korea, China, Austria... Recent studies have shown that Japanese students have a 100% prevalence of smart mobile devices in their hands<sup>1</sup>. However, we must urgently identify the most important benefits of this type of digital transformation in education, which requires its adoption, support and endorsement.

### **The importance of studying:**

The importance of this study stems from the fact that it draws the attention of those in charge of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers to the need to work to keep pace with the spirit of the times in learning Arabic by using modern means such as smart mobile applications... And other programs produced by the information revolution in recent years, considering these methods Auxiliary methods besides the main method, which is direct learning, or when it is not possible to access it for any reason.

The importance of this research paper also lies in trying to get closer to what the curricula of the Arabic language for non-natives should be in smart applications, according to major criteria that can be referred to by those in charge of building the curricula, while shedding light on the most important problems in which the curricula occurred.

Showing the strengths and weaknesses of existing smart applications. In addition to highlighting the importance of evaluation as a valuable filter for

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<sup>1</sup> Al Melhem, T. Using Smart phones Apps for teaching Arabic to Non-native Speakers of Arabic .Scientific journal of the Education Collage in Assiut University, 37 (2),2021,p42

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choosing the best, whether in general or according to educational need and purpose. Assessment is a quality practice that leads to continuous improvement in the public space. Setting educational and linguistic policies in this context.

### **The desired goals of the study:**

This study is designed to achieve the following goals:

- ✓ A review of smart application curriculum for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers (study sample).
- ✓ Determine which indicators and criteria should be available when preparing Arabic language programs in smart apps for mobile phones.
- ✓ Use international standards and modern technologies to create a new curriculum for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.
- ✓ Emphasizing that teaching Arabic to non-native speakers through smart phone applications is one of the means to help teach Arabic and raise the level of learners in understanding and comprehending the language, and is not a main focus in teaching it.
- ✓ Evaluation of a variety of smart mobile applications that aim to teach Arabic as a second language.
- ✓ Provide a clearer understanding for planners and language policy makers who are interested in technical aspects, in order to make better decisions.
- ✓ Try to present the challenges and challenges faced by Arab learners through smart apps, and propose innovative solutions to overcome these challenges.

### **Study problem:**

This study will attempt to answer some of the following questions based on the above:

- ✓ What are some smart mobile applications that can be utilized to teach Arabic to non-native speakers?
- ✓ What is the extent to which these applications can be compatible with standards and best practices in this technical and linguistic field?
- ✓ To what extent have the authors of the Smart Applications Curriculum made a commitment to the basics, rules and standards of content creation and production?

### **Study methodology:**

This study's limitations can be defined as an applied study of a group of smart mobile phone applications. by following the descriptive, analytical, and evaluative approach of curricula for teaching Arabic to non-natives in smart applications, as evaluation is one of the important processes that help in the development of language learning; Especially that evaluation that is followed by evaluation and improvement, and the evaluation process is applied to all elements of the educational process, including the teacher, the learner, and the educational method,

as well as the method of education, as “researchers and teachers agree that the evaluation of language teaching with the help of technology should produce educational and educational choices about the best way to use technology for this purpose, but how such an assessment might be made is not clear.”<sup>1</sup>

Evaluation is defined as “the systematic obtaining and examination of information in order to provide useful feedback about something.”<sup>2</sup> Hence, it can be said: Evaluation is a descriptive process that includes a number of tools and methodologies that seek to judge things or activities based on predetermined standards and foundations. Therefore, the evaluation usually describes what is before explaining what ought to be and interprets the difference between the two practices through those criteria that are supposed to lead to specific results.

### **Previous studies:**

As in previous studies that have focused on the role of smart mobile applications in teaching languages in general, there are many and varied aspects, including:

- Jan Herrington; Anthony Herrington; Jessica Manti: Design principles for mobile learning, University of Wollongong 2009.

The study dealt with extracting the foundations for designing a mobile application that was used in a university (Wollongong) The study reached the following criteria: the connection with the design with the reality of the learner, the occurrence of learning on the go, the integration of mobile learning with usual learning, the possibility of individual and group learning, and the use of the mobile phone when designing the educational material.

- Harry Walker: Establishing the content validity of an Evaluation Rubric for mobile Technology Applications Utilizing the Delphi Method, Baltimore, Maryland, 2013.

This study concerned the creation of feasibility content for the evaluation of mobile applications using the (Delphi) method and made it possible to define criteria for the evaluation of mobile applications.

- Andujar, A: Benefits of mobile instant messaging to develop an ESL writing system 2016.

This study was designed using a semi-experimental research method on a group of students, and this study concluded that the WhatsApp application is a powerful educational tool to encourage interaction in the second language between

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<sup>1</sup> Jamieson, J. Chappell, C. and Preiss, S. CALL Evaluation by Developers, a Teacher, and Students. CALICO Journal. 23, (1). 2005. p96

<sup>2</sup> Trochim, W. Research Methods Knowledge Base. Online Resource. 2006. Accessed in 12-07-2023 at <https://socialresearchmethods.net>

the participants, despite it being an application intended for communication in the first place.

- Anderson, Gustav: An evaluation of Duolingo as a call resource for upper-secondary English L2 classrooms in Sweden, thesis social sciences Rebro University (2018).

The study examined the effectiveness of the application (Duolingo) In teaching foreign languages as a resource for learners of English as a second language in Sweden, the researcher concluded that it can be used (Duolingo) As a secondary tool and not as a primary resource for language learning, because the application does not cover the communicative aspects of language learning.

- Resell Aguilar, F: Autonomous language learning through a mobile application: a user evaluation of the base computer app Assisted Language Learning (2018).

It is a large-scale survey in the form of an online questionnaire, and the results show patterns of application usage (Bissau) And its advantages that learners find useful for language learning, he concludes (Roselle Aguilar) Mobile apps can be considered as a reliable language learning tool.

### **THE FIRST TOPIC : Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers through smart mobile applications**

The world is now experiencing a revolution of intelligent devices which have added amazing features to all the features of traditional mobile. The designs of the smart mobile have become elegant with touch features, and their built-in cameras have become more accurate, and their applications have become more sophisticated, in addition to the services (Wi-Fi), and the third and fourth generation networks that make its carrier connected to the world non-stop.

The smart phone now has a variety of mobile educational tools that can be used by the learner anywhere and at any time. As the learner carries in his small pocket a calculator, an alarm clock, a diary, a machine translator, a digital camera, a minicomputer, an electronic book, an electronic newspaper, schedules for appointments and tasks, a compass, various games... And a large number of tools that he would not have been able to carry before today.

The mobile phone appeared with its features that captivated everyone, and it began to develop rapidly, becoming smaller in size, light in weight, magnified in qualities and traits, and increasing in intelligence generation after generation.

The mobile phone has become an indispensable personal device, and the camera that was earlier needed to print the captured images or send them to the computer before distributing them to family and friends. Today, the mobile phone

itself captures the image and saves it in the photo album so that it can be viewed directly on the screen, modified or Send it in moments to others or even post it on social media or send it to the printer for printing. There was a lack of this wide range of features and capabilities before.

In exchange for all these features and advantages, the world has moved from relying on traditional computers to relying on smart phones, as nearly half of the Earth's population carries a smart phone, and nearly (2 billion) people in the year (2015) manage their services through mobile phone applications, while It is expected that this number will jump in (2020) to (2.8 billion) people<sup>1</sup>.

### **FIRST REQUIREMENT : Educational mobile concept**

In view of the technical progress that is taking place today and expected in the future, and in addition to offering theoretical and practical solutions in the educational field, we have recently noticed the emergence of the so-called (educational mobile), which is defined as: "any small device that is independent of other devices so that it can be carried and used at a later time for educational purposes."<sup>2</sup> The concept of the technical generation is also one of the most important modern implicit concepts that support the use of mobile phones in education. (Prencky) That this generation has grown up in an environment damaged by technology from every aspect, until it has become a natural part of their lives, and therefore the use of these technologies for the purpose of the study is normal, or perhaps expected<sup>3</sup>.

### **SECOND REQUIREMENT : Smart mobile applications for teaching foreign languages**

Let's say that the most important feature of smart mobile phones is the applications (Apps) It is a miniature computer software specially designed to work on mobile devices (smart phones and tablets), and this means special design considerations such as screen size, processing limitations, memory... And others compared to personal computers. The idea of the applications was originally created to support work on personal digital assistants(PDAS)Such as the calendar, the timer, and the contacts directory, and that was in the nineties of the last

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<sup>1</sup> Saberi,D. Intrusions of Textism into Students' Formal Writing: Reality or Myth? Pertanika Journal of Scholarly Research Reviews, 2, (3).2016. p57.

<sup>2</sup> Trifanova, A., Knapp, J., Ronchetti, M., & Gamper, J. Mobile ELDIT: Challenges in the transitions from an e-learning to an m-learning system. Trento, Italy: University of Trento.2004.p189.

<sup>3</sup> Prensky, M. Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. On the Horizon, 9 (5),2001.p3.

century, and the applications continued until they became a phenomenon of mobile phones after their sweep in the year (2008), and beyond<sup>1</sup> ...

And due to the large number of companies designed for smart phone operating systems, there are many stores and platforms that offer applications to download, install, and then run on compatible phones, and we mention the (Apple) platform (App Store) system (iOS) platform (Google) (Google Play Store) for (Android) and (Microsoft) platform (Microsoft Store), ... Which are the most famous platforms in the world<sup>2</sup>.

With this rapid growth, linguistic applications that are concerned with the development of language skills and cooperative learning have spread, taking into account the age and cultural characteristics of the learners, and developing communication competencies while employing the capabilities of audio recording, listening, video recording and viewing, and developing the independence of the learner. Also, mobile applications help to acquire the listening skill more than other skills<sup>3</sup>.

The applications can also be divided in terms of their relationship to teaching and learning the language into two parts: linguistic applications and other applications. Linguistic applications are intended for teaching the language, or testing it, such as applications for teaching letters or language games, while others are intended for essentially non-linguistic purposes, such as social communication, for example, but they can be used in second language classes in support of teaching it or testing its competencies.

Fortunately, the interest in applications has shifted to teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, when some specialists recently called for the importance of teaching the Arabic language mobile phone, based on convincing reasons, including: the multiplicity of research that confirmed the effectiveness of using mobile phones in language teaching, as well as the availability of mobile phones in all regions the world in large numbers and the huge demand for it.

Teaching languages in the application market generally occupies a good percentage, most of which are concerned with dictionaries and teaching languages

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<sup>1</sup> Kétyi, A. Practical Evaluation of A Mobile Language Learning Tool in Higher Education. In F. Helm, L. Bradley, M. Guarda, & S. Thouësny (Eds), Critical CALL – Proceedings of the 2015 EUROCALLConference, Padova, Italy. 2015. p308.

Dublin: Research.publishing.net. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2015.00035> accessed in 22/7/2023.

<sup>2</sup> Gangaianmaran R. and Pasupathi, M. Review on Use of Mobile Apps for Language Learning. International Journal of Applied Engineering Research, 12, (21). 2017. p11245. Accessed at 21/7/2023. [https://www.ripublication.com/ijaer17/ijaerv12n21\\_102.pdf](https://www.ripublication.com/ijaer17/ijaerv12n21_102.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Kétyi, A. Practical Evaluation of A Mobile Language Learning Tool in Higher Education. p309.

for trips and travel around the world, in addition to a few applications that teach foreign languages. When searching for applications for teaching Arabic as a second language, we find a large number of them, varying in quality of design, target group, and degree of professionalism. However, we can divide the content of mobile applications for teaching and learning the Arabic language for those who are not qualified in the application market on the three main platforms (Google, Apple, Microsoft) as follows:

- ✓ Dictionaries of common words and vocabulary such as an application (Learn Arabic 6000 words)
- ✓ Teaching spelling and letters, which are very much in the application market, such as (Arabic Alphabet)
- ✓ Applications directed at children: in which there may be no separation between teaching Arabic as a mother tongue (for native speakers) or as a second language (for non-natives), such as: (Arabic Alphabets Letters)
- ✓ Applications intended for religious purposes: egg (Learn Quran - Arabic Learning)
- ✓ Teaching Conversation: Some of them enjoy great fame and spread, for example (Learn Arabic Speak Arabic)
- ✓ Semi-integrated institutional education: Ex (Interactive Arabic).

Although it is very popular and popular, applications for teaching Arabic as a second language are generally unprofessional, as they are dominated by primitive designs, lack of attractiveness, and are characterized by weak content, especially those designed by non-specialists or non-Arabs, perhaps for religious or heritage purposes in the Diaspora. Where some scholars believe that these applications tend to teach linguistic vocabulary isolated from the context, and that they do not suit the skills of the learners except in an easy way, in addition to the fact that they rarely give corrective feedback to the mistakes of the learners, and the scholars conclude that these applications are of a behavioural nature despite the total transition in teaching Second language to communicative approaches<sup>1</sup>.

### **THIRD REQUIREMENT : Characteristics and advantages of teaching Arabic through smart phone applications**

The market for smart phone applications for teaching the Arabic language has recently witnessed a remarkable development that is different and superior to many advantages for those that were established in the beginnings. Some applications. Which was not satisfied with asking questions or providing the learners with theoretical information, but rather it integrated theory and application, and takes

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<sup>1</sup> Faltah, A., & Zerrougui, R. The role of artificial intelligence in improving the quality of higher education. The Arab Journal of Specific Education, (4).2020. p12.

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into account the principle of integration in the language learning process with its four skills (speaking, listening, writing, reading), in parallel with the visual display of illustrative images, audio clips and guiding clarifications, To ensure that the learner gets the maximum benefit with the least effort and the shortest time<sup>1</sup>

It is a kind of interactive active learning<sup>2</sup>. Founded, according to the principle of brainstorming in its ability to stimulate the mind and raise the level of focus and attention<sup>3</sup>. Taking into account the individual differences of the learners, the learner does not feel that gap that separates him from the rest of the most diligent and intelligent learners by individualizing the educational situation so that it is suitable for the individual needs of the learner. Each learner has his own needs that may not be commensurate with another learner.

From the multiplicity and diversity in the use of applications, most of the applications for teaching the Arabic language contain levels, and the student can choose the appropriate level for him according to the extent of his mastery of the language. It also provides the advantage of self-learning, as it provides a simplified interactive presentation followed by continuous evaluation questions, which measure the extent of information acquisition and understanding.

In addition to many other advantages such as enhancing collaborative work between the learners themselves, facilitating the sharing of their work through the Internet, and increasing the level of fun in learning in an interactive way, although this matter depends on the design of the application in a way that attracts and captivates the user with the sound and visual effects it includes.<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, the main and important factor for users to choose one application over another for learning is the design of the educational content within the application and the way it is presented<sup>5</sup>. This is what led to the diversity of language teaching applications on smart phones in general, and the Arabic language in particular, with its diversity feature, as there are many examples that

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<sup>1</sup> Fernando, W. Model Quizzes and Their Usability for Formative Assessment of Academic Writing. Assessing Writing, 2020, p6.

<sup>2</sup> Esmaaeel, S. Mohammed, E., & Fifi, T. Educational and Ethical reflections of smartphones and their Effect on general and industrial secondary School students, Journal of Culture and Development, (36), 2019. p42. <https://search.mandumah.com/Record/958158> accessed in 19/7/2023.

<sup>3</sup> Kayyali, M. Positive Impact of High Technology on Higher Education. IJISC, Universidad Azteca, Mexico. 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330182084> accessed in 21/7/2023.

<sup>4</sup> Zhu, J. Students' Perceptions on the Use of Mobile Applications in English Language Learning. E-Learn - Las Vegas, NV, United States. 2018. Retrieved from. accessed in 24/7/2023. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336145502>

<sup>5</sup> Cavus, N. Distance Learning and Learning Management Systems. The Proceedings of 6th World Conference on Educational Sciences, 2015. pp875-876. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.611> accessed in 24/7/2023.

the learner moves between easily and conveniently, and chooses what suits and strengthens his ability to learn the language, and this diversity leads to an increase in educational motivation among students. The learner, and this reflects positively on his ability and speed of learning the language.

Smartphone applications facilitate communication for learners who feel shy, have some communication problems, or have special needs<sup>1</sup>. It also makes it easier for teachers to present and simplify information by presenting it with expressive pictures and video clips. Ease of use and low or free cost in most educational applications. This is evident through the speed of access to them at different times and places when the appropriate device is available, and good internet coverage, which increases the educational opportunities for learners with this flexibility that characterizes studying using smart phone applications compared to traditional methods.<sup>2</sup>.

However, thinking about activating smart phone applications as a new, supportive approach to teaching languages does not mean dispensing with traditional approaches, but rather being aware of the fact that teaching a foreign language in the classroom allows us to do new things that learners cannot do themselves, or at least not. They can do it effectively.

#### **FOURTH REQUIREMENT : Difficulties that impede the applications of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers**

The process of digital transformation, like any process of change, faces a set of obstacles and difficulties that stand in its way, most notably the task of finding the developed software company that is able to transfer the idea with its scientific methodology from its theoretical space and embody it practically on the ground in an application, just as it is not enough for the company to be specialized in programming; In order to be able to create the application, professionally, she must have experience with the advantages of the project to be implemented.

This developed software company must also have the ability to adapt technically: it means converting or producing and designing educational materials, tasks and activities to be compatible with mobile phones, which is difficult and expensive compared to using a computer or traditional non-technical education.

The Arabic language specialist also faces another problem in programming, as he does not know what is the most appropriate program to implement the

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<sup>1</sup> Atiya, M. Trends of Arabic language students as a second language towards mobile learning and their training needs Required to use it. Journal of Education and Psychology, 46,2014. p39. <http://search.shamaa.org/FullRecord?ID=115715> accessed in24/7/2023.

<sup>2</sup> Caputi, V., & Garrido, A. Student-oriented planning of e-learning contents for Moodle. Journal of Network and Computer Applications, 53,2015. p123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnca.2015.04.001> accessed in17/7/2023.

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project, just as every company advises on the implementation of the project according to its experience, it does not, according to what is required by the application and the educational process. It is the most suitable and the best. After seeing the opinion of many programmers, this makes it more difficult for new programs to appear with additional features, and this is what the application will need later in the process of continuous updating and development.<sup>1</sup> This is the reason for the difficulty and complexity of some applications, which makes some learners ignorant of how to manage and deal with them properly, so they achieve more benefit from the application.

On the other hand, we find that such applications have a major role in overcoming many newly emerging problems. Such as the habit of recent generations, and perhaps some of them getting addicted to playing electronic games, so this type of interactive learning is commensurate with the orientations of the technological generation of the twenty-first century learners; To spend their time and enjoy what benefits them and benefit them, contrary to what was common in the twentieth century<sup>2</sup>.

As well as preparing qualified teachers who are able to move from a promoter of information to a content creator<sup>3</sup>. In addition to the need for the availability of the Internet while using most of these applications, and this conflicts with many poor people who find it difficult to maintain the availability of the Internet, as statistics have shown that about (30%) of students around the world do not have the requirements to use technology yet<sup>4</sup>.

It is true that the largest percentage of learners today prefer to use artificial intelligence applications to learn the Arabic language, but a small group still tends to the traditional method, and the reason may be their lack of sufficient awareness about the real feasibility of this new education. And the need to try it first, as well

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<sup>1</sup> Stockwell, G, and Hubbard, P. Some emerging principals for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. Monterey, CA: The International Research Foundation for English Language Education.2013. Retrieved from <http://www.tirfonline.org/english-in-the-workforc/Mobile-Assisted-Language-Learning> Accessed in 23-07-2023

<sup>2</sup> Zaranis, N., Oikonomidis, V., & Linardakis, M. Research on e-Learning and ICT in Education. Springer International Publishing.2017. Retrieved from. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-34127-9> Accessed in 18-07-2023

<sup>3</sup> Al Mutairi, S., & Al Qahtani, A. Reality of Using Smart phones Apps in the Educational process of faculty members from the point of view of Postgraduate Female students at the College of Education at King Abdelaziz University, Journal of Scientific Research in Education, (20),2019. p126. <http://search.shamaa.org/FullRecord?ID=259858> Accessed in 23-07-2023

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF Report. (2020). Retrieved from. <https://www.unicef.org/pressreleases/covid-19-least-third-worlds-schoolchildren-unable-accessremote-learning-during> Accessed in 26-07-2023

as the need to raise their awareness of keeping pace with the times in the trend towards digital learning<sup>1</sup>.

This bias towards the traditional method, the reason for some people's ignorance of it, is in fact one of the reasons for rejecting this group, and its scepticism about the feasibility of digital transformation and the use of smart phone applications in teaching and learning the Arabic language. Building their opinion on scientific grounds and actual experience.

In addition to other negatives, such as the smallness of mobile screens compared to computer screens, where the learner may want to read short texts on the mobile phone, but when the text is long, there is certainly a clear preference for reading through desktop computer screens.<sup>2</sup>. In addition to the problem of the spread of advertisements on some Arabic language teaching applications on the mobile phone, which represents a major obstacle for many learners, by causing these advertisements a kind of mental distraction for the learners during the learning process, not to mention that many of these applications are not free, that is, they are paid for. . This prevents and prevents its access to many groups of learners, especially learners from poor countries who wish to learn the Arabic language.

## **THE SECOND TOPIC : An analytical and evaluation study of some smart applications for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers**

### **FIRST REQUIREMENT : Criteria for selecting smart applications subject of the study**

The researcher thought that the sample that enters the analysis and evaluation process should include the best of the smart mobile application markets that provide the service of teaching Arabic as a second language.

- ✓ The application should be specific to teaching Arabic as a second language, or to provide teaching Arabic as a second language separately from the rest of the languages it offers, if any.
- ✓ The application teaches fluent Arabic, not spoken (colloquial).
- ✓ The application should provide an integrated and not fragmented education: in the sense that the application should include levels, and not separate elements such as teaching calligraphy, letter shapes or sounds, grammar or vocabulary as individual skills and elements without a system in which they are organized.

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<sup>1</sup> Abdurrosid, H., & Mamluatul. (2021). Online Model of Teaching Arabic Speaking Skill in State Islamic Universities. *Journal of Arabic Learning*, 3 (4),p 677. Accessed in 23-07-2023  
<http://ejournal.uinmalang.ac.id/index.php/ijazarabi/article/view/9202/8920>

<sup>2</sup> Al Qati, H. (2019). Arabic Learning Via Smartphone Applications as A second language. *Language policy and planning*, 8, p8.

- ✓ The application should be aimed at teaching adults, not children.
- ✓ That the application be teaching Arabic as a second language for general or basic purposes, not for special purposes such as travel and the like.

Based on these limitations, applications for teaching conversation, applications for common dictionaries and vocabulary, applications for teaching spelling and letters, applications directed to children or those directed for religious purposes, in addition to applications that teach dialects, not fluent language, are all outside the scope of this study.

Despite the recent increase in the creation of smart mobile applications that are concerned with teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, but most of them lack professionalism and sufficient scientific methodology, and do not rise to the level of ambition. The most famous and most prominent, which provide institutional or semi-institutional education, are: **Busuu; Rosetta Stone; Arabic; Alif Bee.**

#### **Firstly: Application (BUSUU)**

##### **1-General information about the application BUSUU:**

**BUSUU** Produced by company **BUSUU** The British language, which is interested in teaching languages, offers teaching the Arabic language in addition to thirteen different languages on the two platforms (Android, Apple). It was issued in 2011 and occurred in 2018, as its downloads on the platform exceeded (Google play) alone (10 million), and it was ranked seventh in terms of the most profitable education applications, and the number of registered users exceeded (60 million).<sup>1</sup>. The application is provided busuu Free and paid plans, where the free mode allows the user to learn one language, but if he wants to learn more than one language, the learner goes to the paid model.

##### **2-Application features busuu :**

The application includes busuu It has a number of features that we summarize as follows:

- ✓ In determining the levels of teaching Arabic as a second language, the application relied on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) This is done by dividing the levels into 04 main levels: Beginner (A1) / Basic (A2) / Intermediate (B1) / Intermediate (B2)
- ✓ Considerate application (**Bissau**) Academic potential and its variation among learners, and individual differences. The user is free to choose the level that suits his level of the Arabic language.
- ✓ The application also provides the possibility of self-learning without the need for a teacher, thus saving the effort and time that the learner usually spends until he reaches the classrooms (the traditional method).

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<sup>1</sup> [www.busuu.com](http://www.busuu.com) Accessed in 23-07-2023

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- ✓ The application is in line with the psychological needs of the modern user who is accustomed to using technology in line with the spirit of the era, which is characterized by speed and mobility. The scientific material was designed to apply (Bissau) It is studied from this point of view in a way that the lessons are short, ranging from (5 minutes) two (20 minutes). The learner feels quick achievement and easy smooth transition when needed, which develops the learner's motivation to continue learning.
- ✓ Enjoy the application (Bissau) By encouraging and supporting the learner's speaking skills by helping him practice the language out loud through a speech recognition tool, the application also places great emphasis on listening to the dialogues.
- ✓ The application has the advantage of sharing lessons with native Arabic speakers, which is one of the great advantages that may not be available in many free applications for learning the Arabic language. However, its effectiveness in helping you learn Arabic will depend to a large extent on the learner, through the extent of his ability to open up to others and not be afraid of making mistakes while speaking.
- ✓ The application presents the language material in the form of files and small media such as a picture or a video clip to write or talk about and share it in the application so that the learner's friends can (busuu) or any other learner within the application who speaks the Arabic language. Respond to his written or oral participation to give him feedback on it. In return, the learner will also receive messages from people learning the Arabic language. So that he also has the opportunity to respond to their written or oral posts, and this method is considered fun for the learner and motivating to move forward and achieve the best results, whether for the learner or others.
- ✓ The application is fun and interactive and contains a lot of exercises, each lesson comes with an exercise and you can listen to the audio again.
- ✓ The look and design of the app are professional **busuu** Among the three very important axes being technical, educational and linguistic.

### 3-Application defects busuu:

- ✓ Cares apply (Bissau) Mostly with words only or simple structures complex grammatical structures are not supported on this app.
- ✓ The application does not care about the Arab-Islamic culture and its privacy among the learners, because the application is not Arabic in origin, as it is of British origin.
- ✓ Writing exercises are the most boring exercise in an app (Bissau) As the application does not respond completely to the correct writings, and the reason is that it sometimes asks for formation, and it may reduce some of it,

so the learner does not know what movements he is supposed to write with the word, and the application may display an image and ask to write the word that expresses it. This, in my opinion, is not possible in the Arabic language; Because it bears a large number of synonyms, and the application does not respond to this pluralism, which confuses the learner.

- ✓ The application does not contain a large number of pronunciation and speaking exercises.
- ✓ In its free version, the application does not allow communication with native speakers in speaking and writing skills.

### **Secondly: Application Arabits**

#### **1- General information about the application Arabits:**

**Arabits**<sup>1</sup> Produced and developed by Aleph Education, an Emirati company that is interested in teaching the Arabic language and developing its curricula. This application is distinguished from its previous competitor in that it was only limited to teaching the Arabic language only to non-native speakers. In the foundation stage, and this is a requirement in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, because their information is very little and some of them start from scratch, while the previous application teaches **busuu** More than ten languages for non-native speakers, and we do not deny the advantage of this pluralism in providing the option of language exchange between subscribers registered in the application, each of whom teaches the other his native language.

If applying **Arabits** Available through the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store, it is an integrated application for teaching and learning Arabic that was created by specialists in the field of education and developed artificial intelligence. **Arabits** To develop the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of the learners.

#### **2-Application features (Arabits):**

- ✓ The application followed a comprehensive scientific methodology for teaching the Arabic language by helping learners learn, practice and improve their skills in the Arabic language, starting from the first level for beginners, up to the ninth level.
- ✓ Taking into account the gradual transition in the beginners step by step in pronunciation, starting with the single letter, then the two letters together, up to the word and ending with the sentence.
- ✓ The application displays the sounds of some letters and then tests the learner with the extent of his ability to distinguish them in form, sound and even writing in the cases of connection and separation. Drawn on the letter each

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<sup>1</sup> [www.arabits.com](http://www.arabits.com) Accessed in 23-07-2023

time, and representing that sound and writing in appropriate and translated words, taking care to use the red colour to distinguish the concerned letter within the word.

- ✓ Considerate application (Arabic) Academic potential and its variation among learners, and individual differences.
- ✓ The application also allows for self-learning without the need for a teacher.
- ✓ Application features (Arabic) An example of a precedent in the diversity and richness of the nature of the questions: Multiple choice, either by choosing the appropriate pronunciation for the sound, or vice versa, by choosing the appropriate sound for the letter, word, or sentence. In addition to connection questions, true and false, and when the learner makes a mistake in one of the evaluation questions at the end of the lesson, the question is repeated again, to ensure that the learner is able to pass it after he made a mistake the first time.
- ✓ The app is fun, interactive and contains a lot of exercises and levels. It also respects the privacy of the Arab-Islamic culture by virtue of its origin, which contributes to spreading a bright image of Arabs and Muslims and introducing others to the wonderful Arab heritage.
- ✓ The look and design of the app are professional.

### **3- Application defects (Arabits):**

- ✓ Inability to apply (Arabic) to distinguish sounds automatically; As we find it difficult to come up with what satisfies the application in pronunciation, but rather it does not capture all the spoken words, and this is a great challenge for Arabic speakers, so how frustrating will that be for non-natives?
- ✓ The lack of the advantage of direct written and voice chatting remotely with other learners through the learner recording his voice and sharing it with native speakers of the language participating in the application, so that they correct his pronunciation if there is an error in it, and that is within groups formed by the learner to exchange language with others.

### **Thirdly: Application (ALIF BEE)**

#### **1-General information about the application (Alif bee):**

**ALIF BEE**<sup>1</sup> An interactive application that teaches Arabic to speakers of other languages, produced by the Turkish educational company Alami.(ANDROID - IOS) application is available through a limited free subscription, and a paid monthly and annual subscription.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.alifbee.com](http://www.alifbee.com) Accessed in 23-07-2023

## **2-Application features ALIF BEE:**

- ✓ The application in determining the levels of teaching Arabic as a foreign language depends on the American global framework ACTFL This is done by dividing the levels into 03 main levels (beginner, intermediate, and advanced), and each major level is devoted in turn to 03 sub-levels (lower, middle, and higher).
- ✓ ALIF BEE An integrated curriculum that begins with the zero-level learner until the mastery stage by adopting a comprehensive plan that covers the four communication skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking).
- ✓ The application is available on the intermediate language feature in two versions: the first using the intermediate language, and the second without it by relying on other explanatory means (images–video) in understanding the lesson.
- ✓ The application includes a good set of tests, from level renewal to achievement test and diagnostic test.
- ✓ Lets app (ALIF BEE) The possibility of self-learning without a direct teacher, which allowed the wonderful use of modern technologies within the application, such as the quality of drawing and design, and the activation of voice recognition technology to evaluate the student's pronunciation, which made the learning method interactive between the learner and the program.
- ✓ The application uses artificial intelligence technology to monitor the learner's behavior to know his strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ The application includes a dictionary to ensure the best level of learning and that the learner does not forget those words by adopting the principle of feedback by reminding the learner of the vocabulary that passed with him previously.
- ✓ Diversity in topics and cultural content that simulates the needs of the learner.

## **3-Application defects (ALIF BEE):**

- ✓ Not opening the field of guessing to the learner by explaining all the vocabulary.
- ✓ Adoption of texts made.
- ✓ The absence of the human element through direct, simultaneous or asynchronous communication, which leads to the loss of one aspect of the language, which is the communication aspect and the practice of the language with native speakers.
- ✓ Some over lapping éducationnel goals.
- ✓ Too many exercises with one educational goal.

#### **Fourthly: Application (Rosetta Stone)**

##### **1-General information about the application (Rosetta Stone):**

Produced by company (Rosetta Stone) The American pioneer in this field and winner of many awards, and the application provides teaching (24) foreign languages, including the Arabic language, on my platforms (Android, Apple), and the application was released in (2013), and it was finally developed in (2018). Also, the application is not completely free, but rather the application provides some free lessons at the beginning, and then the learner must pay to complete learning the rest of the lessons, which can be downloaded to the mobile phone for later study<sup>1</sup>.

##### **2-Application features (Rosetta Stone):**

- ✓ Lets apply Rosetta Stone The possibility of self-learning for learners, without the need for a teacher and without wasting effort and time.
- ✓ The application is an interactive educational system that combines sound, movement, and writing. The application consists of 05 educational levels: beginner, intermediate, advanced, very advanced, and expert.
- ✓ The application takes into account the learner's psychological, mental and scientific capabilities, as it increases in difficulty based on the progress of the learner's level.
- ✓ The app introduces different words and uses complex grammar rules in an intuitive way language immersion.
- ✓ The application is characterized by the intensity of exercises that link the spoken word, the image and many conversations.
- ✓ The application gives special importance to both spoken and written language, as each complementary lesson is designed to develop the learner's four skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking).
- ✓ Through the application, you can download lessons to learn at any time without the need for an Internet connection.
- ✓ The application is distinguished by the presence of a simple and distinct interface that is free of ads.
- ✓ The app seeks to develop useful, practical conversation through daily scenarios and events.
- ✓ The application supports the speech recognition feature that helps to improve the learner's pronunciation of the language, and get immediate feedback about errors, and the learner can also compare his accent with native speakers of Arabic.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.rosettastone.com](http://www.rosettastone.com) Accessed in 23-07-2023

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- ✓ The application provides feedback and repetition without resorting to translation so that the learner can think and build sentences in Arabic.
- ✓ At the end of each lesson there is a summary of all its contents and an experiential conversation that includes the information learned through it.
- ✓ The application allows the learner to train in linking the words of the Arabic language through pictures in certain situations, so that he can communicate correctly in Arabic.

### **3-Application defects (Rosetta Stone):**

- ✓ The application is somewhat expensive compared to other Arabic learning applications, which may burden some learners.
- ✓ The application contains a lot of repetitive and sometimes boring sections, and the application does not allow the speed of navigation between lessons and levels to be customized according to the learner's needs, which may lead to a waste of time.
- ✓ The on-screen keyboard for typing activities is uncomfortable to use.
- ✓ Lack of variety in application exercises and tests, which makes each exercise less challenging for learners.
- ✓ Some lessons contain pictures that are not related to the lesson.
- ✓ Non-observance of the application of the Arab-Islamic culture.
- ✓ The dependence of the application on non-original sources in audio applications.

### **THE THIRD TOPIC : Evaluation of electronic applications study sample**

There are many studies that dealt with the evaluation of electronic applications for smart phones in terms of technological quality standards, in order to know the advantages and efficiency of these applications, and to identify the most important language skills that they absorb, the quality of the content of their scientific programs, the educational specifications that they follow and their importance in improving the various skills of education.

Through the researchers' review of a group of these applications, which ranged from Arabic in design to foreign ones, which differ among them in many aspects, the researcher tried to set a set of criteria that must be available in each application in order to facilitate the evaluation process, which are as follows:

- ✓ The degree of interaction between the user and the application.
- ✓ The intensity, diversity and inclusiveness of the exercises for all skills.
- ✓ The number of skills targeted by the application.
- ✓ Methods of presenting and presenting trainings by employing technological media.
- ✓ Ease of moving within the application and moving from one screen to another.

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- ✓ The app provides feedback.
- ✓ Providing immersion in the language environment, taking into account the special culture.
- ✓ The program is free from cultural preparations and racial discrimination.
- ✓ The validity and originality of the content in terms of scientific and cultural content, phonetic rules, lexical and morphological...
- ✓ The extent to which side services are provided to the learner (thesaurus, antonyms and synonyms, translation).
- ✓ The application provides a report on the user's performance, such as: recording errors and the percentage of its progress in the application.

Through these criteria, the strength and weakness of each application are determined by comparing them, and the following table shows this:

**Table (1): Evaluation of smart applications (study sample) for non-native speakers according to the specified criteria**

Evaluation Criteria	BUSUU	ARABITS	ALIF BEE	ROSETT STONE
Intensity and variety of exercises	Good	Good	Good	Good
Feedback	Good	Good	Good	Good
There are short instructions	Good	Middle	Middle	Good
Number of language levels	Middle	Good	Good	Weak
Adoption of interactive media	Good	Middle	Middle	Good
The degree of immersion in the language environment	Weak	Good	Good	Weak
Multiple educational activities	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
The degree of interaction between the user and the application	Middle	Weak	Weak	Middle
Gradual reception of information	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
Content originality	Weak	Middle	Middle	Weak
Consider all educational skills	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
Providing ancillary services	Middle	Middle	Good	Middle

**Source:** prepared by the researcher

Based on the results of this study, it is possible, through a general view of Table (1), to divide the applications into the following:

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**Distinguished applications:** These are applications that have achieved a wonderful equation between three axes: technology, educational aspects, and linguistic aspects. The applications that achieved this equation were: an application **Rosetta Stone** application **BUSUU**

**Medium applications:** they need varying degrees of work and improvement so that they can be used as required, whether at the level of individuals or institutions. Among those applications are those that tend to technical aspects and neglect the linguistic and educational aspects, or vice versa, so that the application remains a copy that does not differ much from the traditional paper educational chains. Perhaps this The reason for the inexperience of its developers, and we mean here by mentioning ARABITS / ALIF BEE.

**Conclusion:**

After reviewing a group of smart applications that teach the Arabic language to non-native speakers, we can say the necessity of linking technology to education in order to keep pace with the great technical development that we are witnessing in our current era. In light of the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

- Employing modern technology in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.
- Invite teachers of Arabic to non-native speakers to motivate learners to benefit from these educational applications.
- Reliance on different learning theories when designing educational smart applications.
- Pay more attention to feedback while learning in the app.
- Introducing smart educational applications in language laboratories in schools, universities and institutes specialized in teaching languages.
- Developing standards for smart applications to keep pace with scientific progress.

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