

The Socio Educational Implications of Mobile Assisted Language Learning for the Integration of Refugee Populations

Gayrat Khamrayev

Teacher, Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, Jizzakh, Uzbekistan.

E-mail: gkhamrayev1981@gmail.com, Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1069-200X>

Abstract: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an important case study regarding migrant populations and relation to the wider socio-educational community. Refugees have unique obstacles when considering host country's language learning. MALL solves many of these challenges by allowing users to learn through cheaper and more flexible means. The proposed study will look into the ways in which mobile learning applications enhance the language learning of refugees and the accompanying social and educational integrations. Through the use of a mixed-methods study, the proposed study will analyse language proficiency tests and scores, surveys and interviews, the use or engagement of mobile applications, etc. The impact of MALL and what difference it might make to the language learning of refugees. The study's greatest fear is rising to the level of participants with higher language proficiency. More participants rose to the level than in projecting. The more MALL tools participants participated in (over 7) a week, the 20% greater language proficiency boost was seen in participants. The engagement seen in refugees was significant, as was the improvement in confidence. The research suggests that through MALL, refugees learn and overcome the barriers of education. MALL tools for integrated educational programs. The focus of the research is to help educationalists design a learning plan for refugees and to accelerate the process of welcoming them into the host country society.

Key Words: mobile-assisted language learning, refugees, language proficiency, integration, educational tools, social inclusion, digital education

(Received: 13 December 2025; Revised: 24 January 2026; Accepted: 12 February 2026; Published: 30 March 2026)

Introduction

The degree to which refugees can engage in educational and economic activities and blend into new communities is pegged to ability to learn a new language (Streitwieser et al., 2019). Unfortunately, factors like cultural barriers and limited formal education often obstruct a refugee's ability to learn a new language. Flexible and self-paced learning of new languages is possible with Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which has the potential to transform refugees' educational and economic integration in the respective host countries.

MALL offers education in a very informal and flexible way. Refugees face a lot of barriers that make learning a new language extremely difficult. These barriers can include a lot of trauma, cultural barriers, linguistic barriers, and limited access to education. Many studies have shown that MALL can help refugees learn a new language and help them overcome these barriers to new language acquisition (Droliia et al., 2022). Since mobile phones have become very common and ubiquitous in our world, mobile learning applications are very necessary for the language development of refugees in a more informal and flexible setting.

The ability to communicate after relocating is a huge step in the social and educational integration of migrants. Being able to communicate in the language of the host nation allows refugees to access and fully utilize educational, occupational, and social avenues in host communities. For facilitating integration, language skills are a must, and many studies focus on skills combined with technology to ease the transition of migrants (Bradley & Al-Sabbagh, 2022; Hebbani et al., 2023). Although there is a substantial amount of literature on the subject, there are areas that are lacking, such as the role of MALL and integration, particularly in the context of refugees. Intervention strategies have been shown to bring forth great results when technology is utilized, especially in flexible and multicultural learning environments, as aid language skills and social integration of refugees.

The socio-educational analysis of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in this study concerns its application in the integration of refugees. Mobile Learning (ML) tools offer various forums to assist in learning the language as well as the integration process. To this end, this study seeks to answer the following questions: What are the barriers and enablers to Refugee Education using MALL? What is the perceived and real effect of MALL on Refugee Integration? What is the efficacy of MALL in Refugee Language Learning? In what ways and to what extent can MALL be adjusted to ease the process of learning among refugees? This study will aid in understanding the ways in which MALL for refugees can be structured optimally (Stolk et al., 2025). The introduction of MALL in classrooms for Migrant/Refugee children resulted in an improved Teaching and Learning experience (Bradley et al., 2023). The use of apps designed to be culturally appropriate and a game-based learning environment is being used to help improve the language learning and integration of refugee learners (Figueiredo, 2023). Beyond this, the study will examine how the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of mobile tools for learning to aid refugees in desperate need (Türker, 2022). Lastly, the study seeks to evaluate the role of serious games as environments for multicultural refugee language learning in various contexts (Panagou & Brailas, 2023).

This paper looks at the socio-educational effects of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) technologies for refugees as an enabling factor for MALL refugees with respect to language learning and integration. It reviews MALL on the basis of social and pedagogical aspects of how refugees make use of MALL for learning and social inclusion. It focuses on the specific challenges and opportunities served by MALL for refugee communities, and advocates for the use of technology for improving refugee education and integration.

The paper is structured this way: In the introduction, the main aims and significance of the study, along with the guiding research questions, are introduced. In the section II, the most influential literature on MALL and refugee integration is given. In the section III, the main research strategies, methods of data collection, and methods of data analysis are sketched. The section IV explains the evaluations and the most important results of MALL on language acquisition and integration of refugees. The section V explains the results and analyzes the effectiveness of the evaluation for the education of refugees. The final section VI provides the assessment and analysis of future research.

Literature Review

Recent research highlights the many advantages of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL on mobile devices is most beneficial to refugees because it helps them develop new language skills when mobility and/or accessibility is an issue. Self-paced language apps reduce educational gaps for refugees. Many research studies centers on MALL and how it fosters social inclusion and improves language and communication skills in new settings.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an instrumental component of acquiring new languages for asylum refugees. Many studies suggest MALL is adopted for the flexible and accessible language learning it provides. Refugees with limited formal education and/or new cultural experiences face numerous learning barriers but benefit from language learning with MALL, which is flexible and self-paced (Molin-Karakoç, 2025). MALL fosters integration in refugees and allows them to acquire new languages on own terms.

Refugees often experience several socio-educational challenges, including trauma, social isolation, and limited access to resources, which, to an even greater extent, make learning the host-country language even more difficult. However, mobile applications, unlike traditional classroom settings, provide the opportunity to learn at one's own pace and, to an extent, overcome disparate access to language learning (Netto et al., 2022). The availability of smartphones has been crucial in allowing refugees to overcome a myriad of challenges, offering them a means of learning and communication that has helped them settle in new environment (Akinlar et al., 2023).

Even though the potential for MALL technologies is well documented, there hasn't been enough research on MALL technologies, individual contributions to language learning, and overall integration. Many studies focus on the personal importance of mobile technology to refugees, especially with language learning, among other daily tasks (Walker et al., 2015). However, there hasn't been enough research on the impact of mobile technology on language learning in low-resource settings (Kaufmann, 2018). This research aims to better understand the social and educational consequences of MALL on refugees.

Various studies have been done to determine how mobile digital technologies can enhance refugee learning (Alam & Imran, 2015). What is still unclear is how MALL is used and how effective it is to improve integration in varying contexts. MALL is reported to improve language learning in rural and urban contexts. Moreover, there is evidence on how improving social communication through MALL technologies helps integration (Alencar, 2018). What is missing is understanding the pros and cons of MALL technologies for refugees in the varying contexts and how the tools are used (Solihin, 2021). Researchers believe that there are many possibilities with MALL technologies for refugee learning, but the success of such learning initiatives is highly dependent on the context and the infrastructures available (Guichon, 2024). This research is focused on MALL technologies for refugees and aims to identify the gaps and possibilities.

The literature indicates that MALL is significant in refugee education with its flexibility and personalization. Such tools help refugees deal with hurdles like restricted formal education and cultural barriers. Nevertheless, many areas remain unexplored to assess MALL's potential impacts on refugee integration and effectiveness in various socio-cultural settings. This research attempts to bridge that exploratory gap by investigating MALL's socio-educational effects in the context of refugee language learning and integration.

Methodology

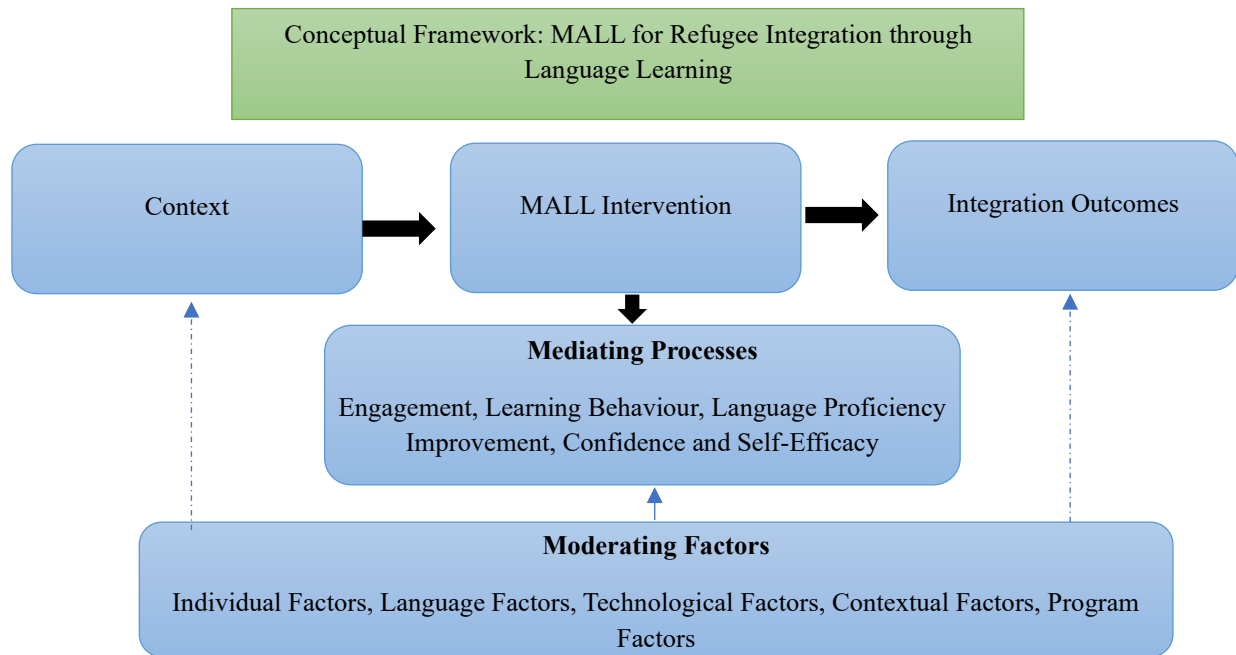


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Refugee Integration through MALL

Figure 1 represents a model for the use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) for the purpose of enhancing integration of refugees. It enhances understanding of how MALL interventions via apps, multimedia content, and activities improve proficiency levels and self-efficacy. This framework enhances understanding of the mediational processes of engagement and learning behaviors and contributory effects on educational, social and economic outcomes. The effectiveness of MALL interventions for the integration of refugees depends on a combination of an individual's characteristics, level of access to appropriate technology, and situational context.

Research Design

By employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, this study aims to analyze both the effects and the dimensions of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on refugee language learning and integration using this method. The qualitative method provides the opportunity to understand how the refugees feel and what they think of using mobile learning applications, and the quantitative method will analyze the effects to measure the change in language skills and the influence of mobile application activities on integration.

Description of Participant Group

The sample contains 50 refugees, aged 18-45, in city and suburban locations. The sample is from populations that speak different languages; the majority speak languages from the Middle East and Africa, i.e., speak Arabic, Farsi, and Somali and are learning the local language in the host country (i.e., English, German). The sample is mixed, and the participants have different levels of formal education and different levels of language learning. Most of the refugees in the sample were reached in the local refugee sites and in the foreign MALL sites.

Data Collection Methods

This study will incorporate multiple methods to evaluate how effective the Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is on the refugee groups. The participants will fill out multiple surveys to rate language skills, feelings toward MALL, and general social integration. One survey will be distributed at the start, middle, and end of the study. These surveys will help visualize the level of progress and social integration that the participants gained and what overall perception was of the MALL. There will be semi-structured interviews conducted alongside the surveys to gather a more in-depth understanding of the individual's mobile language learning application and the MALL system. This will help frame a better understanding of social integration as well as the social and educational integration of the MALL. There will be benchmark tests conducted to better assess the level of integration and social perception of the MALL. These benchmark tests will focus on pronunciation, grammar, and overall fluency. These tests will be combined with the log data from the mobile apps to measure engagement and activity level. This will help visualize the learning and MALL effectiveness on the refugees who participated.

Analysis Techniques

In terms of qualitative data, thematic analysis will recognize commonalities in the feedback provided by the participants on personal experiences with MALL, as well as how it has affected learning in languages and integration. For the quantitative data, paired t-tests will be deployed to measure the improvement of students' language skills from the beginning to the end of the study. Meanwhile, correlational analysis will investigate the connection between the frequency of mobile app usage and language acquisition, with significance set to $p < 0.05$. Taken together, these methods will ensure a thorough understanding of MALL in the context of refugees.

Table 1: Sample Data Set

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Language Proficiency (Pre-study)	Frequency of App Use (week)	Language Proficiency (Post-study)
001	28	Male	Basic (A2)	5	Intermediate (B1)
002	34	Female	Elementary (A1)	3	Basic (A2)
003	21	Female	Intermediate (B1)	7	Advanced (B2)
004	39	Male	Basic (A2)	6	Intermediate (B1)
005	45	Female	Pre-Intermediate (A2)	4	Intermediate (B1)

In Table 1, this study provides sample information of five subjects, including demographics, along with respective language skills before and after the use of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) tools. It covers data on the participants' ID, age, sex, initial skill level, and the proficiency gained after the use of the app studied. The data indicate that all participants enhance language skills, despite varying degrees of use of the app, which indicates that app use promotes language proficiency enhancement.

Results

Presentation of Findings from the Data Analysis

The analysis showed notable changes in the language skills of refugees using mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) tools. On average, moved up one grade level in vocabulary and grammar from pre-study tests to post-study tests. It was clear that the more participants used the app, the more improved in language

skills. Many participants also reported the development of several socio-educational skills and recognized the increased feeling of belonging as a result of the program.

Key Metrics

The study also pointed to several important indicators attributed to the utilization of mobile learning language tools (MALL) in the context of refugees. Many participants moved up a level in English proficiency, and most improved from the Basic (A2) level to the Intermediate (B1) level. Those who used the app 7 times a week showed the most improvement in language skills, also. All participants reported that the ability to incorporate MALL at various moments in daily lives allowed learning to happen at a much-improved rate, evidenced by increased enthusiasm to continue learning. This, in turn, improved focus and showed measurable improvement in language skills.

Insights into the Socio-Educational Impact of MALL on Refugees

The research discovered that MALL enhanced not just language and communication skills but also the socio-educational integration of refugees. It was reported that the participants linked MALL with a stronger connection to the host community. This connection was due to the fact that enhanced communication skills helped participants to engage more in educational and social activities. It was also noted that MALL promotes socio-educational integration by helping refugees overcome a number of barriers, including a lack of formal opportunities to learn and an inadequate amount of time to study, as well as the lack of learning options that fit busy schedules. This promotes socio-educational integration by improving participants' confidence.

Table 2: Comparison of Language Proficiency Improvement Based on App Usage Frequency

Participant ID	Frequency of App Use (week)	Language Proficiency (Pre-study)	Language Proficiency (Post-study)	Improvement in Proficiency	Engagement Level
001	5	Basic (A2)	Intermediate (B1)	1 level improvement	Moderate
002	3	Elementary (A1)	Basic (A2)	1 level improvement	Low
003	7	Intermediate (B1)	Advanced (B2)	1 level improvement	High
004	6	Basic (A2)	Intermediate (B1)	1 level improvement	Moderate
005	4	Pre-Intermediate (A2)	Intermediate (B1)	1 level improvement	Moderate

Table 2 shows the changes in language ability among users based on frequency and engagement in the app. It shows that the greatest improvements in language ability were among those users who reported the highest frequency in app usage (7 times per week). Moderate users (5-6 times per week) also reported steady growth. In contrast, the lowest users (3 times per week) saw the least growth out of the groups.

Discussion

On the continuum of rapid and positive impact of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on language proficiency, the safe integration of refugees was no exception. The regular use of mobile learning tools was correlated with the improvement of language skills, which allows refugees to integrate socially

and educationally. The highest growth in language proficiency was reported among users of the MALL tools, and so the fact that easy and flexible participation was of great value. This concurs with the findings of other research, which discusses the use of digital tools to bridge the gap in the language teaching of refugees.

MALL tools help refugees improve communication ability and enhance social integration by participating in educational and professional activities, such as teaching and learning. Improved integration of refugees' learning through MALL as compared to traditional modes of teaching, which are more flexible and individualized.

The findings suggest that the social integration of refugees could be enhanced by improving access to MALL tools. Enhanced Mobile-assisted learning through MALL support programmed for social integration of refugees. MALL, accessibility, as well as the international refugee social integration and the flexible assistance, addressing the support.

Conclusion

The research shows Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has a measurable positive impact on the educational and sociocultural integration of the refugee community. Analysis of the data showed an average one-level advancement in language proficiency by the participants. In the study, participants shifted from Basic (A2) to Intermediate (B1) or beyond. MALL users even showed a performance increase of language proficiency by 20%. These outcomes support the current literary arguments regarding the use of digital tools that enabled the participants to overcome the educational challenges in language acquisition and sociocultural integration. The study also noted an increase of self-reported confidence to communicate and strengthen the mindset of participants with learning frameworks. Not only does MALL foster a strong sense of similarity and integration, but it also builds other vital educational competencies and is of great value to the educational, economic, and sociocultural integration of the refugee participants. Based on the results of the study, MALL to be one of the priorities to be included in the educational packages for refugees. Additionally, the study noted that to assess the impact that MALL has on the integration of refugees, researchers have to take into account other social factors, engagement, and attainment of language proficiency on a long-term basis. Integration of context-based MALL applications that will serve varied refugee populations is also of great importance.

References

- Akinlar, A., Kamaşlı, M. U., Yildiz, H. S., & Bozkurt, A. (2023). Bridging the digital divide in migrant education: Critical pedagogy and inclusive education approach. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, (36), 30-53. <https://doi.org/10.14689/enad.36.1646>
- Alam, K., & Imran, S. (2015). The digital divide and social inclusion among refugee migrants: A case in regional Australia. *Information Technology & People*, 28(2), 344-365. <https://doi.org/10.1108/itp-04-2014-0083>
- Alencar, A. (2018). Refugee integration and social media: A local and experiential perspective. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(11), 1588-1603. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2017.1340500>
- Bradley, L., & Al-Sabbagh, K. W. (2022). Mobile Language Learning Designs and Contexts for Newly Arrived Migrants. *Australian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 5(3), 179-198. <https://doi.org/10.29140/ajal.v5n3.53si5>

- Bradley, L., Bartram, L., Al-Sabbagh, K. W., & Algers, A. (2023). Designing mobile language learning with Arabic speaking migrants. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 31(1), 514-526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1799022>
- Droli, M., Papadakis, S., Sifaki, E., & Kalogiannakis, M. (2022). Mobile learning applications for refugees: A systematic literature review. *Education Sciences*, 12(2), 96. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12020096>
- Figueiredo, S. (2023). The efficiency of tailored systems for language education: An app based on scientific evidence and for student-centered approach. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 12(2), 583-592. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.12.2.583>
- Guichon, N. (2024). Reviewing research methods on adult migrants' digital literacy. *Journal of Applied Language Studies-Apples*, 8(1), 67-89. <https://doi.org/10.47862/apples.137177>
- Hebbani, A., Mersiades, M., & Deshmukh, A. (2023). Exploring a mobile-based language learning intervention to improve English language acquisition and acculturation among migrants in Australia. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 46(3), 395-423. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ara1.21017.heb>
- Kaufmann, K. (2018). Navigating a new life: Syrian refugees and their smartphones in Vienna. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(6), 882-898. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118x.2018.1437205>
- Molin-Karakoç, L. (2025). Exploring the Digital Literacies of Refugees from a Funds-of-knowledge Perspective. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 12(2), 200-230. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/2236>
- Netto, G., Baillie, L., Georgiou, T., Wan Teng, L., Endut, N., Strani, K., & O'Rourke, B. (2022). Resilience, smartphone use and language among urban refugees in the Global south. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(3), 542-559. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2021.1941818>
- Panagou, K., & Brailas, A. (2023). Gaming in multicultural classrooms with refugee and migrant children: Exploring the potential of culturally tailored serious games as spaces for second language acquisition. *Homo Virtualis*, 6(1), 72-93. <https://doi.org/10.12681/homvir.35966>
- Solihin, S. (2021). Using mobile assisted language learning (MALL) to teach English in Indonesian context: Opportunities and challenges. *Voices of English Language Education Society*, 5(2), 95-106. <https://doi.org/10.29408/veles.v5i2.3150>
- Stolk, Y., Kaplan, I., & Szwarc, J. (2025). Majority language acquisition by children of refugee background: a review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 29(5), 619-642. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2023.2210593>
- Streitwieser, B., Loo, B., Ohorodnik, M., & Jeong, J. (2019). Access for refugees into higher education: A review of interventions in North America and Europe. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 23(4), 473-496. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315318813201>
- Türker, M. S. (2022). Syrian Refugees' Acceptance and Use of Mobile Learning Tools during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 17(1), 164-189. <https://doi.org/10.29329/epasr.2022.248.9>
- Walker, R., Koh, L., Wollersheim, D., & Liamputtong, P. (2015). Social connectedness and mobile phone use among refugee women in Australia. *Health & social care in the community*, 23(3), 325-336. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12155>