

# A Satisfaction Survey of APPs About English Learning for Undergraduates in Baoding

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As college students have a desire for diversified skills in a fast-developing society, a variety of English learning mobile phone APPs appear in college students' mobile phones. Given this situation, this paper investigates and analyzes the current status, needs, and satisfaction in the use of English learning APPs among college students. In this study, questionnaire method and interview method are used to collect related information. According to the survey, it is found that the market prospect of English learning APP is extremely promising, but there exist problems from three aspects. From the users' perspective, it is difficult to choose an APP that suits non-English majors' actual level. From the APPs' perspective, leaking privacy, viruses, or advertisements are their problems. What's more, in those APPs, professional knowledge was not systematic and rigorous, and the scheme design, ideas and methods provided were not scientific and reasonable. From another perspective, other APPs for entertainment are English learning APPs' competitor. In response to the above problems, the author proposes improvement suggestions for English learning APPs from four aspects, content editing, cooperation section, personalization, and feedback so that bring some improvement direction for English learning APPs industry.

*Keywords:* APP, English learning, satisfaction

## Introduction

As a valuable subject and communication vehicle, English is already a “headache” for many college students, whether in the studying process or communication with others. Traditionally, learning English requires holding a thick book of words and short sentences packed in buses, subways, and corridors. At present, in the various media situations, English majors begin to rely more on modern technology, and informal learning has begun to rise in English learning. In informal learning, the learning model based on the English learning app is one of the main manifestations (Ou & Lei, 2019). In various application markets of Android phones or the official “iTunes App Store” of Apple's IOS system, there are more than a thousand English-related APPs. Whether in daily communication or encountering English problems that have not been learned in the course of learning, users can learn through the English learning APP. It is a better way for college students to learn. The quality of mobile learning resources is an important factor in determining whether the mobile learning can give full play to the role (Hou, 2014). Therefore, the quality of English learning APPs should be paid attention. And varied requirements for English learning APPs hold by college students and many problems exposed in the development process are also worthy of our further investigation.

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The purpose of this research is to analyze some issues that affect college students' use of English learning APPs with the help of some methods and tools. Therefore, through the research of college students' satisfaction with English learning APPs, we could analyze the existing problems based on the survey results and seek solutions to provide effective theoretical support for better implementation of mobile English learning APPs' development.

### **Materials and Methods**

Questionnaire survey is one of the most frequently used methodologies in survey research. To understand the actual use of English learning APPs by college students, this research designed a questionnaire on "The Current Situation of College Students' Usage of English Learning Apps" and conducted an online questionnaire survey in five universities in Baoding. In addition to the information about the popularity, software type, usage habits, loyalty, learning motivation and content, use effect, user evaluation of college students when using the English learning APP, the author also investigated college students' problems in using the English learning APP, and their related suggestions and outlook. 160 questionnaires were distributed and 156 questionnaires were collected from Baoding. The recovery rate was 97.5%.

### **Result and Discussion**

After a series of work such as questionnaire production, questionnaire distribution, questionnaire recovery, questionnaire statistics, etc., the author analyzed the survey results.

#### **Current Situation of Undergraduates in Using English Learning APPs**

The survey of the number of English learning APPs used by college students shows that among the college students surveyed, only 3% of college students have not used an English learning APP. It can be seen that English learning APPs are widely welcomed by college undergraduates, reflecting the high acceptance and demand of such APPs by college students from another side, further proving that such related issues deserve attention and research.

In terms of choosing the type of English learning APP, the investigation indicates that most undergraduates use word memory APPs, listening improvement APPs, and assisted translation APPs while speaking improvement APPs and English reading APPs are the types of APPs that are rarely used by college students. It can be seen that college students are mainly inclined to ability-improved APPs when choosing the type of APP. That kind of APPs is straightforward, simple, quick-resulting, and fruitful.

The survey on the frequency of using the English learning APP of college students shows that undergraduates who frequently use English learning APPs account for 19.9%, and 66.7% of college students use it when they encounter English problems, and college students who download English learning APPs but rarely use them account for 13.4%. It can be seen that many college students choose APP to cope with the exam or solve irregular English problem.

The reasons why college students utilize English learning APPs tell that personal needs and the APP's good features and user experience are the key fascination, and undergraduates are also affected to some extent by the promotion of personal interests, the need for lesson learning, and the influence of teachers' recommendations. It can be seen that, whether passive or active, college students who use English learning APPs have a positive internal motivation and good external motivation, so it is an irreversible trend for college students to use more English learning APPs in daily learning.

For the effect of the use of English learning APPs, 74% of undergraduates think that English learning APPs are helpful to improve English proficiency and are intuitively reflected in scores reached. English learning APPs are currently in a good development trend, which has played a good role in boosting college students' English learning.

### Reasons for the Popularity of English Learning APPs

From the perspective of undergraduates, the advantages of English learning APPs are shown in Table 1. It can be seen that with the promotion of smart phones, the portability, pertinence, intelligence, and professionalism of English learning APPs are the main advantages that attract college students.

Table 1

*Advantages of English Learning APPs*

Option	Total	Ratio
Portable	127	81.41%
Feature-rich	97	62.18%
Learning-related	90	57.69%
Funny & personalized	85	54.49%
Performance-enhancing	64	41.02%
Record of learning progress	72	46.15%

### Problems With English Learning APPs

About the problems found in the process of using English learning APPs, the participants' views were shown in Table 2, from which one thing can be affirmed. If the user experience and product quality of English learning APPs want to be improved, it is the key to solve the above problems.

Table 2

*Problems With English Learning APPs*

Option	Total	Ratio
Payment	118	75.64%
Advertisement	126	80.77%
Lack of professionalism	90	57.69%
Heavy schoolwork	85	54.49%
Little effect	73	46.79%
No need to learn English	30	19.23%
The interface of the app is not good	89	57.05%
Easy to be disturbed during learning	109	69.87%

### Participants' Suggestions and Expectations

Regarding the suggestions and expectations for English learning APPs, the participants made their own choice. These options in Table 3 are the valuable suggestions made by the respondents on the development of English learning APPs after their personal use, which are worthy of our in-depth thinking and implementation.

From the above analysis, the author summarized the problems with the English learning APP market.

Except for college students majoring in English, other major college students have a weak English foundation and a limited level of proficiency. In the face of good and bad APP products in the market, it is difficult to choose an APP that suits their actual level. In addition, these non-English majors have a heavy professional curriculum and are under great pressure. Therefore, little energy can be paid on English learning.

Less time is available to learn with the APP. Over time, the enthusiasm and interest of users will eventually diminish.

Table 3

*Expectations for English Learning APPs*

Option	Total	Ratio
Professionalism	145	92.95%
Feature-rich	121	77.56%
Reduce advertising	138	88.46%
App's interface is beautiful	90	57.69%
Convenient communication and sharing	93	59.61%

Many APPs still cannot maximize the fragmented time of students, and many students are still in the unconscious and purposeless learning stage. The reason is largely due to the APP itself. Through interviews, the author learned that the one-time learning plans formulated by many APPs have a large amount of knowledge, and the content is complex, which makes people feel difficult to remember. Also, the risk of leaking piracy, advertisement, etc., are problems of APP itself.

Although English learning APPs have tried to combine entertainments and learning, other entertainment and social APPs are more popular. Therefore, when using the English learning APP to learn, users are easy to be attracted by other types of APPs, thereby interrupting learning.

And from the expectation of users, if English learning APPs could provide planned multimedia content, generate user performance interactively, and remember everything related to learning, maybe the popularity and satisfaction will increase.

### **Suggestions for Improvement of English Learning APP**

According to the survey result and analysis, four aspects of the improvement and promotion of English learning APPs can be carried out:

In the English learning resources section, teachers can participate in APP development. Teachers can provide rich learning materials and ensure their professionalism, design and build APP client and learning space for downloading resources, and develop and utilize many types of resources based on the practicability, functionality, fragmentation, and fun of the APP.

The purpose of the cooperation and communication section is to build a collaborative learning environment for students to discuss problems, exchange ideas, share information, and answer questions with each other. During the learning process, learners can voluntarily form groups to help each other with like-minded learning partners and make progress together. So they can have an effective way to improve spoken English and improve students' communication skills while completing tasks on APPs.

The third section is about personalization. Different students have different needs and different requirements; it is recommended that if there is individual customization, it may better meet users' needs and increase user viscosity.

The last section concerned with evaluation and feedback. English learning APPs need to make intelligent judgments at any time, make statistics and analysis on the effect of learning, and feedback the results to learners. The evaluation and feedback are real-time, targeted, and can reflect the changing state of the learner's grasp of the content. At the same time, English learning APPs can also make intelligent decisions based on the learner's

learning level, learning status, and the rules of learning itself, providing learners with content that needs to be consolidated and content that requires further learning.

### Conclusions

With the frequent use of English in the international world, undergraduates have the pressure to learn English well. The occurrence of English APPs, on the one hand, suits the development of internet and mobile technology, and on the other hand, benefits undergraduates from learning English without the limit of time and space. However, in the development of English learning APPs industry, those APPs' own defects and new needs of its users should be paid attention. In this paper, the author used the questionnaire to investigate the real situation of English learning APPs industry and its main users' real requirements, and the corresponding suggestions were provided. Due to time and space limit, the participants were all in Baoding, Hebei Province. If given the opportunity to do a further validation of this result, the author may test it in universities of Shanghai.

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