
The MVSD Model for Developing Vietnamese Speaking Skills in Mobile Learning Environments

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ABSTRACT: Online learning and mobile technologies are reshaping the teaching of Vietnamese as a foreign language, particularly speaking instruction. However, the pedagogical factors that shape speaking development in mobile learning environments remain insufficiently explained. Drawing on research on Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Communicative Language Teaching, and communicative task design, this paper proposes the Mobile-mediated Vietnamese Speaking Development (MVSD) model. The model places learner-centred communicative task design at its core and links it to pedagogical facilitation, interaction and feedback, and the conditions of the mobile learning environment. MVSD is proposed as a pedagogical framework for explaining and guiding the design and organization of Vietnamese speaking activities in online classes.

KEYWORDS: Vietnamese as a Foreign Language; speaking skills; Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL); mobile learning; MVSD model

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies are visibly transforming the ways foreign languages are taught and learned. As smartphones and Wi-Fi have become widespread, learning is no longer confined to the traditional classroom but can take place across a range of spaces and times. This tendency is increasingly evident in the teaching of Vietnamese as a foreign language, especially in online classes in which many learners use smartphones as their primary learning device. For speaking instruction, a change in the learning environment entails new requirements for the organization of learning activities. Learners must use language in real time, sustain interaction, receive feedback, and adjust their expression to particular communicative situations. Consequently, the effectiveness of developing speaking skills through mobile devices depends not only on technological conditions but also, to a considerable extent, on how tasks are designed, how activities are pedagogically facilitated, and how interaction is sustained in the classroom.

Research on Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has demonstrated a range of possibilities for supporting foreign language learning. Nevertheless, most studies have focused on English or on the effectiveness of technologies and learning applications. In the case of Vietnamese as a foreign language, the relationships among the learning environment, communicative task design, pedagogical facilitation, interaction, and feedback in the development of speaking skills have yet to be adequately explained. This paper therefore examines the pedagogical factors that influence the development of Vietnamese speaking skills through mobile devices and proposes the Mobile-mediated Vietnamese Speaking Development (MVSD) model. The study addresses three questions: What difficulties commonly arise in this learning environment? Which factors directly influence the effectiveness of speaking development? How should the MVSD model be organized to support Vietnamese speaking instruction in online classes? In MVSD, communicative task design occupies the central position and is linked to pedagogical facilitation and the interaction-feedback process. Learning outcomes are treated not only as outputs but also as evidence for adjusting subsequent tasks. In this sense, the model is proposed as a pedagogical framework for explaining and guiding the organization of Vietnamese speaking instruction in mobile learning environments.

II. RESEARCH CONTENT

A. Literature Review

1) *Research on Mobile-Assisted Language Learning:* Mobile-Assisted Language Learning has become a significant research direction in language education, particularly since smartphones and Wi-Fi became widely available. Initially, mobile devices were mainly used as tools that enabled learners to access learning materials more conveniently. Subsequent research broadened this view by situating learning in more flexible contexts in which learners can sustain learning activities both inside and outside the classroom. Kukulska-Hulme and Viberg (2018) show that mobile technologies can support interaction and collaboration, thereby

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extending the spaces in which language learning occurs. Review studies have also reported positive effects of MALL, although outcomes are not uniform across contexts. In their review of MALL research on the speaking skills of ESL/EFL learners, Rajendran and Yunus (2021) found that most studies reported some degree of learner improvement. From a broader perspective, Figueiredo (2023) notes that learning outcomes are also influenced by learner characteristics, implementation contexts, and the organization of learning activities. The central question, therefore, is no longer simply whether mobile devices can be used in foreign language learning. More important is how learning activities are organized in mobile environments and what conditions enable technology to genuinely support learners.

2) *Research on Speaking Development through MALL*: Compared with receptive skills, speaking requires learners to process and use language during interaction itself. Speakers must select appropriate expressions while simultaneously monitoring their interlocutor's responses and adjusting their speech when necessary. These characteristics make the development of speaking through mobile devices a distinct issue; it cannot be reduced to transferring conventional speaking exercises to another technological platform.

Recent research generally confirms the potential of MALL to support speaking development. Li's (2024) meta-analysis indicates that MALL has a positive effect on foreign language learners' speaking skill development, although the magnitude of the effect varies according to the organization and duration of the intervention. Metruk (2024), in a systematic review of pronunciation instruction, likewise shows that mobile devices create additional opportunities for practice and can support pronunciation learning. These findings are relevant to speaking development, but most reflect effectiveness in particular dimensions or specific instructional arrangements. Another emerging direction is research on collaborative learning on mobile platforms. The review by Guo, Jeyaraj, and Razali (2024) associates collaborative MALL (C-MALL) with activity design, collaboration, interaction, and learner participation. This line of inquiry is important because it shifts attention away from the device itself and towards how learners actually use language in joint activity.

Taken together, these findings suggest that research on MALL and speaking is moving from demonstrating the effectiveness of technology towards identifying the conditions under which that effectiveness emerges. Nevertheless, the relationships among communicative tasks, pedagogical facilitation, interaction, and feedback have yet to be integrated into a unified mechanism, particularly for languages that have received substantially less research attention than English.

3) *MALL Research in Vietnam*: In Vietnam, MALL has attracted attention in foreign language education, but existing studies have mainly focused on English at the tertiary level. These studies commonly examine the use of mobile devices to support learning, learner participation, or the effectiveness of mobile learning for a particular language skill.

With respect to speaking, the study by Ta Thi Bich Lien and Nghiem Thi Thu Ha (2024) is noteworthy. Their findings suggest that integrating MALL into speaking classes can contribute to improvements in fluency, accuracy, and non-verbal communication among students. The study provides further evidence for the potential of MALL to support speaking instruction in the Vietnamese educational context.

Domestic research, however, has continued to focus primarily on evaluating the effectiveness of technology use in English language teaching. Teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language raises additional issues, particularly because learners must manage forms of address, select expressions according to participant roles, use sentence-final and modal particles, control intonation, and employ linguistic resources for politeness. These characteristics mean that organizing speaking activities concerns not only linguistic accuracy but also the appropriateness of speech in particular communicative situations. Findings from MALL research on English are therefore an important point of reference, but they are insufficient to explain how Vietnamese speaking skills develop in mobile learning environments.

4) *Research Gap*: Research on MALL generally indicates that mobile devices can support foreign language learning, but most studies continue to focus on English or on the effectiveness of a particular technology, application, or learning activity. For speaking, the key issue is not merely whether technology helps learners improve, but how tasks are designed, how teachers facilitate their implementation, how interaction unfolds, and how feedback is used. These relationships have not yet been adequately explained within a common mechanism. For Vietnamese as a foreign language, this gap is particularly significant because speaking is closely tied to context and interpersonal relationships. The present paper therefore proposes MVSD as an integrated pedagogical framework in which communicative task design is central and feedback is used to inform the adjustment of subsequent tasks.

B. Theoretical Foundations of the MVSD Model

The MVSD model is grounded in three foundations: Communicative Language Teaching, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, and communicative task design. These foundations are considered in relation to the organization and maintenance of speaking activities in online mobile learning environments.

1) *Communicative Language Teaching as a Foundation for Speaking Development*: In foreign language teaching, speaking is not simply the production of phonologically or grammatically correct sentences. Learners must also use language appropriately in relation to communicative purpose, interlocutor, and context. Richards (2006) argues that Communicative Language Teaching

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should provide opportunities for learners to use language in meaningful activities rather than merely practise isolated linguistic units.

This requirement is particularly important in Vietnamese as a foreign language. Forms of address, modal and sentence-final particles, intonation, and politeness strategies may vary according to the relationship between participants and the communicative situation. Speaking development therefore needs to be embedded in tasks with specific communicative purposes. Mobile devices do not alter this principle; rather, they expand the spaces and conditions in which communicative activities can be implemented.

2) *Mobile Devices as a Language Learning Environment*: In this paper, mobile devices are conceptualized as an environment in which learning activities take place rather than merely as tools for delivering content. Kukulska-Hulme and Viberg (2018) show that mobile technologies can extend learning contexts, support interaction and collaboration, and enable learners to continue learning beyond the traditional classroom.

At the same time, the possibility of learning across different times and spaces makes learners' conditions of participation more diverse. Devices, connectivity, and the surrounding environment may directly affect interaction. The important issue is therefore not simply the use of mobile devices, but the selection and organization of activities that are appropriate to learners' actual learning conditions.

3) *Communicative Task Design in Online Environments*: Task design provides the link between the goal of developing speaking competence and what learners actually do. According to Ellis (2003), communicative tasks create opportunities for learners to use language to achieve a specific outcome, with a primary focus on meaning.

In mobile learning environments, an appropriate task should require learners to use Vietnamese to accomplish a genuine communicative purpose. The objective, mode of interaction, expected output, and feedback procedures need to be sufficiently explicit for learners to understand what they are expected to do, without reducing the activity to a mechanical sequence of operations. Task difficulty should also correspond to learners' proficiency and capacity to participate. When learners have opportunities to prepare, experiment, and revise their expression, they are better positioned to move towards less controlled communicative situations.

4) *The Teacher's Role in Mobile Speaking Classes*: In speaking classes conducted through mobile devices, teachers do more than provide linguistic knowledge; they organize the ways in which learners use language. This involves designing tasks, arranging modes of interaction, monitoring task performance, and providing feedback when necessary. Pedagogical facilitation becomes particularly important in online classes because interaction can easily be disrupted or fragmented when tasks and organizational procedures are insufficiently clear.

From these theoretical foundations, speaking development through mobile devices can be understood as the outcome of several interacting factors: learning conditions, communicative tasks, teacher facilitation, and interaction and feedback. The relationships among these factors provide the immediate basis for the MVSD model presented below.

C. The Mobile-mediated Vietnamese Speaking Development (MVSD) Model

1) *Model Rationale*: Research on MALL has provided substantial evidence of the benefits of mobile devices for foreign language learning. Most studies, however, have concentrated on the effects of technology or particular instructional arrangements, while the pedagogical mechanism through which speaking develops has not been systematically explained. Addressing this gap, the present study starts from the proposition that speaking development in mobile learning environments is not a direct product of technology; rather, it results from the organization of communicative activity.

From this perspective, mobile devices provide conditions and spaces for learning, whereas outcomes depend on how tasks are designed, how teachers facilitate activities, how learners interact, and how feedback is used. Technology therefore does not replace the principles of communicative language teaching; it extends the conditions under which those principles can be implemented online.

On this basis, the paper proposes the Mobile-mediated Vietnamese Speaking Development (MVSD) model. The model is not intended to introduce a new technology or a fixed teaching procedure. Instead, it seeks to explain the relationships among the components involved in speaking development. The theoretical value of MVSD lies in connecting these components within a unified pedagogical mechanism in which communicative task design occupies the central position.

2) *Structure of the MVSD Model*: MVSD is organized as a system of four functional components operating within a mobile learning environment. This environment provides the conditions and context for the entire instructional process, while communicative task design occupies the central position and connects pedagogical facilitation, interaction and feedback, and the development of Vietnamese speaking competence (see Figure 1).

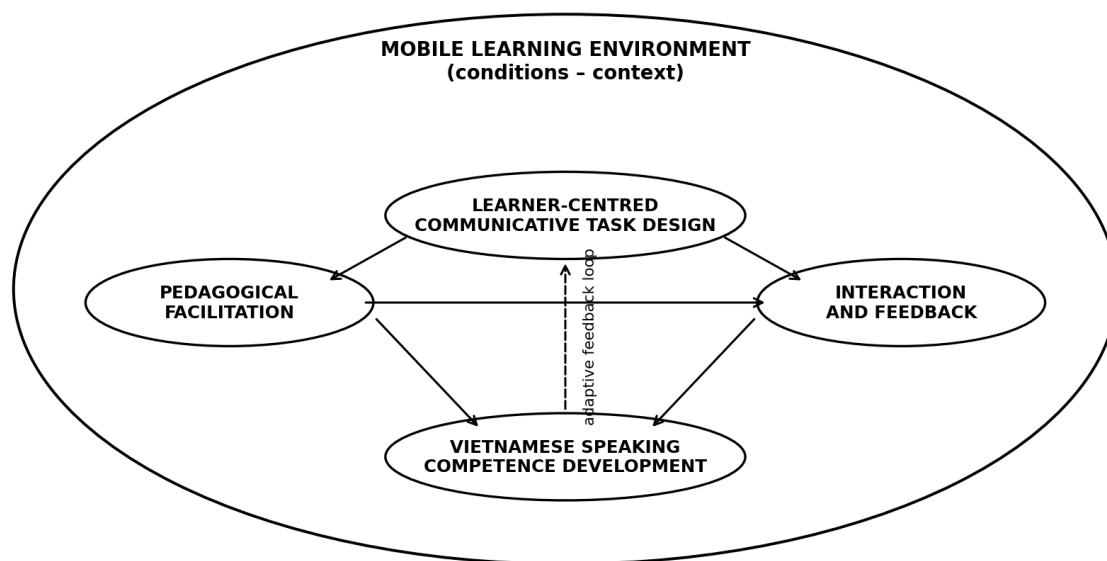


Figure 1. The Mobile-mediated Vietnamese Speaking Development (MVSD) model

Solid arrows: influence/coordination; dashed arrow: adaptive feedback loop

3) *Operational Mechanism and Theoretical Contribution of MVSD*: MVSD operates as a cycle in which the communicative task is both the starting point and the locus at which adjustments are incorporated after each implementation. Tasks are designed within the specific conditions of the mobile learning environment and in relation to learners' needs and proficiency. When a task is implemented, the teacher facilitates the activity, while learners use Vietnamese to achieve a communicative purpose and receive feedback through interaction.

Interaction and feedback connect task performance with the development of speaking competence. Learners do not merely complete a task; they also become aware of the appropriateness of their expression, try alternative choices, and adjust their language use in subsequent situations. Feedback therefore serves not only error correction but also provides information for designing the next task more appropriately.

This mechanism gives MVSD its adaptive character. Tasks can be adjusted in terms of difficulty, output requirements, interaction format, degree of support, or communicative context on the basis of what occurred in the preceding task. Consequently, the model is not tied to a particular application or platform and can be flexibly applied to different groups of learners.

MVSD extends the MALL perspective by connecting its components within a single pedagogical mechanism. The learning environment provides the conditions; task design directs activity; the teacher facilitates implementation; and interaction and feedback generate information for subsequent adjustment. Under this interpretation, technology does not directly produce speaking development; its pedagogical value is realized through the way communicative activity is organized.

MVSD therefore advances the following proposition: the development of Vietnamese speaking skills in mobile learning environments depends more on the design and adjustment of communicative activity through tasks, pedagogical facilitation, and interaction and feedback than on the mobile device itself. This proposition provides a basis for empirical testing in future research.

D. Discussion

1) *Theoretical Significance of the MVSD Model*: Previous MALL research has identified numerous benefits of mobile devices for foreign language learning, particularly their capacity to extend learning across time and space and to create additional opportunities for interaction. Research findings also indicate, however, that technology does not automatically generate learning gains when pedagogical activity is not appropriately organized. MVSD adopts this position but moves beyond it by focusing on the operational mechanism of the speaking classroom rather than merely on the effectiveness of a device or application.

Within the model, communicative task design is central because it is where learning objectives are transformed into concrete learner activity. This perspective helps explain why the same technological platform may produce different outcomes across classes. The difference lies not only in the device but also in task construction, learner participation, teacher facilitation, and the quality of interaction and feedback.

MVSD also conceptualizes feedback more broadly. Feedback is not used solely to correct errors after task completion; it also supplies information for adjusting subsequent tasks. The teaching process can therefore respond to learners' actual difficulties and

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progress. In this respect, the model connects task design, implementation, and adjustment in a continuous cycle rather than treating them as separate stages.

2) *Implications for Teaching Vietnamese Speaking as a Foreign Language*: Most research on MALL and speaking has been conducted in English language teaching contexts. These findings are informative, but they cannot simply be transferred intact to Vietnamese. In addition to pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, learners of Vietnamese must manage choices involving forms of address, modal and sentence-final particles, intonation, and politeness. Such choices vary according to speaker-hearer relationships and particular communicative situations.

From this perspective, MVSD allows the linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of Vietnamese to be incorporated directly into task design. Learners do not merely practise a sentence pattern or a predetermined structure; they use Vietnamese to achieve a communicative purpose, monitor the interlocutor's response, and adjust their expression when necessary. Teachers likewise do more than provide language models: they create situations, guide interaction, and support learners in making contextually appropriate linguistic choices.

This is particularly relevant to online classes conducted through mobile devices. Interaction in such environments depends heavily on task organization. Tasks that are excessively long, cognitively demanding, or unclear in purpose can easily disrupt the flow of communication. By contrast, manageable tasks with specific purposes and timely feedback can create additional opportunities to use Vietnamese and enable learners to adjust their speech while participating.

3) *Applicability, Limitations, and Directions for Validation*: MVSD was not developed for a specific application or platform. It can therefore be applied in online classes using different tools, provided that communicative tasks, pedagogical facilitation, and feedback mechanisms are appropriately organized. This flexibility also allows teachers to adjust tasks to the proficiency, needs, and learning conditions of particular learner groups.

The model, however, may not be equally applicable in all contexts. Its implementation depends on teachers' task-design competence, learner agency, and the technical conditions of the class. In large classes or in settings with unstable connectivity, the organization of interaction and feedback may require substantial adaptation.

A further limitation is that MVSD is currently a theoretical model. The relationships among its components have not yet been validated with empirical data from specific groups of learners of Vietnamese. Future research should therefore examine how the model operates across proficiency levels, the suitability of different task types, and changes in speaking competence across cycles of task performance, interaction, feedback, and adjustment. Such evidence will help define the model's scope of applicability and identify aspects requiring further refinement.

III. CONCLUSION

This paper has proposed the MVSD model to explain the development of Vietnamese speaking skills in mobile learning environments from a pedagogical perspective. In the model, communicative task design occupies the central position and is linked to pedagogical facilitation, interaction and feedback, and learners' learning conditions.

The core of MVSD lies in the way these factors are connected within a continuous cycle. Task outcomes not only indicate the development of speaking competence but also provide information for adjusting subsequent activity. This approach is compatible with the characteristics of Vietnamese, in which communicative effectiveness depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on the ability to select contextually and relationally appropriate forms of expression.

At its current stage, MVSD remains a theoretical model. Empirical validation across learner groups and classroom contexts is required to clarify its scope of applicability, the appropriateness of its individual components, and the ways in which the model may be further refined.

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