

Students' Perception of Using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a Media for Learning English

Umml Aisah Nasution^{1*}, Utami Dewi², Sholihatul Hamidah Daulay³

¹Magister of English Education Department, State Islamic University of North Sumatera, Indonesia

² Magister of English Education Department, State Islamic University of North Sumatera, Indonesia

³ Magister of English Education Department, State Islamic University of North Sumatera, Indonesia

Email: ¹ummlaisah.nasution@uinsu.ac.id, ²utami.dewi@uinsu.ac.id, ³sholihatulhamidah.daulay@uinsu.ac.id

Abstract

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is a media that can be used in the process of learning English in the form of a hand-held mobile device or also known as a mobile phone. The purpose of this study is to determine students' perceptions of the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a media for learning English. This research used descriptive qualitative method. The researcher used direct interviews as a data collection technique for two Junior High School students who attended schools in urban areas and two Junior High School students who attended rural schools in the North Sumatra region. The results of this finding are that students who attend school in urban areas do not have serious problems with using MALL as learning media. They consider that the internet network is easy to access, the school also provides WiFi and they are able to operate mobile phones optimally so that the use of MALL as a media for learning English is considered effective and not boring by students to improve their English skills. Students who attend schools in rural areas also think that MALL is a media that is not boring and is able to improve their English skills, but there are obstacles they experience, like difficulties in accessing the internet network and the school does not provide WiFi, so that the use of MALL as a learning media is considered inadequate effective.

Keywords: learning English; MALL; media; perception; students

INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology (ICT) has always been advantageous to education because it allows students and teachers to always rely on the most recent tools to support their instructional activities. Improvements in teaching can be achieved with the help of ICT (Kee & Samsudin, 2014). Modern technology has brought countless inventions

into human life. In terms of communication, mobile phones have played an important part in moulding our lives and education is no doubt striving to take use of it (Yudhiantara & Nasir, 2017). One of the functions that mobile phones offer users is text messaging. It helps people interact anywhere, anytime for communication, regardless of time and place. In order for cellphone users to learn more effectively, this is what teachers and students need to investigate.

According to Darsih & Asikin (2020) noted various studies have proved the benefits of educational technology, especially Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL, according to Davie and Hilber (2015), is the use of mobile devices, such as personal digital assistants (PDAs), regular cell phones, smartphones, tablets, Android devices, or MP3 players, which are all utilized for learning media to promote language learning. In previous research by Gonulal (2019) discovered that the MALL application can be used as a useful tool for language learning.

There are numerous mobile apps available to help with vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills while learning English. Although these applications are frequently developed with voice, visuals and other activities, they are surely engaging to students, not forgetting to focus on language learning (Guo, 2014). Free programs can also be extremely helpful learning tools, especially if they are carefully chosen based on criteria that promote meaningful language learning, such as: Need for enabling exchange and collaboration, providing feedback, and developing thinking skills (Losi, 2022). Paid programs may have more features, but free programs can also be very beneficial learning tools.

In addition to the beneficial consequences of utilizing MALL as a media for learning English as mentioned by previous scholars above, there are also negative impacts of using MALL. After analyzing the data, Aratusa et al. (2022) came to the conclusion that students' perceptions of using MALL in pronunciation were generally positive because they believed that MALL was useful and effective for their pronunciation learning. However, the students identified one significant issue with internet access that prevented them from pronouncing MALL correctly. However, it is clear from the students' responses that there are three more issues that contribute to their difficulties: the functionality of their cellphones; the danger of being distracted; and their familiarity with using mobile phone for learning English.

In this study, the researcher made interviews of two Junior High Schools in the North Sumatra region as the context in this study. The first school is located in an urban area and the second school is located in a rural area. Both of these schools use MALL as a media for learning English, but from the results of these observations there are some differences that the researcher found from both the positive and negative impacts of using MALL as a media for learning English for students. As the results of previous research which only presented the results of research from one region or one institution regarding students' perceptions of the use of MALL as a media for learning English, in this study the researcher was interested in conducting research on students' perceptions of using MALL as a media for learning English in Junior High Schools located in urban and rural areas.

So according to this background, the researcher raised the title about **“Students’ Perceptions of Using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a Media for Learning English.**

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Mobile Learning

Mobile learning makes it easier for students to learn anytime, anywhere. In addition, there is also Learning Mobility, which motivates and inspires learning as a simpler alternative to traditional learning. The fluidity of learning has also led to new forms of education such as: Personalized, learner-centered, contextual, collaborative, ubiquitous lifelong learning. Finally, student mobility can be coordinated with each other to achieve the same learning goals and protect against time and place issues.

According to Kukulska-Hulme (2012), mobile technology can be used to recognize the student's presence in a particular location, or her relationships with other people and objects in the environment, and adjust the learning experience accordingly can be adjusted to facilitate situational, problem-based learning. With the help of personal mobile devices, students can practice more flexible, user-friendly and personalized learning habits regardless of location. Mobile phone learning can increase students' sensitivity to active learning motivation. Learners can also participate in various social learning collaborations. Learners enjoy ownership over their learning and enjoy a degree of freedom and independence.

Mobile learning also increases the mobility and dynamics of the learning process and the flow of information related to student learning. Kukulska-Hulme (2012) also stated that the most important feature of mobile learning is personalized, localized, authentic, spontaneous and routine learning.

2. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

MALL is a learning method that uses tools to manage language learning. O'Malley (2012) defines this as any kind of learning that occurs when the learner is not in a fixed, predetermined location, or when the learner takes advantage of learning opportunities provided by mobile technology defined as learning that occurs in You have to learn a foreign language in a monotonous and formal way like a class.

Burston (2014) states that so far most MALL publications have focused on describing project implementation. Incorporating her MALL into language learning has many benefits for students. Most of it is in English, one of the most important aspects and skills to master today. BenMoussa (2003) points out the mobility and reach benefits of mLearning. Available to students anytime, anywhere. Another advantage of his is that MALL is very motivated, which improves his understanding of the content being conveyed. Additionally, mLearning's collaborative nature encourages group discussion and immediate feedback, ultimately enhancing learning and improving memory. Alsied (2017) states that students are enthusiastic about individual and group learning and choose their own learning styles.

3. English Learning through MALL

This language learning strategy will help you develop your English skills, especially for English as a EFL students. Magno (2010) points out that many studies have found associations between language learning strategies and English proficiency, and that how these strategies

are used has a large bearing on English proficiency. increase. Magogwe and Oliver (2017) argue that second language learning requires different cognitive processing strategies and activities. Studies show that the more methods you use, the more likely you are to improve your desired English skills. A sensible answer for students is to find learning solutions using the tools they already have. Also, each student must have a mobile phone as this tool is very important.

Of course, if all students have mobile phones, it can be used as a learning tool that saves time, effort, and money. The learning method used in mobile language learning is Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). At MALL, tutorials make learning English easier and improve your English skills. A small example is a YouTube application that provides videos for listening training, a built-in browser application that provides free access to English novels to practice reading skills, and the Play Store and App Store to download additional programs to support learning English. and embedded applications. . All of this can be achieved without the user having to set a schedule or strategy for learning English.

METHOD

This study used qualitative research methods. In a sense, the qualitative method is an analytical mechanism that focuses on defining words and sentences that are structured intentionally and consistently, from data collection to research documentation and reporting. Also, qualitative approaches are descriptive in nature, where data are collected in the form of words or images rather than numbers (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). But experts say the qualitative descriptive method could be interpreted as a collection of simple data- gathering actions without specific conditions, and the results are significant. Researchers wanted to know perceptions about the use of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) as an English learning tool. The participants consisted of 4 students. Among them are two high school students from urban areas and two high school students from rural North Sumatra. Researcher believes that research participants can provide information that answers research questions. In qualitative research, data are collected through in-depth interviews, document analysis, observations, and analysis of audiovisual material (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, data for this study were collected by direct interviews. Several steps were taken to collect data from the interview results; 1) Draft interview questions for participants. 2) Researcher interviews each participant. 3) The researcher transcribes the results of the interview.

FINDINGS

As the research explained above, in this study four participants were used, namely Junior High School students who attended schools in urban and rural areas in North Sumatra. From the results of interviews conducted by researcher with participants regarding students' perceptions of the use of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a media for learning English, the participants had the following perceptions:

Junior High School Students Who Attend School in Urban Areas

The first participant with the initials RA said that:

“Menurut persepsi saya ya kak, tidak ada permasalahan yang serius mengenai penggunaan mobile phone sebagai media dalam pembelajaran khususnya belajar bahasa Inggris paling

kendalanya itu kehabisan kuota internet kak, tapi walaupun kami kehabisan kuota pihak sekolah menyediakan Wifi di lingkungan sekolah dan internet di sekolah mudah diakses. Saya juga lebih mudah menggunakan mobile phone daripada computer saat pembelajaran. Jadi menurut saya pribadi, memang mobile phone ini salah satu media yang efektif dalam pembelajaran khususnya bahasa Inggris tidak membosankan karna banyak fitur dan aplikasi yang bisa kita akses untuk menambah referensi belajar kak."

From the statement above, it can be concluded that the use of mobile phones as a learning media in urban areas has a very positive impact on students because it can improve students' English skills. The use of mobile phones as learning media is not an obstacle for students because they do not experience difficulties in accessing the internet, the school also provides Wifi and the use of mobile phones is also easier for students to operate.

The second participant with the initial AS said that:

"Kalau persepsi saya tidak jauh berbeda dengan yang dia katakan kak. MALL itu efektif dan tidak membosankan. Saya pribadi dan saya lihat teman-teman saya juga begitu, tidak ada permasalahan serius terkait penggunaan mobile phone. Saya juga sama kak, kendalanya kehabisan kuota untung pihak sekolah nyediain wifi dan InsyaAllah mampu meningkatkan skill English kami kak."

From the participants' perceptions regarding the use of MALL as a medium for learning English in junior high schools in urban areas, it can be concluded that there are no problems that hinder their learning process by using mobile phones, because the school provides free Wifi to access.

Junior High School Students Who Attend School in Rural Areas

Third participant with initial NIS, said that:

"Menurut persepsi saya penggunaan mobile phone sebagai media pembelajaran bahasa Inggris tidak membosankan, tapi kendalanya lumayan juga kak. Di sekolah kami tidak ada Wifi dan lumayan sulit untuk mengakses internet hanya kartu tertentu yang lumayan mudah untuk mengakses internet dan walaupun mati lampu maka jaringan juga hilang kak. Jadi, walaupun penggunaan mobile phone sebagai media pembelajaran tidak membosankan, tapi karna banyak kendala dalam penggunaan mobile phone tersebut jadi menurut saya media ini kurang efektif kak."

From the perception above, we can see that students who attend school in rural areas consider that the use of mobile phones as a learning media is not boring, but because there are several obstacles as mentioned by the third participant above, it can be seen that mobile phones as a media for learning English are lacking effective for use in rural areas.

The fourth participant with the initial NKN said that:

"Kalau persepsi saya kak, penggunaan mobile phone sebagai media pembelajaran mampu meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris saya, tapi gimana ya kak mungkin karna kami sekolah di pedesaan jadi memang akses internet lumayan sulit seperti yang dikatakan teman saya kalau listrik padam maka jaringanpun hilang, sekolah kami juga tidak ada wifi kak. Jadi kami lebih sering menggunakan buku pelajaran dari pada mobile phone, mobile phone kurang efektif karena kendala yang saya sebutkan tadi."

From the explanation of the fourth participant, we can see that mobile phones as a media for learning English are able to improve students' abilities, but due to several obstacles experienced by students, they use textbooks more often than mobile phones because they are considered less effective.

DISCUSSION

From the findings above it can be seen that there are differences and similarities between the perceptions of junior high school students who attend school in urban and rural areas. The difference is that junior high school students who attend schools in urban areas do not experience serious problems related to the use of mobile phones as a media for learning English. The obstacle they experience is only running out of internet quota, but the school can overcome this problem by providing Wifi at school and easy internet access in the school environment, they are also able to operate mobile phones properly. Meanwhile, junior high school students who attend school in rural areas consider that the use of mobile phones as a learning medium is less effective because of the obstacles they often experience, namely the internet network which is difficult to access, the school does not provide Wi-Fi. Even so, participants who attended schools in rural areas stated that the use of mobile phones as a learning media was not boring and was able to improve participants' English skills.

From the discussion of the findings above, there are similarities and differences between this study and previous research written by Zana Chobita Aratusa, et al (2022) entitled "Students' Perceptions on the Use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Learning Pronunciation". In this study the focus was on examining student perceptions regarding the use of MALL as a media for learning English for junior high school students who attended schools in urban and rural areas in the North Sumatra area, while previous research conducted research at an educational institution, namely at a university in Indonesia. The similarity between this study and previous research is that participants who attend school in urban areas think that the use of MALL as a learning media is considered effective and this perception is the same as the results of previous studies but different from the results of this study, namely the perception of students who attend schools in rural areas who consider MALL to be less effective as a learning media. The statements of participants who live in rural areas are not without reason, they said that because they experienced several obstacles, namely difficulties in accessing the internet, no wifi available at school. Then participants who went to school in urban areas also experienced problems, namely running

out of internet quota but they could still be overcome because the school provided free Wifi for students. Previous research also experienced problems in using MALL as a learning media but the results of this study were different. As for the participants' perceptions in previous studies regarding the constraints in using MALLs as learning media, they were the function of their cell phones; danger of being disturbed; and their familiarity with using mobile phones to learn English.

From the discussion above, we can see that the use of MALL as a learning media, one of which is learning English, does not fully have a positive side, there is also a negative side and the negative side is most dominantly experienced by students who attend schools in rural areas.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, the researcher concludes that Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is a media that can be used in the process of learning English in the form of a hand-held mobile device or also known as a mobile phone. There are differences and similarities between the perceptions of junior high school students who attend school in urban and rural areas. The difference is that junior high school students who attend schools in urban areas do not experience serious problems related to the use of mobile phones as a media for learning English. The obstacle they experience is only running out of internet quota, but the school can overcome this problem by providing Wifi at school and easy internet access in the school environment, they are also able to operate mobile phones properly. Meanwhile, junior high school students who attend school in rural areas consider that the use of mobile phones as a learning medium is less effective because of the obstacles they often experience, namely the internet network which is difficult to access, the school does not provide Wi-Fi. Even so, participants who attended schools in rural areas stated that the use of mobile phones as a learning media was not boring and was able to improve participants' English skills.

Every human being has errors and forgetfulness. Therefore, if there are errors in writing and sentence structure in this article, the researcher apologizes in advance. The researcher hopes that this article can be useful for readers and can be used as reference material for further research. Researcher also receives constructive criticism and suggestions from readers as material for consideration for future research writings.

REFERENCES

- Alsied, et al. (2017). Exploring Challenges Encounter by EFL. *IAFOR*, 3(2).
- Aratusa, J., C., et al. (2022). Students' Perceptions on the Use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Learning Pronunciation. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 5 (7), 2652-2660.
- BenMoussa, C. (2003). *Workers on the Move: New Opportunities through Mobile Commerce*. Stockholm Mobility Roundtable.

- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education: an Introduction to Theories and Methods*. United States: Pearson Education.
- Burston, J. (2014). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning: A Selected Annotated Bibliography of Implementation Studies. *ILT Journal*, 17(3).
- Creswell, John W. (2012). *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Darsih, E., Asikin, N., A. (2020). Mobile Assisted Language Learning: EFL Learners' Perceptions Toward the Use of Mobile Applications in Learning English. *ENGLISH REVIEW: Journal of English Education*, 8 (2), 183-194.
- Davie, N., & Hilber, T. (2015). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning: Student Attitudes to Using Smartphones to Learn English Vocabulary. *11th International Conference Mobile Learning*, 70-78.
- Gonulal, T (2019). The Use of Instagram as a Mobile Assisted Language Learning Tool. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 10(3), 309-323.
- Guo, H. (2014). *Analyzing and Evaluating Current Mobile Applications for Learning English Speaking*. British Council ELT Master's Dissertation Awards: Commendation.
- Kee, C. L., & Samsudin, Z. (2014). Mobile Devices: Toys or Learning Tools for the 21st Century Teenagers?. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 13 (3), 107-122.
- Kukulska-Hulme, Agnes & Shield, J. (2012). *An Overview of Mobile Assisted Language Learning: Can Mobile Devices Support Collaborative Practice in Speaking and Listening?*. UK Intellect Research Group.
- Losi, R., V. (2022). Students' Perceptions on Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in EFL Class: An Overview of Altissia Usage. *Jurnal PAMATOR*, 15 (1), 25-36.
- Magno. (2010). Korean Students' Language Learning Strategies and Years of Studying English as Predictors of Proficiency in English. *Tesol Journal*, 39(2).
- Magogwe & Oliver. (2017). The Relationship between Language Learning Strategies, Proficiency, Age and Self-Efficacy Beliefs: A Study Of Language Learners in Botswana. *Journal System*, 35(3).
- O'Malley, C. (2012). Guidelines for Learning/Teaching/Tutoring in a Mobile Environment. *Humanities and Socical Science*, 11(1).
- Yudhiantara, R., A., Nasir, I., A. (2017). Toward Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL): Reaping Mobile Phone Benefits in Classroom Activities. *REGISTER JOURNAL, Language & Language Teaching Journals*, 10 (1), 12-28.