

Students` Perception Toward Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in English Speaking Class during the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the study emphasize finding out the student's perception of the use of several tools in English Speaking classes to support English-speaking learning activities and the positive and negative values that could engage students in English-speaking learning during the pandemic. The study was a descriptive study that involved 30 students in the Faculty of Law at the University of Prof. Hazairin, SH. The data was collected through a questionnaire, online observation and interview. The findings of the study stated that students showed a positive perception toward the use of several tools in English-speaking class. They believed that offline dictionaries, Video blogging, Instagram, YouTube could support and motivate them more in their English-speaking classes. The findings also discovered some values related to the study. They showed positive values in accepting the modernization, practicality, and portability of using *Offline dictionaries, Video blogging, Instagram, YouTube, and Zoom*. The unsocialized trait and unbalanced emphasis are several of the disadvantages.

Keywords: *Mobile-Assisted Language Learning MALL, Speaking, Pandemic*

ABSTRAK

Tujuan penelitian ini menekankan untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan beberapa alat di kelas English Speaking untuk mendukung kegiatan pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris, nilai positif dan negatif yang dapat melibatkan siswa dalam pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris selama pandemi. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif yang melibatkan 30 mahasiswa Fakultas Hukum Universitas Prof. Hazairin, SH. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui angket, observasi online dan wawancara. Temuan penelitian menyatakan bahwa siswa menunjukkan persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan beberapa alat di kelas berbicara bahasa Inggris. Mereka percaya bahwa kamus offline, Video blogging, Instagram, YouTube dapat lebih mendukung dan memotivasi mereka dalam kelas berbahasa Inggris. Temuan ini juga menemukan beberapa nilai yang berkaitan dengan penelitian. Mereka menunjukkan nilai positif dalam menerima modernisasi, kepraktisan, dan portabilitas penggunaan kamus Offline, Video blogging, Instagram, YouTube dan Zoom. Sifat yang tidak tersosialisasikan dan penekanan yang tidak seimbang merupakan beberapa kelemahannya.

Kata Kunci: *MALL Pembelajaran Bahasa Berbantuan Mobile, Berbicara, Pandemi*

INTRODUCTION

The Pandemic Covid-19 has a major impact on people's lives. People are being asked to take precautions to avoid being poisoned. Social isolation serves as a real mask for those who are not affected. With the outbreak, a large population was forced to study remotely to follow the worldwide stay at home order (Vargo, 2021). Furthermore, the most important decision taken in this regard is to take everything home, such as Work from Home (WFH) and School from Home (SFH). It is unquestionably not a serious issue for adults. Furthermore, it makes a huge difference in the lives of school students. With the outbreak, a large population was forced to study remotely to follow the worldwide stay at home order.

Both teachers and learners are struggling to deal with material online during this pandemic period. In Indonesia, it is a rare occurrence, but it is probable. The majority of Indonesian students usually attend ordinary classes with desks, whiteboards, rooms, and houses. While technology is used, it is only used as a support tool. The Covid-19 pandemic has turned teachers' and students' lives absolutely upside down. During this pandemic, technology has taken complete charge of the school.

Nowadays, especially during the pandemic, where everything is about transferring things to home, all technological devices are considered primary. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning (Hulme, 2008). Technological developments with the adoption of mobile multimedia devices and applications have translated into huge opportunities for English as a foreign language (EFL). Consequently, this study probes the impact of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on EFL learners' reading comprehension (Darsih, 2020).

Mobile devices such as PDAs, phones, and other handheld devices, are used everywhere for doing everything ranging from voice calling to making short messages, video chat, listening to audio (Mp3, Mp4, Mpeg), web surfing, shopping, and like (Afriyanti, 2016). Teachers and lecturers are being asked to plan and include activities for their learners to support online learning lessons at home as the use of mobile phones increases.

Speaking is the most important aspect of learning a foreign language (Kacetl, 2019). During summits, for example, smooth communication skills between businessmen and government officials are important. Moreover, the acquisition of technical language competence by a foreign language specialist is the primary objective of language learning in college students. It means that being able to communicate in the language being studied is a primary objective (Zhu, 2021)

Using technology during a pandemic is more efficient and interesting than it has ever been. In reality, we can provide a richer learning experience for our language learners by using mobile phones. The common technologies used in online classes are offline and online portable dictionary, Google Classroom, YouTube, Instagram, Video blog, and Zoom. The materials are usually distributed from one of these media, which the teachers upload. Learners who work online have access to instructional resources and events at their leisure, allowing them to study wherever and wherever they choose. The main advantage of using mobile devices in learning is the fact that their implementation does not have time- and location limitations, i.e. modern gadgets might be used at any time and in any place, which facilitates learning and improving the language (Kuning, 2019). When things go wrong, though, providing technological assistance can be challenging because, despite the presence of smart devices, not all students own them. Rapidly developing mobile device technology and widespread ownership of mobile devices seem to have an impact on language education, as well as other contexts of learning (Sipra, 2016).

This research looks at how students feel about a range of mobile devices that they use in their English speaking courses. Learners are also being investigated related to the positive and.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative study aimed at presenting the learners` responses toward mobile devices used in English Speaking classes during the pandemic. This study also finds out the values of this learning method that could engage students in English-speaking learning during the pandemic. There were 30 college students from the Law Faculty of Prof. Hazairin, SH University as the participants of the study. During the pandemic, for more than a year already, the participants were taking English Courses online.

After a semester, they were asked several questions related to the use of technologies (mobile devices) such as offline and online portable dictionaries, Google Classroom, YouTube, Instagram, Video blogs, and Zoom in their online English Speaking classes. They were delivered a question, concerning, “*What are the online activities used in their English-speaking classes?*”, “*What is the most attractive online activities for their English-speaking classes?*”, “*What are their opinions related to technologies applied in their online English-speaking classes?*”, “*What are the difficulties in their English speaking classes applying the technological devices?*”, and others. Furthermore, the data were interpreted descriptively through series of methodologies; (1) delivering the questionnaire, (2) collecting the data, and (3) interpreting the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The study's conclusions are summarized based on the results of the participant interviews. The analyses and discussions were categorized into the learners' views of online English-speaking classes' technologies, as well as their positive and negative values toward them.

Students` Perceptions toward the Mobile Technologies in Online English-Speaking Classes

Related to the question, “*What are the online activities used in their English speaking classes?*”, the response to this question indicated that online English speaking courses employ a range of technology.

Table 1. Mobile Technologies in Online Classes

Name of Technologies	Number of Participants Answering
Google classroom	30
Zoom	30
YouTube	23
WhatsApp	30
Instagram	30
Video blog	17
Telegram	16

In line with these result, the mobile technologies used most by the students are Google Classroom, Zoom, WhatsApp and Instagram. The result also showed that there are video-based

devices mostly used to continue their classes, as example: Zoom. Septi (2020) stated that Zoom helps people to stay connected in the face of danger. Furthermore, Zoom proved to be remarkably easy to use for one-on-one and small group meetings, and even for formal gatherings of dozens of people.

In relation to the question, *“What is the most attractive online activities for their English-speaking classes?”*, some of the students` answers are as follows.

“I prefer having the lecturer uses Zoom in teaching, because it feels like in a real class.

--

I like Zoom meeting. I can meet my friends and the English learning feels like real.

--

In applying Speaking assignment, I prefer IGTV or Instagram TV. I can post a video and I can show it off to my followers. They can give comments toward my posts.”

The students asserted that they require proper instruction. In this regard, being in a nearly real-time class is preferable to being in an online class. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, they prefer the more real-life class, such as Zoom. They could have a direct conversation in Zoom, while they could broadcast their speech accomplishments on Instagram with some feedback. In relation to the question

“What are their opinions related to technologies applied in their online English speaking classes?”, the answers are as follows:

I feel like having a game in my hand. The game is my classes.

--

I think with my mobile devices, my hobby of making and editing photos and videos is more fun, it is more fun in my speaking class.

--

I felt so happy since I don`t need to go to my campus. Just stay home.

--

I could still play game during the classes.”

The students gave different reactions when they were asked the questions. Most of their answers are from their personal feeling and experiences. Students believe that all of the technologies used in their online English-speaking classes are valuable and appropriate for them. They seemed to be of assistance. It's evident and true that even the class is almost real-life.

Related to the question, *“What are the difficulties in their English-speaking classes applying the technological devices?”*, the following are the responses from the students.

“I experienced over-budgeted purchasing the internet quota.

--

In my village, I need to go over a small hill to have a signal.

--

Sometimes I still feel so shy to ask questions to my lecturer online in Zoom. I prefer texted WhatsApp messages to her.”

There are several students who did not encounter any problems during the online English speaking class. The problems above are the problems arise in online English speaking class.

Zoom, as well as uploading and downloading content from YouTube, IGTV, and other platforms, are all costly. Another issue arises in terms of technical aspects, where they discovered signal difficulty. A technical issue will jeopardize the solo-success learning. When students run into technical difficulties, they don't have anyone to turn to for help.

Positive and Negative Values from Mobile Devices in Online English Speaking Class

Using new technology is one way to stay connected to the rest of the planet through the pandemic. The truth is that the ideals that emerge have a dual sense. Good and negative qualities are delivered by technology. With the advent of technology, people are being assisted. This often covers the negative element, especially in English-speaking classes. There are many points of view or common opinions on the topic of values from mobile devices in an online English speaking class. Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has been a popular research area in recent years in the SLA and Foreign language field as it has been considered as being able to facilitate language learning by offering an authentic, socially connective, contextually sensitive, and personalized mobile-mediated language learning environment O`Cathain (2019) similar opinion with Miangah (2012) Overall, there is potential for developing research on MALL and reading comprehension for randomized control studies with larger populations and longer intervention periods.

The positive values from the students` point of view are as follows. **First, their thoughts to be opened.** The students agreed that having technology in their hands allows them to expand their horizons beyond their normal classroom. In fact, it is true that technology provides a continuous connection to our social media feeds, which has become a popular source for news for many Americans (Hunt, 2017). They agree that they will get the most up-to-date Speaking material, with many examples available on YouTube. They might look up which one they prefer on the internet. **Second, the simplicity.** The students feel amazed when they do not have to use too many tools in providing a video, as example, for their English speaking assignment. They could take a video, picture, edit them, and broadcast it only with a simple click. They don't need to consult an expert for this. It is similar with the idea from Davidson (2007) that simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. **Third, modernized.** Most students acknowledged that having mobile phones with all of the technologies below is a plus. They had the impression that they were hip, enticing, and millennial. They also claimed that with only a few clicks and pushes of information, they could easily connect with the outside world in seconds. Mobile devices provide the capabilities and context that allow the rapid sharing of information that social media relies upon (Yang, 2013).

From the student's perspective, the negative values are as follows: **First, students agreed that they currently depend on their mobile devices.** From early in the morning to late at night, they would take their mobile devices everywhere, check the latest headlines, and update their personal status on social media. It becomes a habit. They noted that they hold their phones the majority of the time and that they know something is lacking when they do not. The more interaction they have in their online English speaking class, the more they become aware of their gadgets. People's reliance on phones, tablets, and computers has radically changed how they interact and connect, and it's slowly eroding some of our most basic values. As Almadhady (2021) stated people need to consider the possible consequences of our 24-7 reliance on digital technology. **Second, Students find it difficult to tell the difference between fake news and hoaxes.** It is very easy to have the latest news and information from WhatsApp, or other social medias. The second reality is that they are unable to choose accurate information. Social media also shows the very beautiful sides of human life. The students feel unaware and unable to notice the stories behind that. However, social media is an easy way for

fake news stories to spread because it tends to cultivate news stories that reflect our individual beliefs and values rather than a broad spectrum of viewpoints Almadhady (2021). **Third, students cannot differentiate between feelings.** It is true that they cannot physically communicate with one another because they are taking an online English-speaking class. Faces were the only thing they could see on the television. They are having difficulty deciphering their friends' genuine reactions to the debate of their English-speaking classroom assignment. As example, in a Zoom group meeting, you can't share a glance with someone, a surreptitious smile of recognition or an eye roll any expression is for anyone who might be looking, and you can't tell who is looking Septi (2020) English teachers can use the Zoom Meeting as an alternative virtual media for Work from Home (WFH) or Teaching from Home (TFH) teaching and learning English language in COVID-19 Condition (Pradipta, 2018)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Learning a second language with the aid of technology has become a necessity in today's world. Forces of the Covid-19 pandemic, the surface need for online learning attracts all types of technology. Mobile Assisted Language Learning has emerged as a potential assistive tool in the complex process of language learning. Technological advances in the last quarter of the last century have made it mandatory for teachers to employ technology as a tool to help in the process of teaching and learning during the pandemic. There are a lot of mobile devices that could help online English-speaking classrooms, such as YouTube, Google Classroom, Zoom, Instagram TV, WhatsApp, and Telegram. They could maximize the function of these potential mobile devices in their online English Speaking classes.

Additional training and research results, as well as other classification techniques, can be used to increase accuracy.

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