

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter covers the research background, including the research topic, problems at the site, context, previous research, and gaps. It also discusses the significance, goals, and difficulties at the research location. The research delimitation illustrates the breadth and focus. Therefore, it addresses background, problem identification, delimitation, research questions, objectives, significance, and organization.

Background of the Research

Due to the rise of technology integration in language learning, teachers nowadays are expected to be technologically savvy in utilizing the advancements. One of its demands takes in the form of mastering Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). This technological breakthrough includes a variety of gadgets, such as MP3/MP4 players, smartphones, e-readers, laptops, and tablets.

Wireless communication technology is not an exception to the rule in the world where innovative technology-supported gadgets are expanding quickly. It is anticipated that this wireless computer equipment would soon be available in both urban and rural parts of every country, as mobile phones with high capabilities are extending into many facets of human existence. Therefore, broad access to such a low-cost, high-tech device has significantly altered the e-learning scene in many ways. In fact, it is possible to view mobile learning as the e-learning of the future.

Using mobile devices in the classroom, known as Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), can significantly improve English language skills. Rajendran and Md Yunus (2021) explain that mobile devices provide a flexible and interactive learning environment, allowing students to practice English anytime and anywhere. These devices support various apps and tools that enhance speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

For instance, language learning apps offer exercises, games, and quizzes that make learning more engaging and effective. Additionally, the multimedia capabilities of mobile devices, such as audio and video, help learners understand pronunciation and context better.

Moreover, MALL encourages collaborative learning and real-time feedback. Students can use social media and messaging apps to practice communication with peers and teachers, fostering a more immersive language learning experience. This real-time interaction helps learners apply their skills in practical situations, improving their confidence and proficiency. Rajendran and Md Yunus (2021) highlight that the instant feedback provided by mobile apps and platforms allows students to correct mistakes and improve faster. Overall, integrating mobile devices in the classroom makes English learning more accessible, personalized (Rajendran & Md Yunus, 2021)

The tools used for mobile language learning are portable and rather compact by their very nature. While these features, coupled with the other functionality that contemporary mobile devices now offer, help to explain why students increasingly carry these devices, they also have the potential to restrict how the devices are utilised. Zain and Bowles (2021), reviewing several previous studies, concluded that screen size and input methods are the most frequently cited physical issues.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers find themselves significantly impacted by the current situation due to the prevalence of mobile language learning tools. The portable and compact nature of these tools, as discussed by Zain and Bowles (2021), has led to an increased reliance on mobile devices by students. However, Thornton and Houser (2001) caution that the potential limitations, such as screen size and input methods, can hinder the effective utilization of these devices in an educational context. This emphasizes the obstacles faced by EFL teachers who must navigate the varied technological landscape while ensuring meaningful learning experiences for their students. The lessons

from these studies underscore the need for educators to carefully consider the practical implications of incorporating mobile devices into language teaching methodologies.

Beyond utilizing the mentioned features, smartphones are also favored for their ability to accommodate various activities involving gaming. Many educators integrate games into their teaching methods using mobile phone facilities. Games serve not only as a source of entertainment but also as effective tools in enhancing student engagement and reinforcing conceptual understanding. However, teachers must address several obstacles associated with the use of games in education. As Thornton and Houser (2001) caution, it is important for educators to ensure that the use of games aligns with learning objectives and does not hinder the educational process. The seamless connection between smartphone usage and the integration of games in the learning context is an important step to ensure a holistic and effective learning experience for students.

Additionally, teachers should encourage students to actively create language for themselves because the language used in every activity is unpredictable. Games are significant and helpful because of this. It's entertaining, but it also develops a predictability and a desire to connect. The use of technology or mobile application by students will improve their ability to acquire new words or participate in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, based on the findings of empirical study done by Bozorgian (2018), it was revealed that the pupils who used the Quizizz application had a significantly higher vocabulary.

The usage of technology or mobile application to enhance students' English skills was discussed in prior study. Students tend to concentrate instead on finding ways to make using mobile application more motivating for students. Games is considered to be fun by the students. One of their aspects is that games offers student a reward and a sense of joining competition Kaur and Aziz (2020). Hence, the researcher will concentrate on the use of

mobile application work as a tool for learning the English language in this research.

Teachers' strategies in incorporating Mobile-Assisted Language Learning are important for optimizing the benefits of technology in language education. According to research by Bozorgian (2018), teachers' attitudes play a pivotal role in the successful integration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning instruction in an English as a Foreign Language context. Teachers who embrace Mobile-Assisted Language Learning strategically leverage mobile devices to create interactive and engaging language learning experiences. They may use language learning apps, multimedia resources, and online platforms to supplement traditional teaching methods, providing students with dynamic opportunities for practice, feedback, and independent exploration of language skills. Effective teacher strategies involve thoughtful selection and integration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning tools into the curriculum, aligning them with language learning objectives and adapting them to suit diverse learning styles.

1 However, the implementation of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in language teaching also presents obstacles for educators. As highlighted by Muhammad Ishtiaq Khan et al. (2018), instructors may face obstacles such as limited technical proficiency, insufficient access to technology, and concerns about maintaining classroom control. Baby Boomer or Boomer teachers, in particular, often struggle with using technology in the classroom due to a lack of familiarity and comfort with digital tools. This generation of teachers might find it challenging to adapt to new teaching methods that heavily rely on mobile devices and apps. Consequently, they may require additional training and support to effectively integrate MALL into their teaching practices. Teachers must navigate the complexities of integrating Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, ensuring they can effectively use these tools to enhance language learning while managing the classroom environment. It is in a way that enhances rather than disrupts the learning environment. Striking a balance

between traditional teaching methods and technology-assisted learning requires careful planning and ongoing professional development. Moreover, instructors need to address potential disparities in students' access to technology outside the classroom, ensuring that Mobile-Assisted Language Learning tools are inclusive and do not inadvertently create divides among learners. Effectively overcoming these obstacles requires a supportive institutional framework and a commitment to ongoing training and adaptation in response to the evolving landscape of language education.

Therefore, this research focuses to investigate the use of mobile application as tools for English language learning, focusing on teachers as central subjects. The study explores how teachers strategically integrate Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, particularly through mobile application, to enhance language learning experiences. By examining teachers' sequenced steps in adopting Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, the research aims to provide lessons into the implementation of mobile application for improving pupils' English language skills. Hence, it contributes important information for educators and institutions regarding the integration of technology into language learning classroom.

Identification of the Problem

The process of teaching the use of mobile application as an English learning tool, especially in a private school in Yogyakarta, has been going on from 2019 to 2024. School teachers use mobile application for learning so that most students do not get bored of learning. However, when the researcher conducted a preliminary interview with a teacher who used mobile game learning in schools, the teacher found that there were still many students who could not or did not use mobile application. It is debatable whether this is due to students' lack of understanding or their difficulty in using mobile phones. However, some students were quite satisfied with the lessons their teachers used.

According to teachers, students' attitudes towards English are difficult. Many students are disgruntled, often skipping school, appearing to fall asleep in class, or participating in discussions alone. In addition, English learning outcomes appear to be poor, causing teachers to look for other ways to measure results. Teachers attributed the dissatisfaction and poor performance to students' depression and dislike of English because it was not their everyday language. Therefore, the use of mobile application is a way to increase students' interest and motivation in learning English through traditional methods..

Through interviews with Miss Audrey, Miss Bianca, and Miss Celine, the researcher learns about the use of mobile application to teach English. Even though schools have basic amenities like fans and blackboards, some students feel like the school does not meet the standard in empowering their teaching methods; hence it is affecting how they learn English. However, teachers add to the interview that mobile application make learning more approachable. Teachers are using these games to help students interact and understand better. Teachers pick games that match based on teaching and are right for the students' age.

However there is a problem: schools cannot set clear policy on using new teaching methods like games. This makes teachers feeling unsure about how much freedom they have to try new things. Despite this, the talks showed how important mobile application are for making English class fun and engaging. Teachers are determined to find new ways to teach English well, even with rules and competition from other school subjects..

Therefore, in this study, researchers will focus on what strategies teachers use to implement mobile application as a tool for learning English and also what obstacles teachers face during the teaching and learning process.

Delimitation of the Research

Research linked to the implementation of mobile application as an English language learning tool was found to have a very broad scope. Therefore, in order for this

research to be more focused, the researcher decided to limit to teachers' perceptions of the use of mobile application as an English learning tool. It included strategies being used and also the obstacles that the teacher faced in using this learning method. This research took place at a private school in Yogyakarta with the help of semi-structured interview.

Participants in this research focused on teachers who implemented English language learning by using mobile application that met the criteria of categorized as MALL.

Research Question

According to the explained background, the researcher arranged two research question :

1. What strategies do teachers apply in implementing MALL?
2. What obstacles do teachers have in implementing MALL?

The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research question above, this research has two objectives :

1. To find out the learning strategies applied in implementing MALL.
2. To find out the obstacles that teachers face in implementing MALL.

The Significances of the Research

The research conducted is expected to provide more benefits and knowledge for students, teachers, educational institution, mobile game developer and future researchers.

For Teachers

Teachers stand to gain important knowledge from this research, serving as a reference for effective strategies and potential obstacles in utilizing mobile application for English language instruction. It equips educators with the tools to enhance their teaching method more interactive.

For Educational Institutions

Educational institutions can benefit from this study by gaining a comprehensive

understanding of the implementation of alternative methods, such as mobile game-assisted learning, on student learning. This knowledge can inform the development of more innovative and effective language programs, enhancing overall educational quality.

For Mobile Game Developers

Mobile game developers find significance in this research as it provides lessons into the educational utility of their products. Understanding how mobile application contribute to language learning allows developers to tailor products to educational needs, potentially fostering collaborations with educational institutions.

For Future Researchers

Future researchers in the field of mobile-assisted language learning can use the results of this study as a foundational resource. It serves as a reference offering diverse perspectives and important lessons for those interested in exploring the application of mobile application as tools for teaching and learning English. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in this field, providing a basis for further investigation.

Organization of the Research

This research proposal is organized into three main parts. In chapter one, the focuses is on introduction. This chapter then discusses background, identification of the problem, delimitation, research questions, objectives, significances, and organization of the research. Moreover, in chapter two, this research proposal expands into the discussion of relevant theories and relevant empirical findings which study the shared topic covered in this research proposal. Last, in the part of research method, this research focuses on explaining the research design, research setting, research instrument, data collection technique, data analysis, trustworthiness, and interpreting issue. Hence, the completion of each of this research proposal part will clearly portray the data presentation.