

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter featured a discussion of several study-related subjects. In the first bullet point, the researcher outlines the goal of the study. In the second point, the researcher talks about the identification of the research and its limitations. To address the research questions, the researcher then outlines the study's goals. In the following section, the researcher goes over several benefits of the study for students, instructors, researchers, and other researchers. In the concluding point, the researcher summarizes the overall research idea.

Background of Study

The study begins by examining technology, which is increasingly becoming an integral part of daily human activities. Technology has been designed to simplify and facilitate various tasks. For instance, the process of making coffee has been automated with the advent of coffee makers, where the beans are ground and brewed into a ready-to-drink beverage. In the realm of education, traditional methods of notetaking are being replaced by digital alternatives. Many students now record notes using applications such as “note” or “notepad,” which offer a more efficient approach. From the start of planning learning experiences to the teaching and learning process itself, technology becomes an essential component of the educational process and a major concern for educators (Eady & Lockyer, 2013, as cited in Ahmadi, 2018). As a result, educators must adapt and evolve in response to these technological advances.

Some forms of technology can be utilized as a teaching or learning tool. A few examples include mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and computer-assisted language learning (CALL). A type of instructional technology called MALL, or mobile-aided language learning, uses smartphone applications to support students' learning, particularly in the twenty-first century (Loewen et al., 2018, as cited in Darsih & Asikin, 2020). It is impossible to ignore the importance of mobile applications as helpful instruments in the achievement and acquisition of specialized learning when discussing mobile devices and their closer interaction with the innovation in teaching and learning. Because of this, learning new material requires both the instructor or lecturer and the students to adapt.

By utilizing mobile devices, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) transforms the process of learning a language. With time, MALL has the potential to develop into a more engaging and interactive tool. With a mobile device, students have anytime, anywhere access to interactive apps, games, and online resources that support self-directed learning and individualized practice opportunities. By accommodating various learning styles and increasing the engagement of the content, the use of multimedia components like audio, video, and interactive activities improve the learning process (Miangah, 2012). MALL improves communication and teamwork as well. Through mobile platforms, students can interact with other students and native speakers, fostering a dynamic and social learning environment (Kulkulska-Hulme, 2016). To sum up, MALL is a useful tool for present language classrooms since it encourages students to actively participate in their language development.

At present, one of the challenges with MALL is its limited utility. While mobile devices offer flexibility, they only provide some of the functionalities of a computer. For example, composing an essay on a mobile phone can be more challenging compared to typing on a computer due to the smaller interface and lack of a physical keyboard. Conversely, a computer, while offering a more advanced platform for tasks such as typing, needs to improve the portability of a mobile device as a daily tool. This highlights the need for a balanced approach to integrating technology into language learning.

Various researchers have indeed conducted research related to MALL. For instance, a study conducted by Solihin (2021) revealed that teachers might need to be made aware of how to integrate mobile devices and applications into English language teaching. It means this study underscores that there can be obstacles in learning English as a foreign language, particularly when it comes to integrating technology. In contrast, a study conducted by Silva and Alahakoon (2021) indicates that secondary school students prefer a blended learning approach, combining traditional classroom instruction with mobile learning strategies. The findings reveal that some students express a preference for MALL, provided it contributes effectively to their learning process.

The review research mentioned above shows how drastically dissimilar teachers' and students' opinions are. Despite the extensive research on MALL, there remains a gap in understanding implementation and attitude towards MALL. The existing literatures is limited by the details about the implementation and attitude towards MALL, which this study aims to address. It means that many

studies describe the usefulness of MALL but not their usage and attitude towards them.

Based on the researcher's observation in an English Education Department (EED) at a private university in Yogyakarta, the majority of students utilize mobile devices very often, regardless of whether they are employed for educational purposes or otherwise. Furthermore, the excessive usage of these devices is not confined to the classroom environment but extends beyond it. Therefore, the researcher is interested and focuses explicitly on examining the EED students' implementation of MALL and the EED students' attitude toward the use of MALL in English as a foreign language learning.

Identification of the problem

One potentially helpful tool for learning English as an EFL is MALL. However, there are challenges in implementing it. Several problems can be identified when it comes to using MALL for EFL learning. Consequently, the researcher has detailed these problems in the following section.

Firstly, encouraging students to use their mobile devices for academic reasons is the first issue. Although mobile devices are common among students, there needs to be assurance that they utilize them for educational purposes. This may result from a lack of drive, being sidetracked by other apps on the device, or needing to be digitally literate.

Secondly is Motivation and self-discipline. MALL frequently calls for individual practice and self-directed learning. It's possible that students lack the

self-control or drive needed to successfully utilize the most of MALL services outside of the classroom.

Thirdly is another problem related to MALL in the EFL setting is the technology access and equity. There may be differences in the educational experience due to the fact that some students lack access to smartphones, tablets, or stable internet connections. Existing educational disparities may worsen as a result. Therefore, MALL's efficacy may be seriously impacted.

Last but not least, the content quality and alignment become the problems. Inconsistencies exist in the MALL resources' quality and alignment with learning objectives. Certain online tools or apps could not be pedagogically sound or might not successfully target the particular language skills that students need to learn.

Delimitation of the problem

To delineate the scope of the study, the investigation is precisely centred on the implementation of MALL and the attitudes of students towards its use. Taking consideration to the limitations of time, resources, and the particular research objectives, the study's boundaries and scope are purposefully established to guarantee clarity and manageability. This study is being conducted in the English Language Education Department (EED) of a state university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Institutional focus areas are selected to provide accurate and relevant understanding of MALL implementation in EFL classrooms within the current educational environment. The findings of this study may be useful in the same region, but it may also be inefficient for a different region. This research has been conducted for half a month, from March 20 to April 6, 2024. This time

frame was enough for gathering data, analysing it, and coming to relevant conclusions about attitudes toward and usage of MALL in EFL instruction in the departments that were chosen. The limited duration of data gathering, however, can potentially have an impact on the data's long-term significance. The study was conducted using quantitative descriptive survey design and the participants of this study were exclusively students from the 2020 EED batch. This method and participants are chosen to provide more about the implementation and attitude on a large scale. The research has focused on exploring the most and the least activity and identifying the attitude of EED students towards MALL in EFL learning. This study does not cover other aspects that are outside the aspects. for instance, the detailed reason of the implementation it-self.

Research Questions

Based on the background and the limitations of the problem, the researcher formulated the questions as follows:

1. How do EED students use MALL in learning English as a foreign language?
2. How is the student's attitude towards the use of MALL in learning English as a foreign language?

The Purpose of the Study

Following are the research objectives to specify the aims of the study:

1. To explore the EED students' current use of MALL in learning English as a foreign language

2. To identify the EED students' attitudes towards MALL in learning English as a foreign language

Significance of the Study

Based on the purpose of the study, this study only focused on exploring the EED students' current use of MALL and identifying EED students' attitudes towards the use of MALL in EFL learning. Therefore, the significance of the study is that it will be beneficial for students, teachers, lecturers, and future researchers, as described.

The teachers

The findings of this research will be shared with instructors, particularly those teaching English, providing them with a clear picture of how students utilize MALL in their English learning process. This could encourage educators to consider incorporating MALL into their teaching methodologies, fostering a more collaborative and technologically integrated learning environment.

The students

Upon completion of this research, students with already positive attitudes are encouraged to enhance them further. For those with less favorable attitudes, it is important to remember that attitudes can be changed and improved over time. The findings of this study can serve as a valuable resource for students in the English Education Department who aspire to become future teachers or lecturers, equipping them with practical insights into the effective use of MALL in language teaching and learning.

Future researchers

The findings of this study hold potential for application by other researchers. Those who are interested in this field of study could use this research as a reference, provided their focus aligns with the subject matter of this study. Moreover, this research could offer fresh perspectives on how MALL can be utilized in language teaching and learning.

Future researchers could build upon these findings to explore new dimensions of MALL, potentially leading to innovative strategies for language education. This study, therefore, not only contributes to the existing body of knowledge but also paves the way for future research in this area.

Organization of the Chapters

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the topic in which the researcher presents the background of the study. Furthermore, this chapter also mentioned the identification of problems regarding the topic and the delimitation of them. According to the problems, the researcher presents the research questions (RQ) and objectives of the research.

The second chapter is a literature review that contains some theories and concepts regarding the title that is used as the foundation of this study related to the use of MALL and attitudes towards it by EED students. This chapter covers the theory of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), The implementation of MALL, students' attitudes towards MALL, and a review of related studies. Finally, it presents the conceptual framework of the study.

The third chapter is the methodology, which consists of several parts. The first part is the research design, which explains the quantitative approach used to conduct this research. The second part is the research setting, which explains where and when the research was conducted. The third part is population and sample, which explains the characteristics, the size, and the technique of the sample. How the researcher collected the data using questioner is presented in the data collection method part. The next part is the research instrument, which explains in detail the questionnaire and its validity and reliability. Next is the data procedure, where the researcher presents the procedure for collecting the data. The last part is data analysis, which explains how the data are analyzed.

Chapter four contains findings and a discussion. The research findings present the data that has been analyzed. The data are the answers to the research question, which is the use of MALL and students' attitudes towards it. Also, the discussion explains the specific findings, which are backed by a range of expert theories and relevant studies.

A conclusion and recommendations from this research are included in chapter five. Many noteworthy study findings are explained in the conclusion. Furthermore, recommendations are included in this research for students, teachers, and other researchers who are involved in this field.