Maximizing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) amid Covid-19 Pandemic: Teachers' Perception

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Abstract

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is the newest learning way in the language education where applications or websites are used to facilitate students learning activities, especially in the period of Covid-19 pandemic. This study aims to determine teachers' perception in maximazing MALL. The method of the research was quantitative method which used sample of n=100 English teachers in East Jakarta, Indonesia as research object. The data were collected through a 5-point Likert Scale questionnaire. The findings reveal high positive teachers' perceptions $(\bar{x}=4.31)$ in the use of MALL during Covid-19 in Indonesia. Overall, respondents expressed that mobile learning can help in the learning process during a crisis because of its advantages in portability, interactive language learning activities and easiness access. The current study has a major contribution to assist the government in maximizing the use of mobile learning in learning activities. It also motivates teachers to teach students by using mobile learning. The researcher also recommends more studies to develop MALL as an avoidable alternative teaching way while pandemic.

Keywords: Covid-19, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Teachers' Perspective, English language learning

Introduction

Covid-19 had become a worldwide pandemic since announced by World Health Organization (WHO) in the early March 2020. All countries around the world were affected by Covid-19 virus, including Indonesia. In the middle of March 2020, Indonesian government has issued the regulation to apply a large- scale social restriction *(Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar or PSBB.* As a consequence, both formal and informal places have to close and people move into online activities. In the educational sector, home-based learning policy had run to all levels of education and the informal institution as well (Okmawati and Tanjak 2020). It is a program that migrates the learning process from school to home. Mobile learning does not simply happen. During home-based learning, there are several medias and methods

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in carrying out the learning process (Granger 2005). It resulted in a situation where teachers and students are undesirably asked to change their teaching system from the offline face-to-face session in the classroom into a digital/virtual teaching system using various online platforms or applications (Amin and Sundari 2020). Both teacher and student should quickly learn and adapt their teaching and learning management (Dashtestani 2013)(Granger 2005).

Teachers, as the spearhead of the implementation of online learning, must be able to condition all instructional components (Montrieux et al. 2015). These include instructional methods, media that will be used in learning, use of instructional time related to the time of application use, and psychological and social factors that significantly affect teachers' motivation when teaching (Rasmitadila et al. 2020).

During home-based learning period, many teachers prefer to use their mobile phone as the medium to teach their students. They used Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) related to the use of mobile technology in the process of language learning. Mobile technology has special characteristics in terms of portability (Pratiwi, Nariyati, and Sudirman 2020)(Arashnia and Shahrokhi 2016), connectivity and social interaction (Miangah and Nezarat 2012). Because mobile devices or mobile phones are always in users' pockets, they are more conveniently accessible(Wagner et al. 2016) (Mardiah 2020) than textbooks or computers (M. M. Elaish, L. Shuib, N. Abdul Ghani 2017). Mobile phone can perform a number of tasks so that they can used to achieve many educational objectives. On mobile phone some apps are used in activities learning, such as YouTube to watch videos, Zoom and Google Meeting to have online meeting or video conferencing and Safari to browse Internet (Khalil et al. 2020). The use of some of these apps is a for teachers and students who previously had to use your PC to perform such activities. MALL have several advantages, including the ability to multimedia, internet access, and social networking.

This study explores the perceptions of teachers, especially English teachers in maximizing the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) during school from home in the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia.

Method

Quantitative method was implemented in this study. This research is using a questionnaire as the instruments with a five-point Likert Scale. Questionnaire had been prepared to gain information about teachers' perspectives of maximizing the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) for teaching English. The questionnaire was distributed to English teachers in East Jakarta by using Google Form.

Participants

The participants of this study were 70 (seventy) English teachers from 18 (eighteen) different schools in East Jakarta, Indonesia. The sample comprised, 41 female and 29 male participants. The descriptive data of demographic characteristics, including gender and age are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demograpic data of Participants

	N	Percentage
1. Gender		
a. Male	29	41.43
b. Female	41	58.57
Total	70	100
2. Age		
a. 30 - 45	31	44.29
b. 41- 55	39	55.71
Total	70	100

Data Collection and Analysis

To collect data, the researcher applied questionnaire which the design of the questionnaire came from reviewing previous research and theoretical foundations on mobile-assisted language learning. Due to the limitations, including institutional closure while lockdown period, the researcher selected an online method. The distribution of questionnaires is using Google Form to representatives of research colleagues who had access to the schools in East Jakarta. In this study, researcher distributed 100 questionnaires but only 70 questionnaires were returned.

The data were collected from October 1,2020 to October 10, 2020. The questionnaire explored teachers' perceptions toward MALL usage to support learning activities and it contains 10 items. The 5-point Likert Scale was used for the collection of quantitative data and the category was put the items ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The data analysis from questionnaire is classified by the form of a rating scale. It was calculated to find out standard deviation and mean. Then, it is measured based on criteria by Best (Best J. W. 1981) as follows:

Table 2. Teachers Rating Scale

No.	Teachers Level	Mean
1	Lowest	$1.00 \leq \bar{x} < 1.50$
2	Low	$1.51 \leq \bar{x} < 2.50$
3	Moderate	$2.51 \leq \bar{x} < 3.50$
4	High	$3.51 \leq \bar{x} < 4.50$
5	Highest	$4.51 \leq \bar{x} < 5.50$

However, the bulk of the statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Then, to answer research questions, the data gathered will be analyzed qualitatively. Data from questionnaire also will be described, categorized and interpreted. The statistic used for analyzing the data was mean and standard deviation which analyzed using a computer program.

Findings and discussion
The Demograpic Data

From the table 1 above about the demographic data of the respondents, it is clear that there were 41.43 % male and 58.57 % female participants. It also indicates that the dominance age of the participants was between 41 and 55 years (55.71%). The presence of various participants gives positive impression because they have diverse gender and age.

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire using the Cronbach's Alpha (α =5%)

In order to check the validity and reliability of the data, the validity and reliability test was done using Cronbach's Alpha. The criteria of validity and reliability used the following formula:

$$r_{test} \begin{cases} \leq r_{tabel} \; \blacktriangleright \; accept \; H_0 \\ > r_{tabel} \; \blacktriangleright \; reject \; H_0 \end{cases}$$

The statistical hypothesis formula for validity test:
$H_0 : \rho \leq 0$; *there is negative relation between each items score to the total perception variabel*
$H_1 : \rho > 0$; *there is positive relation between each items score to the total perception variabel*

The statistical hypothesis formula for reliability test:
$H_0 : \rho \leq 0$; *there is negative relation with the variation in perception variable*
$H_1 : \rho > 0$; *there is postive relation with the variation in perception variable*

Below are the tables that show the validity and reliability in teachers' perception:

Table 3. Validity and Reliability of Teachers' Perception

	Cronbach's Alpha	Spearman & Brown
Validity	0,729	0,235
Reliability	0,644	

From the table 3 above, it showed that the validity of teachers' perception instruments with rtest = 0.729 > rtable =0.235 which meant reject H0 or in other words, there is positive relation between each item score to the total perception variabel. From all the questionnaire items tested, all items had rtest > rtable, which meant that all were valid for the perception variable. So, it continues to reliability test. As shown in table 3 above, it also proved that rtest=0.644 > rtable = 0.235, it means the items studied are reliable.

The Results of Teachers' Perception in the Use of MALL

The present research disclosed some interesting findings, classified the research results and identified problems with the existing research. As Table 4 illustrates below, the results of the questionnaire study concerning the students' perception in the use of MALL.

Table 4. Teachers' Perception toward the Use of MALL

Rank	Item No.	Items	$\bar{x}$	S.D	Level
1	4	Mobile learning provide opportunities teacher to teach without place and time constraint.	4,49	0,53	High
2	5	A number of applications and software in mobile devices is beneficial for learning activities	4,43	0,73	High
3	7	The easiness of reaching students in online learning is the advantages of mobile learning	4,43	0,62	High
4	10	Interactive English language learning activities is supported by using mobile devices.	4,43	0,62	High
5	2	The important factor of mobile learning using mobile devices is portability.	4,41	0,57	High
6	1	Teacher can directly share material and the feedback of students' progress	4,30	0,76	High
7	8	Mobile learning help the teacher to reach authentic English language learning material	4,24	0,52	High
8	6	Mobile learning uses mobile devices can connect to the internet at anywhere and anytime	4,23	0,87	High
9	3	Mobile learning can facilitate English Language Learning activities.	4,16	0,55	High
10	9	The benefit of mobile learning is time-efficient.	4,03	0,77	High
		Average	**4,31**	**0,65**	**High**

Result of the Questionnaire Study.

Based on the results on the table.4 above, it presented that the average mean of teachers' perception toward the use of MALL was high ($\bar{x}$ = 4.31). It shows that teachers have high positive perceptions toward the implementation of MALL. It can be seen from the mean score on the data above. The highest level was given to the item No. 4 "Mobile learning provide opportunities teacher to teach without place and time constraint." ($\bar{x}$ = 4.49). It means that teachers had positive perception on using MALL in home-based learning activities. By using mobile phone, teachers can

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do teaching process every time and everywhere (Shdefat 2020). Followed by 3 (three) items in high rank ($\bar{x}$ = 4.43), item No. 5 "A number of applications and software in mobile devices is beneficial for learning activities". This item indicates that the mobile features also put the important part in learning process. The application and software that support teaching learning process is one of the advantages of using MALL. Item No. 7 "The easiness of reaching students in online learning is the advantages of mobile learning". Item No. 7 indicates that MALL provide the one-on-one communication or direct interaction between teacher and students. Then item No. 10 "Interactive English language learning activities is supported by using mobile devices.". It means that MALL also support teacher to teach English interactively. Teacher can do video conferencing to interact with the students by activating cameras and applications which support them (Baran 2014). From those highest rank, it can be proved that teachers have positive perception on using MALL during home-based learning. MALL help teachers to teach in online/virtual way and support them in improving quality of teaching (Iqbal and Bhatti 2020). As in this research, teachers expect that the use of MALL can facilitate learning process, engage and motivate learning experience to the students (Mardiah 2020) . However, the lowest rank is the item No. 9 "The benefit of mobile learning is time-efficient." ($\bar{x}$ = 4.03). This shows that the use of MALL in the learning process is still experiencing problems in terms of time management. For example, the teacher should set a time to download student exercises and check them out. It takes time especially if the practice is in the form of an essay. Teacher also should be viewing and responding to a video of the learners better for interactions that are more spontaneous, informal, and instantaneous (Altavilla 2020). However, it cannot be denied that nowadays in the digital era, the use of mobile phones will be the choice both of teachers and students in learning activities, especially learning English. The quick transition to online learning or e-learning went successful and gained experience can be used in the future. The lesson learned from the COVID - 19 will force a generation of new laws, regulations, platforms and solutions for future cases (Naciri et al. 2020).

Conclusion

COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted the educational systems of all countries across the globe significantly. Home-based learning is the solutions to continue learning process. It is especially important for teachers to find ways to promote these kinds of interactions in form of virtual learning. This study aims at exploring teachers' perception and experience on maximizing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) during Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the results of questionnaires study above (see Table 4), it revealed that teachers' have high perception toward the use of MALL in home-based learning activities during Covid-19 pandemic. It proved by the average means score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.31) for teachers' perception. In short, online teaching is no more an option, it is necessity. Using MALL can help in providing inclusive education even at the time of crisis. Teachers can practice technology and can design various flexible programs for students' better understanding. Users of any age can access the online tools and reap the benefits of time and location flexibility associated with online learning. It is not as easy as it seems, a considerable amount of investment is needed for getting the devices and equipment, maintaining the

equipment, training the human resources, and developing the online content. Therefore, an effective and efficient educational system needs to be developed to impart education via online mode (Dhawan 2020). This research has been tried and done according to scientific procedures, however, still have limitations for instance the number of questionnaires distributed and received was not appropriate and the answers provided by the participants are not reflected the real situation. Certainly, future work in MALL holds many possibilities that go well beyond the projects described above such as the usage of varied research methodologies with diverse and larger samples, and investigation additional strategies for mobile learning integration and any other works related to the development of MALL.

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