THE IMPACT OF SMART PHONES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: PERCEPTIONS OF EFL UNDERGRADUATES STUDENTS IN STKIP PGRI TULUNGAGUNG

Yulia Nugrahini
STKIP PGRI Tulungagung
Email: yulia.nugrahini@stkippgritulungagung.ac.id
Jl Mayor Sujadi Timur No 7 Plosokandang , Kedungwaru, Tulungagung

Abstrak: Para peneliti di seluruh dunia sedang memeriksa nilai pendidikan dan efektivitas mengintegrasikan gadget elektronik terbaru dengan kegiatan belajar-mengajar di kelas. Terlepas dari ketersediaan gadget elektronik terbaru seperti iPod, tablet, dan jam tangan pintar, para peneliti lebih tertarik pada nilai pendidikan ponsel pintar untuk pengajaran-pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Di negara berteknologi maju seperti Indonesia, perangkat ponsel pintar generasi ketiga dan keempat (3G, 4G) tersedia dengan harga terjangkau, dan orang-orang dari semua aliran merasa perlu memiliki ponsel pintar untuk terhubung dengan teman dan kerabat mereka. Selain itu, telah menjadi tren umum di kalangan mahasiswa sarjana untuk membawa ponsel pintar ke kelas juga. Penelitian ini mengkaji dampak ponsel pintar terhadap pembelajaran bahasa Inggris siswa. Sebuah studi lapangan dilakukan pada lima puluh dua mahasiswa pria sarjana jurusan bahasa Inggris dan sastra di STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. Metodologi pengumpulan data termasuk laporan diri untuk siswa dan kuesioner guru. Temuan penelitian ini penting bagi para guru dan peneliti EFL untuk memperkenalkan metode inovatif dan bahan yang bermanfaat untuk kelas bahasa Inggris.
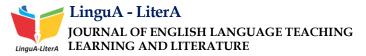
Kata Kunci : Ponsel pintar, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Siswa Sarjana EFL, Dampak

Abstract: Researchers across the world are examining the educational value and effectiveness of integrating the latest electronic gadgets with teaching-learning activities in the classroom. In spite of the availability of latest electronic gadgets like iPods, tablets, and smartwatches, researchers are more interested in the educational value of the Smart phones for the teaching-learning of English. In a technologically advanced country like Indonesia, the third and fourth generation (3G, 4G) smart phones devices are available at affordable prices, and people of all streams find it necessary to own a smart phone for connecting with their friends and relatives. Moreover, it has become a common trend among undergraduate students to carry a smart phone to the classroom as well. The present study examines the impact of smart phones on students' English language learning. A field study was conducted on fifty-two undergraduate male students majoring in English language and literature at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. The methodology of data collection included a self-report for students and a teacher questionnaire. Findings of the study are significant for EFL teachers and researchers for introducing innovative methods and resourceful materials for the English classroom.

Key Words: Smart phones, English Learning, EFL Undergraduate Students, Impact

INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements in Indonesia have paved the way for its citizens and expatriates to easily and quickly connect with their family and friends inside and outside the country. This quick and easy way of communication has accelerated the demand for

the latest electronic gadgets multiple purposes uses like voice calls, messaging, chatting, web browsing, multimedia, and translation. These latest communication systems are easy to operate and available at affordable prices. The demand for touch screen electronic gadgets with advanced features like electronic dictionaries, translating and language-learning software has increased due to its educational value. Electronic dictionaries have made it easier for students to search for the meaning of difficult words quickly and with less effort. Due to their educational value, students at the college level find it essential to carry mobile phones to the classroom. In the classroom, there are language teachers who allow students to use mobile phones to refer to electronic dictionaries or to access information for the completion of assignments. Smart phones with internet connectivity can search thousands of web pages and provide details of a high degree of accuracy to the reader. They almost replace reference books and avoid the physical labor of visiting the university library. An over-dependence on mobile devices may hinder students from activating cognitive skills like brainstorming and recalling that are necessary for creativity. Since students can have quick access to information on their mobile devices, they may not find it necessary to store the information in their minds. (Wang & Higgins, 2005) points out that in order to view images and text, mobile phone makers have made their screens larger, but these screens cannot be made too larger because mobile phones would not be portable or convenient. A disadvantage of mobile technology is that students often spend long hours for chatting with their friends on social networking sites and browsing non-academic websites, which, in turn affects their classroom performance.(Kuznekoff, JH Titsworth, 2013)are of the opinion that the potential distraction caused by students using their mobile phones to play games, text messages, check Facebook, tweeter or engage in other activities has become a concern to many classroom instructors.

The impact of smart phones on academic life of the university students is enormous, and so the present research examines the impact of smart phones on English language learning at the undergraduate level. The researchers administered self-report inventory to elicit students' and English teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of smart phones in the teaching-learning process of English.

A. Relevance of Electronic Gadgets in Teaching-learning Contexts

The power of portable computing in the form of mobile devices is accessible to everyone, and it is the time to consider using mobile devices for education (Goundar, 2011). The article discusses the integration of tablet computers, such as the iPad, into learning settings. The authors argue that organizations are seeking to shift everyday activities onto personal mobile devices, adding that mobile learning, which involves a

strategy to facilitate, enhance, and extend teaching and learning through mobile devices, is often seen as the solution to addressing the problems associated with an increasingly global, mobile, and technologically astute work force(Kaganer, Giordano, Brion, & Tortoriello, 2013). Educational use of smart phone technology: A survey of mobile phone application use by undergraduate university students (Bomhold, 2013).

B. The Impact of Mobile Technology on Classroom Instruction

In this era, the teacher should also be encouraged to examine and envisage innovative ways through which technology can be used to create new prospects for classroom instruction. Universities and teacher training institutions across the world should recognize the relevance of mobile technology in creating effective language lessons. Weinberger, (2011) states that in educational technology, the failure of almost all initiatives is due to the additional burden placed on the teacher.. A skilled teacher is aware of the ways to utilize technology that helps students to progress in their educational paths(Goundar, 2011). As mobile devices become increasingly more prevalent, it is imperative to study their use and effect on the growing field of distance education. This brief review of existing literature indicates that traditional theories of learning, in both traditional and distance settings, are relevant and applicable to mobile learning, and that mobile devices can be brought thoughtfully into pedagogy at the distance level(Fuegen, 2012). (Ally, 2013)is of the opinion that people across the world wish to access learning materials on their mobile phones rather than acquiring another technology to receive learning materials. The number of mobile devices across the world have already surpassed the number of computers and other electronic gadgets, and it is indeed an opportunity for English language teachers to innovate methods and materials for interactive and enjoyable sessions to motivate the students in their classroom. In a regular classroom, EFL students often complain that they learn vocabulary but find it difficult to remember. (Hedge, 2002)states that there has been a greater awareness concerning vocabulary learning in recent years, and it is the responsibility of researchers, materials designers and teachers to increase the pace, using the latest technology in the classroom. Considering the education value, most of the EFL undergraduates depend too much on these devices for electronic dictionaries and rarely use hard copies of Standard English dictionaries. However, the mobile phones have the potential to attract students towards non-academic information which can have serious consequences in students' academic career. In spite of the disadvantages with the uses of mobile devices, many studies in the field have uncovered the motivation of the young students towards mobile integrated classroom instruction.

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1) What is the impact of electronic gadgets on English language learning of STKIP PGRI Tulungagung undergraduates?

2) To what extent do undergraduates depend on Smartphone for communicating in English?

3) How do students and teachers perceive the effectiveness of Smartphone in improving English language skills?

4) Does the use of Smartphone accelerate or hinder English language learning abilities of undergraduates?

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Field Study

The present study examines the impact of Smartphone on English language learning skills of university undergraduates. Further, a preliminary study of this kind at the micro level would give possible insight into pursuing a similar type of research at the macro level in the future.
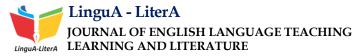
B. Participants

Fifty-two undergraduate students studying in the second, fourth, and sixth level, respectively, with English as their major subject voluntarily participated in this research. All the students are natives of Indonesia, and their mother tongue is Javanese. The researchers took the permission of the concerned officials in the university administration and the teachers before conducting the field study. The undergraduates who participated in the study were informed that their responses are meant for research purposes only.

C. Self-report Inventory for Students

A self-report inventory is a questionnaire which gives a description of personality traits. The self-report inventory consisted of two yes-no questions (Q.3 and Q.4) and twenty-eight self-report statements (Q.10 – Q.37). Four scales (Agree - Strongly Agree – Disagree - Strongly Disagree) were given below each of the statements. Students had to read each of given statement and circle the scale that reflected their opinion most appropriately. Students were instructed to express their views objectively.

D. Questionnaire for English Teachers

A questionnaire was used to elicit English teachers' opinions about the effectiveness of Smart phones in improving undergraduates English language skills. The teacher questionnaire consisted of one open-ended questions. Teachers were requested

to express their views in writing. Since teachers have an important role in the teaching-learning process, their perceptions would be useful for classroom research. Five English teachers responded to the given open-ended questions.

E. Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited in the following ways.

- The focus of the research was limited to the impact of Smart phones on English language learning.

- The study was confined to the students majoring in the faculty of English department, STKIP PGRI Tulungagung

- The data was collected from 52 students majoring in faculty of English department, STKIP PGRI Tulungagung at the undergraduate level.

- The findings were based on the students' response to the above-mentioned self-reports and the answers given by teachers (qualitative teacher questionnaire). The data analysis of the self-report inventory and teacher questionnaire will be presented.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The quantitative data analysis, described in this section, is based on students' responses to the self-report, while the qualitative analysis is based on students' and teachers' responses to the open-ended questions.

A. Analysis of the Self-report Inventory

It was noted that the majority of the students who responded to the self-report inventory are currently pursuing English language and literature courses in their seventh semester. The self-report inventory had four scales: A - Strongly Agree B – Agree C – Disagree D - Strongly Disagree The number of responses for each item is given in percentages.

The percentages of Agree and Strongly Agree (number of responses given for the scale Agree + the number of the responses given for the scale Strongly Agree = Total percentage) have been added up and are presented as the overall percentage. Similarly, the percentage of Disagree and Strongly Disagree (the number of responses given for the scale Disagree + the number of responses given for the scale Strongly Disagree = Total percentage) have been added up and are presented as the overall percentage. Thus, for clarity, the data analysis was based on two major factors; students who circled Agree and Strongly Agree are considered to support the given statements while those students who

circled Disagree and Strongly Disagree are considered to be of a different opinion than the one given in the statement.

In Question No.1, it is observed that all the undergraduates mentioned that they belong to English department while in Question No.2, as stated earlier, the majority of the undergraduates mentioned that they belong to the second, fourth and sixth semester. The table below gives an overview as to whether students purchase a Smart phone to communicate in English.

Table 1. English on Smart Phones

Q. No	Statement	Yes	No
3	I use a Smart phone which has feature like an English dictionary and the internet access	95%	5%
4	I purchased a Smart phone because I can use it to learn English	87%	13%

An analysis of the data presented in the above table indicates that 95% of the students use mobile phones that have features like an English dictionary and web connectivity. 87% of the students agree that they have purchased a Smart phone because they can use it to learn English while 13% of students possibly had other reasons for purchasing a Smart phone.

Table 2. Possession of A Smart Phone For Learning English

Q.No	Statement	Smart Phone %	iPod %	Tab %	Smartwatch%
5	I possess the following Gadgets	96	1	2	1
6	Which of the following Gadgets do you use you to learn English?	96	1	2	1

The above data indicate that 96% of the students possess Smart phones, and the same percentage of students rely on them to learn English while only 1% of the students use iPods, 2% Tablets, and 1% smartwatches to learn English.

Table 3. Medium of Communication

Q.No	Statement	English%	Indonesia%	Both%	Other%
7	Which software do you use on your Smart phone?	60	22	15	3
8	Which language do you use more often for chatting on the Smart phone?	13	85	2	-

The above data indicate that 40% of the students use Indonesia software, and 85% of the students use only Indonesia as a medium of communication for chatting on the Smart phone. The data indicate that 15% of the students use Indonesia and English software on their Smart phones. It is also observed that only 2% of the students use English as a medium of communication while chatting on the Smart phone.

Table 4. Duration of Time Spent On Smart Phone

Q.9	In 24 hours a day, I spend …… hours of my time on smart phone			4 hours-8 hours
	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Q.10	I spend a lot of time, chatting with my friends on my Smart phone.	29	32	26	13

The data presented in the above table indicate that there are students who spend 8 hours in a day on their Smart phone while the majority of students spend almost 4 hours every day on their Smart phones. Of these students, 61% (32+29 =61) agree that they spend time chatting with their friends while (26+13 = 39) 39% of students say that they do not spend a lot of time chatting with their friends on the Smart phone.

Table 5. Using A Smart Phone For The Purpose Of Communication In English And Indonesia

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
11	I need a Smart phone to understand English words and sentences	44	32	17	7
12	I use English as a medium of communication while chatting on WhatsApp Messenger.	21	24	36	19
13	I use Indonesian as a medium of communication while chatting on WhatsApp messenger.	69	27	3	1
14	I use English as a medium of communication while chatting on Facebook.	14	17	32	37
15	I use Indonesian as a medium of communication while writing an email to my friends	43	23	19	15
16	I use English as a medium of communication while writing an email to my friends	20	24	32	24

The data presented in the above table indicate that 76% of the students depend on Smart phones to understand English words and sentences. These data reveal that 45% of the students use English as a medium of communication for chatting on Whatsapp messenger, 31% on Facebook, and 44% for the purpose of writing an email. The data in above table also reveal that 96% of the students use Indonesia as a medium of communication for chatting on Whatsapp messenger and 66% for the purpose of writing an email.

Table 6. Using Smart Phones For The Purpose Of Improving English Language Skills

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
17	During free time, I watch English videos on my smartphones.	47	30	10	13
18	During free time, I watch Indonesian videos on my smartphones.	45	22	16	17
19	Smart phones can help me to improve my English speaking skills.	57	20	15	8
20	Smart phones can help me to improve my English writing skills.	52	21	16	11

21	Smart phones help me to learn new words of English.	44	48	7	1

The data presented in the above table indicate that 77% of the students watch English videos on Smart phones. 77% of the students believe that Smart phones can help in enhancing their English speaking skills, 73% believe that Smart phones can contribute to improving their English writing skills while 92% of the students believe that Smart phones can help them to learn new English words.
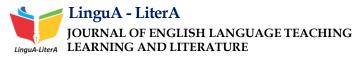
Table 7. Dependence on Smart Phones for Translation

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
22	Mobile phones are necessary for me to translate English words into Indonesian.	52	36	8	4
23	I use mobile phones to translate Indonesian words into English.	46	37	14	3
24	I can understand English words without using a Smart phone.	32	36	18	14
25	The software I use on my mobile phone can translate English words correctly into Indonesian.	36	32	28	5
26	The software I use on my mobile phone can translate Indonesian words correctly into English	34	41	18	7

The data presented in the above table indicate that 88% of the students find Smart phones useful for translating English words to Indonesia while 83% of the students use mobile phones to translate Indonesia words into English. The statistics show that 68% of the students believe that the software used on the Smart phones can translate English words into Indonesia while 75% of the students are confident that the software used in their Smart phones can translate Indonesia words into English accurately. The data presented in the above table also specifies that 68% of the students are confident in understanding English words without using a Smart phone while 32% of the students possibly feel that Smart phones are necessary for understanding English words.

Table 8. Smart Phones for Academic Purposes

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
27	I scan and save the study-related reading materials to my Smart phone.	31	29	27	13
28	My Smart phone helps me to improve my English language skills.	46	36	12	6
29	My teachers of English allow me to use a Smart phone to learn English words in the classroom.	22	24	31	23

The above data indicate that 60% of the students scan their academic reading materials on their Smart phones while 82% of them believe that Smart phones help them to improve their English language skills. 46% of the students indicate that their English teachers allow them to use Smart phones in the classroom for the purpose of learning English words. 54% of the students, however, say that their English teachers do not permit them to use Smart phones to learn English words in the classroom.

Table 9. Reading On the Smart Phones

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
30	During the exams, I read notes from my Smart phone	23	23	28	26
31	I can remember everything if I read from my Smart phones.	21	27	39	13

The data presented in the above table indicate that 54% of the students do not use their phones during exams during exams while 46% of them read notes from their Smart phones during exams. 52% of the students are of the opinion that they cannot remember everything that they read on their Smart phone while 48% of the students say that they can remember everything that they read on the Smart phone.

Table 10. Influence of Smart Phones on Teaching-Learning Process in English Language Classroom

Q.No	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
32	My English teacher allows me to take notes on my Smart phone.	15	43	21	21
33	Because of the Smart phones, I stopped writing notes on paper.	17	30	31	22
34	I can improve my English spelling by using a Smart phone.	32	35	22	11
35	I do not need to learn English spelling because I can always use a Smart phone.	19	23	30	28
36	I do not need to learn English language because I can always use a Smart phone.	18	28	38	16
37	Smart phones are the main cause of my poor performance in the exams.	27	25	26	22

The above data indicate that English teachers allow students to take notes on their Smart phones, and also, a majority of the students are of the opinion that they can improve English spelling through Smart phones. 52% of the students, however, believe that Smart phones are the main cause for their poor performance in exams.

B. Analysis of Students' and Teachers' Written Responses

The qualitative analysis is based on an open-ended question (Q.38) given in the students' questionnaire and four open-ended questions given in the teachers' questionnaire. Only 19% of the students (Q.38 Please write your opinion about using a Smart phone / iPad / Smart watch / Tablet for learning English), and five English teachers responded to the open-ended questions. An overview of the students' and teachers' perceptions is presented in the table below.

Table 11. Students' Written Statements about Using Electronic Gadgets for The Learning of English

No	Student's Statement on Question 38	Relative Share
1	Using Google translation to know a new word, watch youtube, using social applications.	20%
2	A good way to learn English.	21%
3	In this century, we can't imagine our lives without a Smart phone.	35%
4	Smartphones are good for communication, but not for learning. Not all people use smartphones to learn.	5%
5	I think using a Smart phone in the classroom is very bad.	3%
6	Smartphones are helpful, but, as a student, you always need real books to learn.	2%
7	It is good to use Smart phones to communicate with people in English or any other language.	4%
8	My Smart phone helps me to take online English.	4%
9	In general, technology is helpful to improve your knowledge.	3%
10	If you need to search for a word from a book (hard copy), sometimes you need to turn many pages, but in the Smart phone, it is easy to search and find a word.	3%

The above data indicate that most of the students are of the opinion that electronic gadgets can help them to improve their English language skills. There are many students who depend on Smart phones for the purpose of translation. However, there are also a few students who think that using the Smart phones in the classroom is not appropriate.

The statements presented below is an overview of the English teachers' opinion on the impact of Smart phones.

Table 12. Opinions of English Teachers on Impact of Smart Phones on English Language Learning

No	Statements by Teachers of English (Qualitative Approach)
1	Smart phones will certainly improve students' language skills.
2	Applications like WhatsApp help students to form groups and contribute to improving their writing, reading, and speaking skills.
3	Smart phones can be used for a variety of purposes
4	Smart phones can store useful information, such as dictionaries, and can access websites on the interne
5	Smart phones are within our reach at any time, and we can use them without any time limit.
6	Smart phones help learners to learn independently.
7	Smartphones provide easy, fast and efficient access to thousands of useful sources.
8	Smart phones are helpful to verify the usage of English words

All the five teachers who participated in this questionnaire are of the opinion that electronic gadgets are necessary for improving students' English language skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

a) The Impact of Electronic Gadgets on English Language Learning of STKIP PGRI Tulungagung Undergraduates

An analysis of the findings suggests that the impact of mobile phones in students' everyday lives is more dominant than that of other electronic gadgets.

b) The Extent to Which Undergraduates Depend on Mobile Phones for Communicating in English

The findings also reveal that 86% of the students use translating software, available on the mobile phones, to understand English words and sentences.

c) Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Positive Influence of Mobile Phones on Improving English Language Skills

The belief that they can carry their mobile phones around at all times and that therefore, it is not necessary to learn English spelling may hinder them from reaching higher proficiency levels. It is observed that students often depend on their mobile phones when they are not sure of English spellings.

d) Mobile Phones as a Tool to Improve or Hinder Students' English Language Learning Abilities?

The findings of the present study reveal that English teachers - and most of the undergraduates - who participated in the survey are of the opinion that mobile phones can accelerate students' English language learning abilities.

REFERENCES

Ally, M. (2013). Mobile learning: from research to practice to Impact Education. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf Perspectives*, *10*(2), 1–10.

Bomhold, C. R. (2013). Educational use of smart phone technology: A survey of mobile phone application use by undergraduate university students. *Program: Electronic Library and Information Systems*, *47*(4), 424–436. https://doi.org/10.1108/PROG-01-2013-0003

Fuegen, S. (2012). The Impact of Mobile Technologies on Distance Education. *TechTrends*, *56*(6), 49–53. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-012-0614-0

Goundar, S. (2011). What is the Potential Impact of Using Mobile Devices in Education ? *Proceedings of SIG GlobDev Fourth Annual Workshop*. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.688.3051&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Hedge, T. (2002). Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom. T. Hedge. *ELT Journal*, *56*(3), 337–341. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/56.3.337

Kaganer, E., Giordano, G. A., Brion, S., & Tortoriello, M. (2013). Media tablets for mobile learning. *Communications of the ACM*, *56*(11), 68–75. https://doi.org/10.1145/2500494

Kuznekoff, JH Titsworth, S. (2013). The Impact of Mobile Phone Usage on Student Learning. *Communication Education, Volume: 62, Issue: 3*, (December), 233–252. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2013.767917

Wang, S., & Higgins, M. (2005). Limitations of mobile phone learning. In *Proceedings - IEEE International Workshop on Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Education, WMTE 2005* (Vol. 2005, pp. 179–181). https://doi.org/10.1109/WMTE.2005.43