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THE INFLUENCE OF MALL (MOBILE ASSITED LANGUAGE LEARNING) ON ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: Technological developments with the adoption of Mobile Multimedia devices and applications have translated into huge opportunities for English as a foreign Language (EFL). The mobile phone can be easily used everyone. Mobile phone have some applications with great advantage for user. Consequently, this study probes the influence of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on EFL learners' reading comprehension. The population of this study was vocational student EFL students (15-17 years old) at SMK Perwari Tulungagung. The material of reading comprehension (englishforeveryone.org) was used to have almost homogenous groups. After administrating the reading from reading comprehension test, 60 students who were randomly and equally assigned to the experimental and control groups (30 students in each group) were selected as the sample of this study. To see the impact of MALL on EFL students' reading comprehension, TOEIC reading comprehension test in form of multiple choice and some open ended questions was used as a pre – test and post – test to assess the participants' reading comprehension in both control and experimental group.

Key Words: MALL, Reading Comprehension, EFL students

Abstrak: Perkembangan teknologi dengan adopsi perangkat dan aplikasi Multimedia Seluler telah menerjemahkan peluang besar bagi Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa asing (EFL). Ponsel dapat dengan mudah digunakan semua orang. Ponsel memiliki beberapa aplikasi dengan keuntungan besar bagi pengguna. Akibatnya, penelitian ini menyelidiki pengaruh Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) pada pemahaman membaca peserta didik EFL. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa EFL siswa SMK (15-17 tahun) di SMK Perwari Tulungagung. Bahan pemahaman bacaan (englishforeveryone.org) digunakan untuk memiliki kelompok yang hampir homogen. Setelah pemberian bacaan dari tes pemahaman bacaan, 60 siswa yang secara acak dan setara ditugaskan untuk kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol (30 siswa di setiap kelompok) dipilih sebagai sampel penelitian ini. Untuk melihat dampak MALL pada pemahaman membaca siswa EFL, tes pemahaman membaca TOEIC dalam bentuk pilihan ganda dan beberapa pertanyaan terbuka digunakan sebagai pra-tes dan pasca-tes untuk menilai pemahaman membaca para peserta dalam kontrol dan eksperimen kelompok.

Kata Kunci : MALL, Pemahaman Membaca, siswa EFL

INTRODUCTION

MALL is a teaching and learning methodology that uses mobile phones or other handheld devices with some form of wireless connectivity, such as phones, PDAs and tablets, among others. (Abbasi & Hashemi, 2013) defined it as ''any sort of learning that happens when the learner is not in a fixed, predetermined location, or learning that happens when the learner takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by

mobile technologies". (Burston, 2017) MALL is an educational technology for mobile learning. It is designed to seamlessly bring together functionalities of mobile devices, the Learning Management System (LMS) and the need of close connection between teachers and students. Students can have in their smart phones learning resources and course activities as if they were connected to the network through a computer with a wired or wireless broadband link, in addition to native functionalities of smart phones. It is stated that mobile learning technologies are those that allow users get access to educational resources using mobile devices such as smart phones, notebooks, tablets, and so on, anywhere and anytime (Warschauer, 2004).

Using MALL as a pedagogical technique will help the students get a comprehensive understanding of the content of materials in second language learning and provides novel opportunities for language learning (Hashemi & Azizinezhad, 2012). This study tries to answer the following question:

"What is the influence of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) on English?"

This study is in significance of providing information on the issue of increasing EFL students' reading comprehension by using MALL. (Stockwell, 2012) Today's contemporary world has been labeled the world of information explosion, where everyone strives to stay abreast of any new step taken in science and technology. In this world, hardly anyone denies the significance attached to reading as the most generally needed skill as one of the best ways to remain up-to-date and well informed(Shield & Kukulska-Hulme, 2008). Learning to read and reading to learn is not an outworn slogan. Emphasizing the importance of reading, (Mayer, 2014)have stated that, "reading is the most important of all skills for most language learners in general and for EFL learners in particular. Effective reading is essential for success in acquiring a second language. After all, reading is the basis of instruction in all aspects of language learning (Sharples, 2005)

A. Mobile Learning Technologies in Education

All in all, using any kind of technological device should be accompanied by developing an efficacious type of methodology because these devices are not instructors but rather instructional tools. In the MALL Research Project Report (2009), it was concluded that mobile phones have a considerable effect on boosting students' confidence in both listening and speaking (Fageeh, 2013). Also a group of students was asked to have some conversation in Indonesian on their mobile phones. The results obtained showed that all students were satisfied with the privacy and freedom that they had using their own mobile devices. Moreover, the teachers welcomed the facility of listening to their students' conversations because they could identify each student's

difficulty better. In this study, students undertook a conversation test at the beginning of the project to quantify their initial conversational ability and a post-test to realize their progress. An 11% increase in their mean score from the pretest to the posttest showed the great effect that mobiles can have on improving language ability.

B. Reading Comprehension and MALL

Mobile technology is currently a feasible approach to overcoming many of the obstacles in current methods of EFL reading instruction. Standing on the shoulders of the giant, CALL (Fageeh, 2013), mobile assisted language learning (MALL) has the capability of providing EFL learners with the same opportunities for independent and targeted reading practice and immediate corrective feedback as CALL. In recent years, many studies have explored new methods of language learning made possible by the unique features of MALL, including portability, social interactivity, context sensitivity, connectivity, individuality, and immediacy (Traxler & Kukulska-Hulme, 2006).

Research suggests that MALL has excellent potential for providing students with rich, real time, collaborative and conversational experiences both in and outside the classroom. However, the focus of MALL is mostly on speaking (Kukulska-Hulme, 2006), vocabulary, phrases and grammar (Sharples, 2005), rather than early reading skills. Furthermore, most subjects in recent studies of MALL have been college students. Few studies have investigated how mobile technology benefits the reading skills of elementary students. The subjects of studies (Inkpen, 1999)(6- and 7-year old children) and (Rahimi & Tafazoli, 2014) (k12 students) are exceptions, but the learning objective in these studies was not specifically English reading skills. Further, although the most widely used hand-held devices (e.g., cellular phones, personal digital assistants, and mp3 players such as iPods) have a good reputation in MALL research, their small screens have been frustrating (Burston, 2014)Smart phones have turned into an everyday object for teenagers and many believe that these can be used to facilitate the language learning process. The extended band-with as well as the possibility of installing different apps on these smart phones has opened new opportunities for learners to better utilize these technologies for learning and comprehending different contents of language.

Considering the limited number of MALL studies focusing on reading comprehension, the current study tries to investigate the influence of using such devices on increasing the reading comprehension of EFL students.

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Method

The population of this study was intermediate female EFL students (16-17 years old) at SMK Perwari Tulungagung. The material of Reading comprehension in Reading test was used to have almost homogenous groups. After administrating the Reading comprehension test(EnglishForEveryone.org graded English Worksheets), 60 students who were randomly and equally assigned to the experimental and control groups (30 students in each group) were selected as the sample of this study.

To see the impact of MALL on EFL learners' reading comprehension, reading comprehension test (TOEIC test) in form of multiple choice and some open ended questions were used as a pre – test and post – test to assess the participants' reading comprehension in both control and experimental group. The reading tests were graded tests; intermediate (low to high) with controlled level of difficulty (vocabulary and structure).

To consider the internal consistency reliability (to evaluate the degree to which different test items that probe the same construct produce similar results), split-half reliability as a subtype of internal consistency reliability was used. The process of obtaining split-half reliability begun by splitting in half all items of the test that were intended to probe the same area of knowledge in order to form two sets of items. The entire test was administered, and finally the split-half reliability was obtained by determining the correlation between the two total set scores. The reliability of the test was (0.89). To check the validity, reading comprehension tests were used in a way to test the topics being covered at class to follow the content relevance and content coverage validity.

B. Procedure

The researcher checked to see whether all learners in experimental group had mobile phones or not. Some of them did not have mobile phones; therefore the researcher provided them with some sim-cards and made sure that there was at least one mobile phone in their families. Those learners who did not have mobile phones were asked to insert the provided sim-cards in a mobile phone provided by the researcher to do the activities according to the time table of sending texts. Both groups received the same materials during the course considering the same teacher, and the same setting. Both groups participated in the study for 16 meetings, and 8 reading comprehension texts were practiced in both groups. In both groups, the reading texts were practiced in the same way at class, but as outside activities control groups received paper and pencil

activities and they were asked to do them for the next session. Experimental group received the same reading activities which the students had to read, reflect, and answer via mobile phone. For the experimental group the activities were divided into several parts to be received everyday up to the next session. After doing outside activities, both the experimental and the control groups were tested to measure their reading comprehension. The main point that should be mentioned is that the control group received the activities on the paper but the experimental groups received them via mobile phone within a planned time schedule.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Reading Comprehension Scores of Control and Experimental Group (pretest)

Group	Reading Comprehension/Skill			t-test	df	P-value
	Total Number	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Control	30	9.18	3.43	0.11	38	0.9
Experimental	30	9.05	3.50			

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Scores of Control and Experimental Group (posttest)

Group	Reading Comprehension/Skill			t-test	df	P-value
	Total Number	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Control	30	10.45	3.31	-3.12	38	0.003
Experimental	30	13.56	2.99			

Table 3. Reading Comprehension Sores of Control Group (pretest & posttest)

Time	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	t-test	df	P-value
Pre-test	30	9.18	3.43	-10.38	19	0.0005
Post-test	30	10.45	3.31			

Table 4. Reading Comprehension Sores of Experimental Group (pretest & posttest)

Time	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	t-test	df	P-value
Pre-test	30	9.05	3.50	-16.64	19	0.0005
Post-test	30	13.56	2.99			

This study has investigated the effect of MALL on SMK Perwari Tulungagung EFL students' reading comprehension. Considering the research hypothesis, Ha:There is a relationship between MALL and SMK Perwari Tulungagung EFL students 'reading comprehension. According to the results (tables 1), based on the P-Value, independent

sample t- test and paired sample t-test, it can be said that there is significantly a positive relationship between MALL and SMK Perwari Tulungagung EFL students' reading comprehension. Both groups (experimental & control) promoted in terms of the target language reading comprehension, but the findings supported the superiority of MALL. Therefore, the research hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and Ho is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The current findings provide additional insights into the perception of reading comprehension via mobile phones. The major research findings show that learners favour reading comprehension via mobile phones due to the convenience facilitated by the portability and accessibility of the mobile phones. The evidence from this study suggests the potential application of mobile phones in reading comprehension. The findings of the current research not only inform teachers and educators, but software developers of the potential pedagogical application of the mobile technology.

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