

Pre-Service English Teachers' Perceptions on the Integration of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) during Virtual Teaching Internship

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ABSTRACT

This research was intended to investigate pre-service English teacher's perception of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) during virtual teaching internships. The problem comes from changing the learning system from offline to online due to pandemic covid 19. Automatically, it influences the implementation of teaching internships. As a result, preschool teachers who carry out the task must adjust the situation. This research is classified into qualitative research. The research participant was five English pre-service teachers who took teaching internship in several schools. The data was obtained by distributing questionnaires, conducting interviews, and analyzing reflective journals. The result shows that EFL pre-service teachers had positive perceptions of the use of MALL in teaching English. Pre-service English teachers understand and are aware of MALL during virtual teaching internships. While the obstacles faced by the Pre-service teacher came from the unstable connection internet access, operating new features, and controlling the students. In conclusion, English pre-service teachers have a positive perception of dealing with MALL application in virtual teaching internships.

Keywords: perception, EFL pre-service teacher, virtual teaching internship, MALL

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki persepsi guru bahasa Inggris pra-jabatan tentang Pembelajaran Bahasa Berbantuan Seluler (MALL) selama magang mengajar virtual. Permasalahan tersebut berasal dari perubahan sistem pembelajaran dari offline menjadi online akibat pandemi covid 19. Otomatis berpengaruh terhadap pelaksanaan magang mengajar. Akibatnya, guru PAUD yang melaksanakan tugas harus menyesuaikan keadaan. Penelitian ini tergolong penelitian kualitatif. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah lima guru prajabatan bahasa Inggris yang mengikuti magang mengajar di beberapa sekolah. Data diperoleh dengan menyebarkan kuesioner, melakukan wawancara, dan menganalisis jurnal reflektif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru prajabatan EFL memiliki persepsi positif tentang penggunaan MALL dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Guru bahasa Inggris prajabatan memahami dan mengetahui MALL selama magang mengajar virtual. Sedangkan kendala yang dihadapi oleh Guru Prajabatan berasal dari koneksi internet yang tidak stabil, pengoperasian fitur-fitur baru, dan pengendalian siswa. Kesimpulannya, guru prajabatan bahasa Inggris memiliki persepsi positif dalam menangani aplikasi MALL dalam magang mengajar virtual.

Kata kunci: persepsi, guru pra-layanan EFL, magang mengajar virtual, MALL

INTRODUCTION

Pandemic Covid 19 bring a significant effect on many sides. One of them is the education side. Due to the covid 19 outbreak, teaching and learning significantly changed to online learning. As instructed by The Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makariem, all intuitions and schools stop conducting offline teaching and learning activities. He strongly urged all teaching and learning activities to be turned into online learning (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020). Automatically, the instruction significantly affects teaching and learning activities. It was challenging both for students and teachers to conduct online learning.

Technology plays a vital role in substituting face-to-face learning with online teaching and learning. Some online platforms are used in the learning process as media to communicate with both students and teachers, such as Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and other platforms. Theoretically, online learning can be defined as a learning process that utilizes the internet to access the material, communicate and interact with content, teachers, and other students, gain knowledge and information, and gain learning experience (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). It can be understood that online learning deals with optimizing using an internet connection to access material, information, and interaction with teachers and other students virtually. It also gives students learning experiences to gain more knowledge and challenges in the global era. Technology is beneficial during a pandemic to keep online teaching and learning going. In other words, online learning and technology are closely related.

Recently, the use of mobile phones has increased highly. Most of the students have their smartphones, and they are named digital natives because they are surrounded by technology and the advance in technology and communication (Widiana et al., 2018). Related to online learning, most students use their smartphones to access digital platforms for online learning. The use of mobile devices in the teaching-learning process is called mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) refers to a language learning strategy that applies and uses mobile phone applications such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and others that support learners in learning their target language (Pratiwi et al., 2020). In short, Mobile Assisted Learning deals with devices such as smartphones and others that can be used to access applications to learn the language and has a greater influence on the teaching and learning process (Dehkordi, 2018). It also deals with media that can virtually support the teaching and learning process. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) helps students learn and assess their assignments in practice. Take an example of a writing activity, the pre-service English teachers asked the students to post a picture on Instagram and then write an appropriate caption, and they needed to tag their teacher.

Another example is students are asked to create a mini vlog as a speaking activity to practice their English. There are a lot of activities that can be done by students and pre-service English teachers in applying Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). It can be understood that students and pre-service English teachers can access, teach and learn anywhere and in distance learning. The students can use some online resources such as YouTube and some relevant videos to learn English. Due to studying from home activity, students can quickly learn anytime and anywhere by using their mobile phones as long as they are connected to the internet (Vyas & Nirban, 2014).

During teaching internships in the pandemic era, pre-service English teachers should adjust the situation by applying teaching strategies virtually. Automatically, they have to have appropriate knowledge and ability to use and access technology. This impact also was experienced by Pre-service English teachers of Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri. They had to teach the students virtually. It was so challenging, and it gave valuable experiences for them. In practice, some problems are found, such as how to collaborate and interact with learning during online learning, appropriate media and teaching material for language learning, internet access and devices, and other technical problems. Those problems contrasted with the previous teaching internship, in which pre-service teachers had offline learning classes and face-to-face learning activities. These phenomena lead to more investigation and analysis. Therefore, the question guiding the present research are: (1) what are the pre-service English teachers' perceptions of the integration of MALL during online teaching internships? (2). What are the pre-service English teachers' obstacles to using MALL during virtual teaching internships?

METHOD

This research applied qualitative research. Qualitative research collects the information from the viewpoint of the subject of a study that will be analyzed to take the conclusion. This research took place in Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri Bojonegoro which located in St. Jendral Ahmad Yani No.10, Jamban, Sukorejo, Bojonegoro. There were five pre-service English teachers as the participants in this research. The reason to take them as participants of this research is they were involved in a direct phenomenon. So, they were able to share their experience and information.

This research employed three instruments to obtain the data: a questionnaire, an interview guideline, and a reflective journal. The questionnaire was used to get pre-service English teachers' perceptions. At the same time, the interview guideline was employed to obtain information from the participants. Then reflective journal was applied to get in-depth information about their feelings and emotions about the online teaching internship and their experiences using MALL. The questionnaire was adapted from Hussin et al. (2012) and Azli, Shah, and Mohamad (2018). The questionnaire was classified into three dimensions: the concept of MALL, the benefits of MALL, and the implementation of MALL. It comprised of 22 closed questions that centered on pre-service English teachers' acknowledgments of MALL and the obstacles when using it. The option to choose by Likert Scales (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, neither agree / nor disagree, Agree, strongly agree). The technique of analyzing the research data refers to the theory of Miles and Huberman, such as; data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the data analysis, there are some findings. The first finding deals with pre-service English teachers' perception of MALL integration during virtual teaching internships. The data was obtained from the questionnaire. The result can be described as follow:

In the term the concept of MALL, there are sub-indicators. The first shows that 20% of participants said they strongly agreed, 40% of participants agreed, and 40% were neutral. It can be stated that the participants understand the concept of MALL. The next is dealing with technical skills in using MALL. The result shows that 60% of participants agreed, and

40% said neutrally. It can be claimed that they have a technical understanding of using MALL. The following sub-indicator is the curiosity to learn more about MALL. The data shows that 80 % of participants strongly agreed, and 20% agreed. It means that they have a strong desire and curiosity to learn more about MALL.

While the next sub-indicator is the need to learn MALL in virtual teaching, the result shows that 80% of participants said they strongly agreed, and 20% agreed. It can be understood that the participants need to learn and apply MALL in their virtual teaching. The following sub-indicator is paying extra money for mobile learning. The result shows that 40% of participants agreed, and 60% said neutrally. It can be pointed out that they do not mind spending their extra money to learn mobile learning. It means they have a strong desire to learn about MALL and use it in virtual teaching.

In conclusion, the pre-service English teachers understand the concept of MALL. They have already known about MALL because they have had personal experience using and applying MALL in virtual learning. As a result, they have already known about the use of mobile language learning. It seems that they have a positive perception of the concept of MALL in virtual teaching (Yudhiantara & Nasir, 2017). In addition, based on the interview, pre-service English teachers said they have been familiar with and have had the skill to operate it as they have already known and learned some applications in virtual learning. The university also supported it, which has given access to communication virtually during pandemic covid 19. It was found in line with the reflective journal. It was found that they can find and create videos or other media in MALL. In other words, pre-service English teachers have a positive perception of the concept of MALL. They mostly understand how to employ and practice it during virtual teaching internships.

The second aspect investigated on the questionnaire is the benefit of MALL. The aspect has some sub-indicators. The first sub-indicator is the time-saving of MALL. The data shows that 100% of participants said they agree. It can be understood that using MALL can devote more time to teaching. They can maximally use and activate some practical and useable features in MALL. The next sub-indicator is MALL as an alternative web learning. The result shows that 40% of participants strongly agreed, while 60% agreed. It can be known that MALL is an alternative way to learn based on the website. MALL allows students to learn digitally, and they can explore more than using the conventional way.

The next sub-indicator is unknowing the 3G facility in the phone. The response shows that 40% of participants said neutral, 40% disagreed, and 20% strongly disagreed. It can be implied that almost pre-service teachers understand and know some 3G features and facilities in their smartphones. As a result, they can use it in teaching activities effectively. The next sub-indicator is the easiness of accessing MALL. The result shows that 80% of participants agreed, and only 20% of participants said neutrally. It can be understood that pre-service teachers can access MALL easily and use it as well as possible in virtual teaching and learning activity. The next sub-indicator is accessible material. The data shows that 100% of participants said they agree. It implies that the material can be easily accessed in MALL. Using MALL, both students and pre-service teachers can access teaching material wherever and whenever through their mobile phones. The last sub-indicator is MALL allows the learners to be autonomous. The data shows that 20% of participants strongly agreed, 60% agreed, and only 20% said neutrally. It can be understood that pre-service teachers understand and agree that by using MALL, the material will lead the students to be autonomous learners because they can easily access teaching material anytime. They can independently access and learn it.

Based on the data described above, it can be analyzed that pre-service English teachers feel and get the benefit of using MALL in their virtual teaching. They can access and upload material quickly, and they also can lead their students using current features and technology in virtual teaching. MALL can save time effectively in teaching and learning. In short, MALL offers numerous advantages for pre-service teachers and students to keep in touch and learn during pandemic covid 19. Virtual teaching is an alternative way to support teaching and learning activities going. In other words, pre-service teachers have positive perceptions and experiences in accessing and using MALL integrated with virtual teaching and learning.

The next indicator is about the implementation of MALL in virtual teaching. The data shows that there are some sub-indicators. The first sub-indicator is that the participants can use and apply some applications to teach their students. It shows that 20% of participants said they strongly agreed, and 80% agreed. It can be inferred that most EFL pre-service teachers use some relevant applications for teaching and learning, and it is commonly integrated with mobile learning and devices. The following sub-indicator selects and uses the approach to guide students in virtual learning. The data shows that 100% of participants said they agree. It can be understood that EFL pre-service teachers understand practical approaches to teaching and learning. The following sub-indicator is the teacher's ways of managing students.

The data shows that 100% of participants said they agree. It means that EFL pre-service teachers can manage students during virtual teaching and learning. The next sub-indicator is combining technology and material in the teaching process. The data shows that 20% of participants strongly agreed, and 80% agreed. It can be understood that almost EFL pre-service teachers commonly integrated their material and technology. The data from the interview also support it. It shows that pre-service teachers integrated their teaching material and technology. They usually use quizzes and YouTube videos to share their teaching materials. The next sub-indicator is some obstacles in using MALL. The result shows that 20% of participants strongly agree, and 80% agree. It shows that pre-service teachers use barriers in accessing and using MALL. The next sub-indicator is evaluation. The data shows that 20% of participants strongly agreed, and 80% agreed. It means that EFL pre-service teachers can evaluate their students during virtual teaching and learning by applying some applications in MALL. The last sub-indicator understands students' mastery of knowledge. The data shows that 60% of participants said to agree, 20% participants said neutral and 20% of participants said strongly disagree. It can be analyzed that by dealing with students' understanding in virtual teaching and learning, EFL pre-service teachers understand whether their students understand the material or not. Some pre-service teachers are confused about students' understanding of the material in teaching and learning. In short, EFL pre-service teachers sometimes get challenging to access and understand whether the students understand the whole material or not during virtual teaching and learning.

From the data described above, it can be analyzed that pre-service English teachers' perceptions can be investigated and analyzed from several aspects, such as the concept of MALL, the benefit of MALL, and the implication of MALL in teaching and learning. The result shows that most EFL pre-service teachers have a positive perception of dealing with the use of MALL and integration with virtual teaching and learning during pandemic covid 19. The use of MALL in virtual teaching and learning has numerous advantages. It is also related to the implication of MALL during the virtual internship. EFL pre-service teachers commonly implement technology and teaching material in virtual training. In short, EFL pre-service teachers positively perceive implanting MALL in virtual internships during pandemic

covid 19. In other words, pre-service English teachers ideally should know and understand how to use technology and integrate it with teaching and learning activities. Nowadays, pre-service English teachers should be able to justify the method of teaching and technology. It is in line with previous research conducted by Syafriadin et al. (2021). The research shows that pre-service English teachers employed various applications to activate students' English skills during teaching and learning activities, such as Kahoot, Edlink, and other apps. They found problems when employing apps such as internet connection, cost, learning style, and disciplines. In other words, pre-service English teachers have to be aware of technology and its development.

Regarding the obstacles pre-service teachers found in virtual teaching internships, the data shows some points: lack of internet access, difficulty operating the new application feature, and classroom management. Those obstacles were got from the interview. Dealing with an internet connection, all pre-service English teachers have a standard answer "internet access was the obstacle that I found during virtual teaching internship and *the new features in the application (Participant 1)*. Unstable internet connection cause students to lose their focus and mood to participate in learning. As a result, the pre-service English teacher cannot control and loses connection.

Another obstacle is the difficulty of operating new features. When dealing with technology and new features, some pre-service English teachers commonly faced problems and needed to learn and prepare before employing it in virtual teaching. As stated by participant 3, "*internet access and new application were the obstacles because the geographical location of students' houses is different. For the new application, we must learn it first, and we can directly use it in the teaching process*". The data shows that pre-service English teachers had a problem when they had to meet new app features. So, they have to learn it before practicing it in virtual teaching.

Dealing with classroom management during a virtual teaching internship, pre-service English teachers found managing and controlling students in virtual teaching was not easy. "*Based on my experience, managing the students was my challenge, some were fill the attendance list but they didn't join the learning. Made the interest in teaching which the teachers had to creative make a fun learning (Participant 5)*". It can be understood that pre-service English teachers found that controlling and managing students during virtual learning truly need extra effort. It was a challenge for pre-service English teachers during a virtual teaching internship.

Dealing with the research, the result shows that EFL pre-service teachers positively perceive the implementation of MALL in a virtual internship. Dealing with MALL, some researchers have conducted and investigated MALL and its performance in teaching and learning. A. Habibie researched MALL in the University Students' context. The result shows how smartphones are tools that enable better language competency in students and, of course, with proper and wise supervision (Habibie, 2021). It is in line with this research; it can be implied that MALL with smartphone integration can be very helpful in guiding and mediating language learning, especially by maximizing the use of a smartphone as their media to learn English wherever and whenever they are. They can easily access materials and effectively learn and practice English. In short, MALL has a positive response in university students as media to learn English.

Related to perception, Fuad Saifuddin also conducted another study about students' perception of *E-Learning*. The result shows that students have a positive perception of e-learning. In addition, students' perceptions can be seen from several points. The participants

expressed that e-learning is beneficial and can be used to improve students' motivation. It can be stated that e-learning has a positive perception, leading to positive responses to implementing blended learning. In short, this research has a similar result in positive perception of the use of MALL in the teaching and learning process. But the difference is the participants. (Saifuddin, 2018). In other words, MALL is genuinely beneficial for teaching and learning. During pandemic covid 29, EFL pre-service teachers maximally used MALL as their tool to keep virtual teaching and learning alive.

Dealing with perception and MALL, Widianita et al. (2018) also researched 10th-grade students' perception of MALL in learning English in Buleleng. The result reveals that students positively perceive using MALL, especially smartphones. MALL should be integrated with English teaching and learning. The previous research has the same result that students have a positive perception of integration with other gadgets. It can be concluded that positive perception in using and applying technology.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that EFL pre-service teachers have positive feedback and respond to the use of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) in virtual internships because of some aspects, namely the implementation of MALL, benefit and the concept of MALL (Yudhiantara & Saehu, 2017). MALL provides practicality in accessing and learning language everywhere and every time. MALL can also be integrated with some devices such as laptops, smartphones, and PCs. As a result, MALL provides beneficial aspects for students and EFL pre-service teachers in virtual internships. Technology is extremely useful in assessing students and doing exercise everywhere. The uniqueness of this study was in the result that examined pre-service English language teachers who had a good perception of the integration of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) during virtual teaching internships. Here, they also found obstacles like a lack of internet connection, difficulty operating new features, and difficulty controlling the student (lack of students' interest and lack of motivation).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that pre-service teachers of English Language Education in Unugiri Bojonegoro are familiar with Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. It is proved by the qualification from each dimension of the questionnaires, which show that pre-service teachers' perceptions were very high. The study also reveals that pre-service English teachers found a lack of internet connection, difficulty operating new features, and difficulty controlling the student (lack of student interest and motivation). It is suggested that other pre-service teachers prepare themselves to teach in the digital era. They are also meant to improve their knowledge and skill in operating mobile technology. Further research is also suggested to conduct and develop this study by expanding the research problems and the participants for those interested in running a study about Mobile-Assisted Language Learning.

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