EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF A MOBILE LEARNING APPLICATION "ENGLISH VOCABULARY" IN VOCABULARY LEARNING

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Abstract.
In today's era, technology permeates every aspect of daily life, including the field of education. There is a concept in education known as mobile assisted language learning (MALL). One instance of its application is the usage of mobile learning applications for vocabulary learning. This study was conducted to find out students' perceptions regarding the use of mobile learning applications (English Vocabulary) in learning vocabulary. Using the qualitative method, the researcher conducted interviews with five high school students who were selected purposively. The results showed that all participants felt helped by the mobile learning application during the learning vocabulary. Besides being easy to use, this application has various fun features that allows students to have pleasant learning. More into this, the students agree that the application should cover more complete material such as grammar, tenses and conversation. The study's findings suggest that mobile learning can assist students learn vocabulary, particularly when there is a pronunciation guide

Keywords: MALL, Vocabulary, EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary development is an essential component of language instruction. This is in line with Vossoughi (2009) stating that Vocabulary is one of the language components that should be learned and taught. It is critical for students learning foreign languages to increase their vocabulary mastery. This aligns with Moghadam and Ghaderpours (2012) assertion that vocabulary learning is dominant in language acquisition, regardless of whether the language is a second or foreign, and is critical to the learners overall language acquisition. One of the reasons for the importance of learning vocabulary is that vocabulary mastery greatly influences the reading ability of EFL students. That is consistent with Jitendra et al. (2004) claim that vocabulary

instruction is one of the essential components of literacy education. Besides influencing reading ability, vocabulary influences other skills, such as speaking, listening, and writing.

The description above leads to the conclusion that acquiring new words is crucial. Furthermore, learning vocabulary is complex, and EFL students confront several challenges. This is in line with Nyikos and Fan (2007), who claim that learning vocabulary is one of the most complicated tasks that students must fulfill. One of the challenges is that pupils must study and memorize thousands of words to acquire fluency (Piyu, 2014). Another issue was brought up by Rahmatillah 2014, who discovered that almost all pupils needed help with word pronunciation, writing, spelling, proper grammatical usage, and memorizing vocabulary. According to Sucandra et al. (2022), internal and external influences affect these vocabulary learning challenges. In accordance with the modern era, educators view technology as a solution.

Technological advancements create numerous opportunities, one of which is in the field of education. According to Hasan et al. (2022), digital technology is very crucial for language learning in this modern era. The emergence of mobile learning is one of these technological advancements. According to Hidayati and Rosyid (2020), the advent of the term mobile learning, which refers to the application of learning with mobile phone support and internet access, has resulted in several innovations. Mobile Assisted Language Learning is one of the innovations of it. Mobile Assisted Language Learning MALL is a sort of mobile learning that involves the use of mobile technology in the language-learning process (El-Hussein & Cronje, Defining mobile learning in the higher education landscape, 2010). This is consistent with Amalia's (2020) claim that MALL is mobile learning related to language learning. According to experts, there are numerous benefits to utilizing mobile learning applications as a medium for learning vocabulary. One of the benefits of MALL in learning foreign languages is utilizing mobile applications in learning vocabulary. Using mobile applications gives numerous advantages since they are simple to use, convenient, efficient, and adaptable tools for learning vocabulary (Polakova, 2022).

The use of mobile learning applications in vocabulary learning has been reported to improve student achievement better than using traditional teaching techniques (Polakova, 2022; Lelardeux, et al., 2017), motivation and engagement of students (Ozan, 2013; Rogers & Price, 2009; Yilmaz & Akpinar, 2011). Moreover, it has been reported that mobile apps are efficient regarding time, place, or circumstances (Xu, Applying MALL to an EFL Listening and Speaking Course: An Action, 2020; Naismith & Corlett, 2006). According to some surveys, participants generally agreed that using mobile devices to learn was convenient and enjoyable (Wang, 2015; Xingxing & Butsakorn, 2019). Other studies indicate that students favor attending regular classes over adopting mobile learning (Piyu, 2014). It is because internet data greatly impacts the effectiveness of mobile learning applications. Although downloaded apps can be stored in the phone's memory, doing so slows system speed and takes up more space (Praveen & Shalini, 2021). Furthermore, it needs help utilizing the apps for vocabulary learning. The fundamental issue is that the apps' complicated vocabulary needs to be simplified for students (Deris & Shukor, 2019).

From the previous studies above, the research result on the role of mobile learning applications needs to be more conclusive since a report shows both positive and negative views on mobile learning applications in vocabulary. Therefore, this research expands the study investigating mobile learning applications in vocabulary acquisition. This study aims to explore learners' perceptions of using a mobile application called English Vocabulary in learning English, with a particular emphasis on developing their vocabulary.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mobile Assisted Language Learning is a language education system that combines listening, reading, and speaking activities, improving academic studies, critical thinking, and research

abilities (Chinnery G. M., 2006; Athoillah, The Use of Mobile Language Learning (MALL) in Teaching Students Listening and Speaking Skills, 2022). It utilizes handheld mobile devices and mobile learning applications to facilitate language learning. This approach is part of the growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and helps English language learners enhance vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, pronunciation, and thinking abilities.

Mobile learning applications offer numerous benefits for English study, including easy access to resources and applications, freedom from time and place limitations, multimedia learning, and improved peer interaction. Mobile devices also facilitate collaborative learning and provide valuable tools for students to access language learning materials (Xu, 2020; Thornton & Houser, Using mobile phones in English education in Japan, 2020). Additionally, using mobile devices in educational settings motivates students to engage in educational activities. As a result, portable electronics may become essential for students and teachers (Yilmaz & Akpinar, 2011). The capacity to provide access to learning materials outside of instructional time is another benefit of mobile learning. For this, mobile learning management systems can be employed (Polakova, 2022). Based on the numerous benefits outlined by the researchers above, it is possible to infer that mobile learning applications are beneficial for vocabulary learning.

Apart from the benefits mentioned above, according to Praveen and Shalini (2021) mobile learning applications have some limitations. The first are psychological constraints. The usage of mobile learning apps as a learning tool encourages the use of mobile phones. Because excessive cell phone use exposes people to radiation, which has detrimental consequences, this is in line with the statement of Braune et al. (1998). The second category is Pedagogical Constraints. When mobile learning is implemented, students are totally responsible for their educational activities. As a result, they lack direction and assistance in their learning. Despite these limitations, mobile learning applications are still feasible to use. This can be seen from the results of previous studies, which show the effectiveness of using mobile learning applications in learning vocabulary. Previous research can be seen in the previous study section.

According to the previous statement, mobile learning has both advantages and challenges. It is essential for teachers to understand their students' perspectives on the use of mobile learning for vocabulary learning. In order for educators to improve or make more successful their educational practises. According to Goldstein (2009), perception is the outcome of intricate "behind the scenes" processes, many of which are hidden from consciousness. Furthermore, Balcetis & Dunning (2006) defined perception as our sensory experience of the environment and claimed it includes the awareness of environmental stimuli and actions taken in reaction to them. From these understandings, the researcher concludes that perception is the process by which we take in and make sense of environmental facts.

METHODOLOGY

This research aims to discover the EFL students' perceptions of using mobile learning applications in learning vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, a qualitative research methodology was applied in this study. This approach was chosen because the objective of this investigation is to discover students' perceptions about using mobile learning applications, particularly English Vocabulary. Furthermore, the selection of this qualitative approach is based on the opinion of Creswell (2014), qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social human problem.

The case study design was used in this study to find students' perceptions of the application of mobile learning applications in students' vocabulary learning. According to Yin (2004), a case study is an empirical investigation that explores a current phenomenon inside its real-life environment when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not immediately visible; and when numerous sources of evidence are utilized.

The researcher conducted this research at one of a senior high school in Garut. While the participants in this study were five high school students. The five students were chosen based on their prior experience with mobile learning applications for vocabulary acquisition. Specifically, pupils who have learned to use mobile learning applications. Five participants were chosen using purposive sampling based on several criteria. Because purposive sampling is a technique that considers certain variables. This is consistent with Sugiyono's (2015) theory, which states that purposive sampling is a simple procedure that takes specific consideration. Furthermore, researchers used five participants based on the theory from Creswell (2007) which recommends 3–5 participants for a case study.

In this study, interviews were used to collect the data. Interviewing is a face-to-face verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to obtain information or express an opinion or belief from another person or persons (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954). This approach was chosen in accordance with Rowley's (2012) theory, which argues that interviews are utilized in qualitative research to gather knowledge and understand perceptions, attitudes, experiences, procedures, actions, or predictions. Semi-interviews were designed to gather information about EFL students' perceptions of mobile learning applications, particularly the English Vocabulary app. Semi-structured interviews are used to more openly investigate a problem, in which the parties invited to the interview are asked for their opinions and ideas (Sugiyono, 2010).

Data analysis is a process that formally documents efforts to find themes and construct hypotheses (ideas) based on data in order to support the themes and hypotheses (Moleong, 2005). The data in this study was processed in three steps as follows: Data collection entails the researcher objectively capturing all data pertinent to the interview. The researcher then uses data reduction to process the interview results. According to Miles (2014), data reduction is a selection process, research, and transformation of raw data from written records in the field. Finally, depending on the interview data, the researcher develops conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study tries to answer the research question as follows: "What are the EFL students' perceptions of using mobile learning applications on learning vocabulary acquisition?". The researcher interviewed five high school students to answer the research question. From the interviews conducted for approximately 50 minutes, the researchers collected several student perceptions regarding the use of the Mobile Learning Application, especially the English Vocabulary application.

The first revelation concerns the importance of mobile learning applications in vocabulary learning. According to the findings of the interviews, the majority of the pupils had never learned vocabulary using a mobile application. This identifies a lack of technology usage in vocabulary development; hence it is critical for students to learn more about the benefits of technology in language learning. The next section discusses the benefits of mobile learning applications in vocabulary acquisition. The researchers discovered that the mobile learning application assisted all participants. The researcher then examines the reasons why the subjects benefited from this. The numerous features of the mobile learning application aided participants. Participants described compares between learning vocabulary with mobile learning apps and traditional methods based on these qualities. Finally, the researcher examined the problems that the participants encountered when using the mobile learning application.

Furthermore, based on the research findings, the researchers discovered that pupils prefer enjoyable forms of learning, such as games. As a result, when presented with a mobile application with numerous features similar to a game, they have a favorable attitude. Students can then identify how the learning experience employs traditional approaches via mobile applications. Based on their observations of students using mobile applications to learn vocabulary, they believe that mobile learning is more practical and efficient. This opinion is in

line with Polakova's (2022) theory, which states that Mobile applications provide several benefits since they are easy to use, convenient, efficient, and adaptive tools. A more complete explanation will be discussed in the discussion bellow.

The Use of Mobile Learning Applications in Vocabulary Learning
First, the participants were asked what they know about mobile learning applications and whether they have ever used other mobile learning applications to learn vocabulary. From the results of the interviews, the following were the answers from the participants:

> Participants 1,2,3,4, and 5: What I know is that it is an application on a cellphone that functions as a tool for learning vocabulary.

According to the responses of the five students above, their knowledge of mobile learning apps is consistent with the theory of Chinnery (2006), which argues that a Mobile Learning Application is language learning that is facilitated or increased by the use of a portable mobile device. This demonstrates that pupils are aware that another advantage of mobile devices is that they can aid in studying. However, when asked if they had previously used other programmes before the one provided by their teacher, the majority of them stated that they had never. The following interview findings demonstrate this:

> Participant 1: I once learned vocabulary from watching movies, from the dictionary, and then from listening to music. ..... I usually watch English films. The subtitles are in English, then if I don't understand a word, ... I usually write it down in my book. Then after watching the movie, I translate it.

> Participants 2,3,4, and 5: I personally haven't because this is my first time learning English Vocabulary using an application.

For the question of whether they had ever used other applications to learn vocabulary, the majority of participants had never used any other programs to learn vocabulary. This demonstrates that using applications to learn vocabulary is still a rather uncommon practice. This means that pupils need to learn more about how to use technology to learn a language, so that they can use it in more beneficial ways in the future. This is in line with the theory of Hasan et al (2022), which emphasizes the importance of using technology in learning languages in this modern era.

On the other hand, participant 1 used alternative methods, such as watching films and listening to music, to learn vocabulary. Listening to music is one of the vocabulary learning methods mentioned by Azabdaftari & Mozaheb (2012). However, this approach has an issue in that it leaves a chance for students to misunderstand the new terminology they encounter, thus the teacher must always be involved (Nurpratama, 2019). Furthermore, reading, writing, and translating were the three procedures taken by Participant 1 in order to be able to comprehend unfamiliar words through the film. It can make it easier for them to remember vocabulary. However, since films often reduce active time to just over an hour, pupils will have to work hard to finish the film (Mirvan, 2013; Sari & Sugandi, 2015). As a result, that method is less efficient in terms of time spent learning vocabulary.

The findings from the interviews above show that students are unconcerned with the methods they use to learn a language. This is consistent with Azabtari and Mozaheb's (2012) theory, which claims that the majority of students are unaware of various vocabulary learning approaches. As a result, it is important to inform students about the right technique for learning vocabulary. The findings suggest that pupils should be more introduced to the usage of technology as a learning aid.

Benefits of Mobile Learning Application in Learning Vocabulary

In the second question, students were interviewed regarding the benefits they felt when using the English Vocabulary application in learning vocabulary. The following is the result of the interview:

Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5: Yes, I think this is very helpful in learning my vocabulary because with this application, I can find out vocabulary that I don't know yet, so I can increase my knowledge.

According to the findings of these interviews, all participants believed that using mobile learning applications may help them learn vocabulary. This is in line with the findings of studies conducted by previous researchers, namely (Klimova & Polakova, 2020). The use of the English Vocabulary application to acquire vocabulary was rated positively due to all participants. This demonstrates that the use of technology can be advantageous in language acquisition. This is consistent with Lelardeux's (2017) theory, according to which the use of handheld mobile devices can aid in vocabulary development. Participants also agreed that using applications to study vocabulary could help them increase their vocabulary. The results of the teacher's daily exercises can validate this. After learning is completed, daily practise is carried out to assess student achievement using the English Vocabulary application. The daily practise results indicated a higher score than before using the application, and the vocabulary types most affected by the increase after using the application were nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. Students' vocabulary levels are remain Pre-Intermediate after using the application, where students can use English for assignments and daily activities. From these results it can be concluded that the use of mobile applications can help students improve their vocabulary skills. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Wang Y.-H. , 2015; Polakova, 2022).

Mobile Learning Application Features

Next, students were asked about what application features they felt could help them in learning vocabulary. Here are the results of the interview:

Participant 1: The features of this application really help me to learn vocabulary because we can write, listen, read, and also speak ....

Participants 3 and 5: I think the feature in this application that helps the most is listening. Apart from knowing the new vocabulary, we can also find out how to pronounce the vocabulary.

Participants 4 and 2: In my opinion, the features that help the most are the learn and test features because they are fun.

The mobile learning application used in this study is called English Vocabulary. This application offers various features, because in addition to learning vocabulary this application also has other features. An example is the feature of how to pronounce, how to spell and test. How to use the application is also simple. First, students are required to choose what topics they want to study. After choosing, students will start to learn all the vocabulary related to that topic starting from how to pronounce it, how to spell it and how to apply it in complete sentences. After finishing studying, students can take various tests ranging from writing, pronunciation, and listening tests to know their achievement.

According to the findings of the interview, pupils benefit substantially from the application's different features. These advantages include the ability to learn how to spell and pronounce in addition to studying vocabulary. Furthermore, there is a test feature that can be used to assess their skills after learning a language in the application. This is in line with the theory (Naismith & Corlett, 2006; Thornton & Houser, 2005) mentioned that learning with mobile applications provides various features. Participants 4 and 2 expressed that these aspects make learning enjoyable rather than tedious. This is in line with the results of research from Xingxing and Butsakorn (2019), which stated that participants were generally in agreement that

using mobile devices to learn was convenient and enjoyable. The following is a picture of the features contained in the English Vocabulary application.

Comparison of Mobile Learning Applications with Other Vocabulary Learning Media

The results of the next interview were when students were asked about using this application in Vocabulary Learning compared to other vocabulary learning methods. The following are the results of the students interviews:

Participants 1, 4, and 5: ...... when using this application, it is very fun and not boring because in my opinion, this application is just like a game. When we tested this application, it wasn't boring at all. Instead, it seemed fun and addicting. For example, learning other platforms, watching movies, listening to music, and other things are also fun. The only thing that's complicated is if, for example, there is a word you don't know, write it down in a book first, then look for a translation. For example, in this application, it immediately exists.......

Participants 2 and 3: As long as I use this application to learn vocabulary, in my opinion, apart from being fun, this application also challenges me because there are right and wrong, so it keeps me trying to memorize the vocabulary,.......

Participants 1, 4, and 5 believe that using this program is enjoyable and not uninteresting because it functions like a game. This is consistent with Xingxing and Butsakorn's (2019) idea that mobile learning applications make vocabulary learning more enjoyable. Participant 1 added that other methods, for example, watching movies and listening to songs, were also fun but a little complicated because we had to write them down in a book before we could figure out the meaning ourselves. This supports the theory from Sari et al. (2015), which states that some students may refuse to watch English Films with English subtitles since it takes longer and requires more effort to understand it. They must read the subtitles and watch the clips at the exact same time, and after the film finishes, they just search for the interpretation. According to the study, pupils tend to be more engaged in learning vocabulary if the media employed is enjoyable and engaging, such as games. As a result, it is critical that they use the appropriate media to learn vocabulary.

Difficulties in Using Mobile Learning Applications in Learning Vocabulary

Furthermore, the results of interview data regarding the difficulties students face when learning vocabulary using a mobile application. The following are the results:

Participants 1 and 3: Yes, I'm facing difficulties using this application in its speaking feature,......I have to try again....

Participants 2, 4, and 5: I am not facing difficulties because this application is easy to understand.......

Based on these findings, opinions are separated into two groups: those who have difficulty using this application to learn a language and those who do not. Participants 1 and 3 had issues with speech features or pronunciation. They must repeat the correct answer multiple times. This is consistent with the (Thornbury, 2002; Rohmatillah, 2014) theory, which claims that in addition to issues with memorizing a large vocabulary, they also struggle with pronunciation. This also demonstrates that mobile application has speed constraints. This is due to the slow performance of mobile devices. This is consistent with Praveen and Shalini's (2021) theory that mobile applications depend on the smartphone's condition.

Furthermore, participants 2, 4, and 5 had no difficulties. They claim that mobile learning applications are simple to utilize. This is consistent with Rogers and Price's (2009) theory, which claims that mobile devices are rapidly pushing the use of mobile learning in diverse educational contexts and prompting progress in learning activities. According to the data presented above, some students believe that mobile learning applications are simple to use. They had no problems

when utilizing it. However, certain limitations must be addressed in order to gain expertise with the application and make it easier to use. Moreover, according to the research demonstrated above, pupils also experience difficulty in memorizing and pronouncing a large amount of vocabulary.

The Use of Mobile Learning Applications in Learning Vocabulary in the Classroom
The next question was asked about whether this application should be used as the main tool for learning English vocabulary or as a complement. The following is the data from the interview results:

Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5: In my opinion, this application should only be used as a complement because if you want to learn English more deeply, what you learn is not only the vocabulary. But like tenses, then grammar, conversation.....

According to the interview data, the majority of participants merely utilize the mobile application as an accompaniment to their learning. This indicates pupils will still require additional media to learn English thoroughly. Participant 1 remarked that he needed more content not included in the application, like tenses, grammar, and dialogue. This demonstrates that more comprehensive application functionalities are required to add additional knowledge. This is a new limitation for the use of mobile learning applications in learning languages. As a result, it will serve as a resource for researchers who will create applications as learning aids.

CONCLUSION
The purpose of this study is to provide an answer to the question, "What are the EFL students' perceptions of using mobile learning applications in learning vocabulary acquisition?". From the discussion of Chapter 4, the researcher can draw the following conclusions: Students believe that the mobile learning application can aid in their vocabulary acquisition. Mobile learning applications are not only practical but also simple to use and comprehend. Additionally, mobile learning applications provide a variety of features that make studying easier than it is with conventional techniques. These characteristics act as a reference for spelling and pronunciation. According to the findings, pupils tend to be more engaged in learning vocabulary if the media employed is enjoyable and engaging, such as games. As a result, it is critical that they use the appropriate media to learn vocabulary. Furthermore, there is also a test feature to test students' vocabulary skills before and after learning. The researcher can also conclude that students demand more comprehensive content in addition to intuitive and entertaining application features from the research findings. As a result, not all of the pupils' material demands have been met by this application so that they can utilize this program in addition to their vocabulary learning.

Furthermore, based on the data mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that, despite the numerous benefits students experience when utilising mobile learning applications to learn vocabulary, there are some disadvantages. Among them are elements that are difficult to utilise and materials that are still quite complex. This will be useful information for future researchers in order to improve the application.

According to the above description, this study discovered various findings on pupil perspectives on the use of mobile learning applications. Aside from these findings, this study still has some limitations, because the participants in this study were only 10th-grade high school students, the level of participants was less diverse. Therefore, it is advisable to conduct a lengthier study for future researchers who will investigate the usage of mobile applications in learning vocabulary or about that subject. In order to provide pupils with a more incredible experience, it is recommended that future researchers be able to use more diverse participants..

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