Junior High School Students' Perception of Using Mobile Application to Learn English Pronunciation

Tasya Amanda Winzky [1*] Aswir [2]

[1, 2] Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia

* tasyawinzky16@gmail.com

Abstract

Technology into their teaching as well as how to assist students in making use of resources such as media and the internet to improve their learning of all four skills, particularly teaching and learning English pronunciation. Students are gradually motivated by their personal learning needs, including those that arise from greater mobility and traveling activities, during the initial period of mobile learning. Mobile learning, particularly Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), has become essential tools in the teaching and learning process as a result of this process. The purpose of this research is to look into junior high school students' perceptions of using a mobile app to learn English pronunciation. This study is an action research project that was carried out in one of Indonesia's Islamic Junior High Schools with first-grade students as participants (a total of 65 students). Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The results revealed that students perceived the use of mobile application in learning pronunciation positive and it can enhancing the participants' English pronunciation skills. The data analysis is shown by their positive feedbacks during the action implementation. The findings of this study suggest that various teaching media and tools be used to improve the English language skills of Junior High School students in the future. In this era, teachers are required to understand how to incorporate.

Keywords: *English, Learning Pronunciation, Mobile Application*

Introduction

English is one of the numerous languages spoken throughout the world, and it is an international language that is utilized in practically every aspect of everyday society. English is one of the subjects that has been found at all levels of education, from elementary school to the highest degree. As the study program is based on a foreign language, namely English, which is attained with four master's abilities, those are: speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, one of the indicators of quality of English study graduates is their ability to speak English well.

Speaking abilities are the most obviously observed of the four stated. Many evaluation markers, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, can be used to measure students' English-speaking competence. Speaking pronunciation is an important consideration since learning a new (foreign) language requires us to be able to express ourselves in line with the standards of sound language. According to Louma and Ertin (2014), speech evaluation is often associated with native speakers and pronunciation. Nunan (2014) adds that speaking necessitates someone who is linguistically competent, capable of appropriately articulating the sound of language, has a large vocabulary, and understands the grammatical component.

Pronunciation is an important element of being able to speak in any language. Many aspects, including as phonemes, stress, linking, rhythm, and intonation, must be produced accurately for intelligent speech to be produced. According to Pardede (2018), the mechanical aspects of speaking competence, in addition to grammar and vocabulary, include pronunciation. As a result, being able to pronounce words correctly is important for efficient communication. Without proper pronunciation, grammatical rules knowledge and a large vocabulary do not ensure that one can communicate effectively. He also claimed that with strong pronunciation, a speaker is comprehensible even if he makes errors in other speaking subskills (vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics); with bad pronunciation, understanding a speaker is difficult even if he is correct in other areas. In his research, he also mentioned that, "faulty pronunciation is one of the most prevalent reasons of misunderstanding."

The teacher guides students on how to pronounce words when they are learning to speak. It is well recognized that one of the basic skills of speaking that students must grasp in order to communicate effectively is pronunciation. According to Mairi (2016:162), strong speaking fluency improves one's English skills by making one sound slicker, more natural, and more impressive to the listener. It also allows for more efficient communication owing to the absence of speech interruptions. The manner in which a word or language is uttered is referred to as pronunciation. Ninik (2015) defines pronunciation as "the way a language is spoken, the way a word is spoken, the way a person speaks the words of a language." "Pronunciation is the way we say a word, especially in a way that is approved or widely understood," write Hornby, Farmand, and Pourgharib (2013:841). Students with good pronunciation will find it easier and more comfortable to speak English.

According to Hadi (2019), English language teaching in Asia, particularly in Indonesia, encounters a variety of difficulties for students. One of the issues with language teaching is a lack of practice. The students spent a lot of time learning about language theory, but they are afraid and avoid practicing. Nonetheless, mastery of the English language is one of the most important skills for a student to develop in order to build a better future for themselves. This is why teachers need a variety of teaching techniques and strategies to help students practice and improve their skills.

However, in this era, teachers are required to understand technology because the incorporation of such technologies into teaching and learning has been slower since educators need to understand how they may be effectively employed to assist various types of learning according to Yussof & Abas (2017) and to provide effective approaches and techniques for mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), a subset of mobile learning (mLearning). The mobile phone based on Ni & Yu (2015) is one such gadget that might play an important part in students' progress.

Because the writer discovered several difficulties that the children face, this research investigates the first-grade students of Junior High School when they enunciate words or phrases. In this study, researchers used a survey research methodology with 65 participants to learn about students' perceptions of mobile applications for learning English pronunciation. The findings of this study will be useful to teachers since they will suggest solutions based on students' perceptions. As a result, the teacher will know what the students require, and students will be able to express themselves freely during the learning process, particularly for enhancing pronunciation skills using mobile application.

Method

The primary goal of this study is to learn about Junior High School students' perceptions of learning English pronunciation through the use of a mobile application as a learning medium. According to Moloeng (2013), a qualitative approach was used in this study because it is a research that aims to understand phenomena of what research subject grasp, such as perception, motivation, and action, by describing them in words and language and employing a variety of scientific methods. Furthermore, the methodology used in this research is case studies, which is a research strategy in which the writer thoroughly examines a case in limited time and activity, and writer gather information using various data collection procedures based on the limited time. As a result, the writer used case study methods to collect data on how students perceived after using a mobile application as a learning media to learn pronunciation. The writer takes actions to achieve the goal of this study. First, the writer introduces students to the mobile application as a learning media and how it works. Following that, the writer allows students to experiment with the application and learn on their own. The writer will then provide material and provide assessment related to the material using the previously introduced mobile application. At the end of the session, the writer will distribute questionnaires to all of the students and conduct interviews with some of them after they used the mobile application.

The writer took place on an Islamic junior high school in Indonesia, the first-grade students are chosen as the participants. The total of participants are two classes which includes of 65 students to join the lesson and to fill the questionnaires. Then the writer chose 5 out of 65 students as the participants of the interview session which are recruited by voluntary. Both questionnaires and interview were used to determine students' perception of using mobile application to learn English pronunciation. The data were collected from 25 October 2021 until 8 November 2021.

Results

This study collected data using a questionnaire, which was served in Bahasa Indonesia to make it easier for students to understand the questions and to reduce student mis interpretation.

The results of the pronunciation learning questionnaire using the mobile application

No	Questions	Yes	No
1	Do you think learning English pronunciation is important?	65	0
2	Did it took so much time for you to understand the mobile application to learn English pronunciation?	12	53
3	Was it fun to learn pronunciation using mobile application?	58	7
4	Is it hard to use mobile application to learn English pronunciation?	18	47
5	Is it difficult for you to pronounce English words or phrases?	61	4
6	Do you think mobile application learning can help you to improve your pronunciation?	49	16
7	Do you find it easier to memorize how to pronounce words or phrases using mobile application?	51	14
8	Do you have problem to pronounce words or phrases with English accent?	63	2
9	Are you interested to learn more about how to pronounce words or phrases using mobile application?	49	16
10	Will you download the learning mobile application to improve your pronunciation after this?	44	21

The questionnaire was given to the 65 participants, and here are the results of all questions shows: (1) Question number 1 shows that the results all of the 65 participants who agreed that learning pronunciation is important in English subject. (2) In number two, the results show 53 participants can easily understand on how to use the mobile application that had been introduced while the rests 12 people are thinking that the application is a little bit confusing. (3) The result of question number 3 shows that there are total 58 participants agreed on using a mobile application was a fun way to learn English pronunciation which can be a new way to improve their English. (4) On number four, the results show that 18 participants found it hard to use the mobile application and the other 47 participants answered no. (5) On number 5, there are 61 participants agreed that they are struggling to pronounce English words and phrases though there are still 4 people who confidently answered no. (6) The results of question number 6 show that 49 participants agreed that mobile application learning can help them to improve their pronunciation skill, meanwhile the other 16 participants are not really sure with that. (7) The result of number 7 shows that they found it easier to memorize how to pronounce words or phrases for 51 participants, and 14 participants filled no. (8) On number eight, 63 participants agreed that the it is really hard to pronounce words or phrases using English accent, and 2 participants said it is not that hard for them. (9) On number nine shows that 49 participants are highly interested to learn more about pronunciation using mobile application to enhance their skills meanwhile the rests 16 participants are not interested with that. Lastly, (10) The last question shows that 44 participants answered yes to download the mobile application on their phone in order to learn more about it, and the 21 filled no to the question.

Discussion

Based on the data, it is possible to conclude that using a mobile application to improve pronunciation skill resulted in a positive response. It was provided as a result of the data in Table 1. The first discovery is that a mobile application can reduce their difficulties in learning pronunciation with an 85% positive response. Thus, mobile applications can make it easier for students to improve their skills. It can be a great tool for students learning activity in/out of class, as Vazquez (2014) notes that smartphones and other handheld devices are ideal for both distance and face-to-face learning teaching to students. Using a mobile application can help them learn how to pronounce words more easily. The second discovery is that mobile applications are an interesting medium to use because they can attract and interest students. It is an excellent medium for teaching pronunciation. This finding is completely consistent with the findings of Haryadi & Aprianoto (2020), who stated that the use of technology-based learning pronunciation, such as applications or software, allows students to study as long as they want and to self-train.

In conclusion, the majority of the students had a positive perception of the use of a mobile application to improve pronunciation skills. It is clear from the data derived from an open-ended questionnaire completed by students serving as respondents. The use of a mobile application makes it easier for students to learn how to pronounce words and phrases correctly because it provides audio and visual media that can attract them to follow and repeat the pronunciation. In investigating the students' perception of learning pronunciation through mobile application, the writer did the observation and interview which was carried out with 5 students among all the 65 participants to complete the research.

Students perception of pronunciation learning

Four out of five participants believe that learning vocabulary is an important aspect of learning English. When they are learning English in class, they must speak, write, listen, and read in English; practicing how to pronounce words will help them with their classroom activities. According to the student perception, as evidenced by the following statements: (1) Of course it is important, because everyday we are just listening to theories and do some exercise. Honestly, we lack of practice, (2) Yes, it is really important. It can make us easier to communicate without misunderstand., (3) "It is important. If we know how to pronounce the words and sentence properly, it can make us easier to understand everything when we are talking to each other., and (4) It might be hard for us to communicate if we can not pronounce everything properly, so it is really important in my opinion." From those statements, it can be concluded that students feel it is important to master pronunciation because pronunciation plays an essential role in communication since pronunciation mistakes can influence the clarity of the delivery of a person. Morley (in Keshavarz & Abu Bakar 2017) says that clarity of pronunciation is an element of the competency in communicating. One other student think that mastering pronunciation was not very important because with a lot of practice they can master other skills, as stated below: *"I don't think it's necessary, because memorizing vocabulary is way more important before we start to pronounce the words and practice speaking.* There is nothing wrong with their statement because it is true that we can also start to pronounce words by mastering the vocabulary first.

Students perception of mobile application as learning media

Based on the interview results, the writer discovered something intriguing in the mobile app for learning pronunciation: it provides short video and audio for them to learn, which was used by the students. It was consistent with the majority of students' perceptions as follows: (1) *It is so interesting because there are some short video that can make it even easier to imitate the sounds and the words. and (2) The lesson become less boring because I have fun to follow the audio to improve my pronunciation.* According to the students, in addition to finding learning pronunciation through mobile applications to be enjoyable, they also believe that using this application aids their learning because the features in the application are simple to use. This is demonstrated by the following student perceptions: (1) *It is totally easy, we only need to hear the sound then press to talk and the application will give us score, (2) Quite helpful so I feel more enjoy because it's like playing a game but learning, and (3) Pretty helpful, it is just like a new way to have a fun class.*

Conclusion

Based on the interview results, it was found in the first-grade students of Junior high school perceived the use of mobile application in learning pronunciation positive. The students thought and felt if the short videos and audios in the mobile application was useful and it helps them easier to understand how to pronounce words and phrases properly. The students also felt if the use of mobile application could help them in learning, comprehending, and memorizing pronunciation. They were not suppressed and hesitated while they learned the English pronunciation through the mobile application. Even, they felt fun because they could play while learning. From here we can conclude that teachers can consider this teaching media for their English class. Based on the student's perception, using the mobile application was fun, make them happy like playing games while studying and it is easy to use, there are videos and audios that they can play many times, it helps them more in learning.

Acknowledgment

References

Aprilani, D. N. (2021). Students' perceptionin learning English vocabulary through Quizlet. Journal of English Teaching, 7(3), 343–353.

Citrayasa, V. (2019). Junior High School Students'lived Experiences Of Learning English Using Busuu. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, *5*(2), 85-92.

Gracella, J., & Nur, D. R. (2020). Students' Perception of English Learning through YouTube Application. *Borneo Educational Journal (Borju)*, *2*(1), 20-35.

Grimus, M., & Ebner, M. (2015). Mobile Learning and STEM: First experiences in a senior high school in Ghana. In *Mobile Learning and Stem* (pp. 1-16). Routledge.

Hadi, M. S. (2019). The Use of Song in Teaching English for Junior High School Student. English Language in Focus (ELIF), 1(2), 107. https://doi.org/10.24853/elif.1.2.107-112

Hanifa, R. S., & Santoso, D. R. (2022). The Use of Rosetta Stone in Enhancing Junior High School Students' Pronunciation. *Ethical Lingua: Journal of Language Teaching and Literature*, *9*(2), 836-845.

Harris, David P. 1974. Testing English as Second Language. New York: Mc Graw hill Book Company.

Haryadi, S, H., & Aprianoto, A. (2020). Integrating "English Pronunciation" App Into Pronunciation Teaching: How It Affects Students' Participation and Learning. Journal of Languages and Language Teaching, 8(2), 202. https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v8i2.2551

Ila Amalia. (2020). the Application of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (Mall) in Teaching Pronunciation. Ijlecr - International Journal of Language Education and Culture Review, 6(2), 194–203. https://doi.org/10.21009/ijlecr.062.20

Jones, D. (2009). The pronunciation of English. Bibliolife.

Lauder, A. (2008). the Status and Function of English in Indonesia: A Review of Key Factors. Makara Human Behavior Studies in Asia, 12(1), 9. https://doi.org/10.7454/mssh.v12i1.128

Liu, Y. F., Hwang, W. Y., & Liu, Z. Y. (2021). Effects of mobile drama with authentic contexts on English learning. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, *59*(7), 1294-1318.

Novarita, N. (2021). The Students' Perception Toward Using Mobile Technology For Learning English. Edukasi Lingua Sastra, 19(1), 74–82. https://doi.org/10.47637/elsa.v19i1.326

Nur, M. R. O., Ardita, Y., & Oliviera, B. (2020). Digital native students' perspectives of online games use for learning grammar in English class at Avizena. Edu Private Course. *Jurnal Studi Guru Dan Pembelajaran*, *3*(1), 24-30.

Ramasari, M. (2017). Students Pronounciation Error Made in Speaking for General Communication. Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal, 1(1), 37–48. https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v1i1.32

Suryatiningsih, N. (2015). A Study on The Students' Ability in Pronouncing Diphthongs at STKIP Pgri Pasuruan. Jurnal Dimensi Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran, 3(1), 1–12.

Yanthi, W. (2021, November). The use of Cake Application in teaching Speaking to Senior High School's students. In *Bogor English Student and Teacher (BEST) Conference* (Vol. 2, pp. 165-170).