

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the topics related to the study such as the background of study, identification of problems, scope of problems, formulation of the problems, research objectives, research hypothesis, benefits of research, and definition of terms. The researcher will discuss these topics below:

A. Background of Study

Nowadays, English proficiency is in high demand, especially in the area of listening, which is a very important basic skill for its users. According to Kurita (2012), Listening is one of the four core English language abilities, alongside reading, writing, and speaking. Of course, to learn a foreign language, one of the abilities that must be mastered is listening. The reason is because by listening they are able to analyze or pick up a new thing through sounds that have meaning in language. Through this ability they can provide output in the form of either speaking or writing.

This research focuses on listening skills. Because of the need to provide understanding or improve the ability to listen in order to maximize the output produced. Listening is a fundamental talent that enables people to understand the material being described and gain greater linguistic experience, thus helping them to deliver output effectively. In addition, by listening, of course, they can learn or understand a new word through this ability.

In this study, the researcher used Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which is language learning that uses cell phones as learning media. As mobile phones are becoming increasingly popular among young students, it makes it easier on students' listening skills in the classroom. The use of smartphones will undoubtedly be an innovation for learning in Indonesia as it will change the habit of teenagers in using cell phones for learning rather than for entertainment, given how popular smartphones are nowadays. Smartphones have emerged as an important breakthrough in the world of education as a learning medium, offering various benefits and uses that can improve learning effectiveness.

Smartphones can be used as learning tools by creating instructional content such as movies, photos and interactive programs to help clarify difficult topics in various fields. During the COVID-19 pandemic, smartphones have been essential in replacing face-to-face schooling with online learning using programs such as Google Classroom and Zoom Meetings.

Smartphones can also be used as useful learning tools by installing multimedia apps such as WPS, U-Dictionary, and Photo math. The relationship between students and teachers can be improved by monitoring student activities and providing timely feedback through apps such as Zoom Meeting and Google Classroom. Thus, mobile phones have become an important instrument in improving the effectiveness of the learning process, especially in today's digital era.

Nowadays, the use of smartphones is growing so rapidly that almost everyone in the world, regardless of age, needs them in their daily lives. Syaharani (2023) revealed that global smartphone usage is expected to increase significantly by 2024, with approximately 7.2 billion users worldwide. Indonesia ranks fourth after China, India and the United States. This data shows how rapidly smartphone technology is developing, especially in Indonesia. If we look at the news or social media, we can see how widespread the use of cellphones is in Indonesia. Abdul Muslim (2024) also stated that smartphone users in Indonesia are expected to reach 194.26 million in 2024, up from 190 million in 2023.

After examining the smartphone environment globally, and specifically in Indonesia, let's look at the growth of smartphones in the province of East Java. The population of East Java is much higher than other provinces. According to the Badan Pusat Statistik (2023) the population of East Java based on the results of the 2020 Long Form Population Census conducted in June 2022 was recorded at 41.15 million people.

In the last two years, the population of East Java has increased by around 480 thousand people with a growth rate of around 0.59 percent per year. With a population of around 49.4 million, West Java is the most populous province when compared to East Java. From this data, if we relate it to smartphone use, of course it will have a very large frequency.

According to the Badan Pusat Statistik (2023) the percentage of the population in the age group of children to teenagers in East Java who used

a mobile phone in the last three months reached various levels in each district/city. In general, the level of smartphone use is quite high, with examples in Trenggalek District at 79.39% and in Ponorogo District reaching 83.48%. This data shows that the majority of East Java residents have adopted the use of cellular phones in their daily lives.

Several studies have shown that mobile devices have been used in various aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary teaching (Zhang et al., 2011), grammar and reading (Wang, 2013), and grammar and writing (Li, 2013). In addition, mobile devices are also utilized in the development of listening and speaking skills (D. Kim et al., 2013).

From some of these studies, it can certainly be seen that the use of mobile devices as learning media will be a good innovation for education in Indonesia. The reason that mobile devices can be used in Indonesia is because the use of mobile phones in Indonesia is very high, including among teenagers and children, especially in East Java. Zaenal et al. (2023) state that the majority of teenagers have smartphone dependence with a percentage of 61% and the remaining 39% are quite normal users.

This is the reason behind as teenagers are capable of low self-control and hence incapable of controlling time spent using a mobile phone. Based on the available data, it is evident that a significant number of Indonesians, particularly those in their student years, own cellphones. This presents a promising opportunity for us to encourage the use of smartphones as a learning tool.

In practice, we use the ESL Course app, a smartphone-based English listening learning tool. The ESL Course app is not widely known or used by many people, but its features are quite useful for learning on listening skills, and it is free to use. There are some premium features, but the free features are enough to learn and improve listening skills. ESL Course is available for free on the Play Store for mobile phones. Since the ESL Course program includes a large amount of audio, it is ideal for improving students' listening skills. Not many people know about the ESL Course app, but it has received positive feedback from many users, which suggests that it would be an excellent choice for an innovative learning medium.

This time, the researcher took the city of Trenggalek as a research target, especially in the Durenan area. The researcher chose Trenggalek district because it is a coastal district that is geographically far from the city center and with a mountainous contour that makes it difficult to access educational facilities. Trenggalek district is also a district that is still understudied. We may observe and draw conclusions from the features that encourage teenagers to use cellphones, such as convenient internet access and reasonably priced locations to purchase credit or smartphones, even though we are unable to quantify the number of students who use smartphones.

Teenagers who are also students find it easier to utilize smartphones because of these considerations. The researcher decided to conduct research

at SMK Islam 2 Durenan, a school located in Kendalrejo Village, Durenan District, Trenggalek Regency. The reason the researchers chose SMK Islam 2 Durenan is that, in previous studies, many have used high schools or junior high schools as research sites, and because the location of the school is located in the Trenggalek district, which is still far from the city center, it requires innovation in learning media.

SMK Islam 2 Durenan is an excellent school that prepares all students to face the world of work, which requires proficiency in English. However, when the researcher made observations at the school, the researcher saw a problem where many students still had difficulty in mastering listening skills. The researcher came up with an experimental sample to try using the ESL Course application on smartphones as a teaching innovation for students in the phenomenon.

As researcher considered this issue, researcher attempted to capitalize on the phenomenon of smartphone use, which presents a great chance in my opinion to use cellphones as a teaching tool. So researcher want to conduct research with the title “Effectiveness of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) Through ESL Course Application on Listening Skill of Eleventh Grade at SMK Islam 2 Durenan Trenggalek”.

B. Identification of Problems

Based on the background described above, several problems that exist in the classroom can be identified as follows:

1. The majority of teachers, especially those who are elderly, are unable to utilize learning media using smartphones.
2. The learning method used is only the lecture method.
3. Teachers only focus on one learning model without implementing other more innovative learning models and media.
4. Students feel bored and often sleepy when teaching and learning activities take place, and some play on their cellphones.
5. In English learning, teachers are less able to provide learning models that students like.
6. Lack of use of media such as applications that can make learning interesting.

C. Scope of Problems

Every research requires limiting the problem to avoid widening the problem or differences in interpretation so that the discussion is more focused. The limitations of the problem in this research are as follows:

1. This research was conducted on class XI odd semester students in Islamic Vocational School 2 Durenan Academic Year 2024/2025.
2. Effectiveness of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) Through the ESL Course Application on Listening Skill.
3. The material used in this research practice is the material in the ESL Course application, namely audio as a listening improvement exercise.

D. Formulation of The Problem

Based on the problem identification and problem limitations above, the problem formulation in this research is:

1. How effective is the use of the ESL Course application based on Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in improving the listening skill of eleventh-grade students at SMK Islam 2 Durenan, Trenggalek?
2. Is there a significant difference in students' listening ability before and after using the ESL Course application based on MALL?

E. Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the problems listed, this research has the following objectives:

1. To measure how effective is the use of the ESL Course application based on Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in improving the listening skill of eleventh-grade students at SMK Islam 2 Durenan, Trenggalek.
2. To know about the significant difference in students' listening ability before and after using the ESL Course application based on MALL.

F. Research Hypothesis

Based on the research problem "Is the use of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) through ESL Course application effective for the listening skill of eleventh grade students at SMK Islam 2 Durenan?"

The researcher formulates a hypothesis as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (H_0):

The use of the ESL Course application based on Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is not effective in improving the listening skill of class XI students at Islamic Vocational School 2 Durenan Trenggalek.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a):

The use of the ESL Course application based on Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is effective in improving the listening skills of class XI students at Islamic Vocational School 2 Durenan Trenggalek.

G. Benefits of Research

1. Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, this research is expected to be the right solution by using smartphones as a learning medium, by using the ESL Course application for learning in schools as a form of innovation for teachers or educators and to increase students' interest in learning in English subjects.

2. Practical Benefits

- a. For Researchers

For researchers, they hope to be able to utilize experience in preparing proposals so as to gain additional knowledge, especially regarding the use of learning media which can increase students' interest in learning.

b. For Students

Practical benefits for students, it is hoped that with this innovation in learning media, teaching and learning activities will be more interesting, less boring, create an interactive, more enjoyable classroom atmosphere and increase students' understanding of the material and improve their abilities.

c. For Teachers

- 1) Provide a means of knowledge about learning media innovation.
- 2) Provide new experiences for applying learning media in learning activities.
- 3) As a reference for selecting learning media used by teachers to improve the learning process, make classroom facilities interactive, and increase students' interest and abilities.

d. For Schools

This learning media was developed with the hope that it can provide new innovations for educational institutions in developing various learning media and can be used to add learning media references that can be used by schools in the learning process.

H. Definition of Terms

So that there are no mistakes in understanding the terms listed in this research, the following is an explanation or definition of the terms contained in this research:

1. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Rahmawati et al. (2023) state that Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an approach to language learning that helps students with their language abilities by using mobile devices, such as smartphones. MALL uses a range of apps and mobile device functionalities to practice language skills, including grammar, pronunciation, and comprehension. In its use, MALL uses smartphones and available applications to help students learn languages, such as improving speaking, listening and writing skills.

MALL, then, is a cutting-edge and successful method of teaching language in the digital age that can assist students in improving their language proficiency in an engaging and dynamic manner.

2. ESL Course

ESL Course is an Android application that can be downloaded from the Play Store on smartphones. ESL Course is an application with numerous fascinating features that can help users learn English and improve their language skills.

In general, the ESL course is a little-known application, but it has a lot of potential as a learning tool for students to learn English, particularly on their listening skill.

3. Listening

According to Y.-S. G. Kim & Pilcher (2016), listening comprehension is the ability to grasp spoken language at the discursive

level, which includes conversations, stories (i.e., narratives), and informational oral texts, and incorporates the processes of extracting and building meaning.

Listening is receiving the speaker's words and building on them. Listening is vital in English learning because students must first hear English in order to speak it. Furthermore, it is a skill that requires more effort from certain people than others.

Hearing is essentially the capacity to detect sounds, whether they are words, music, or other sounds. This skill is crucial for learning English since it's a fundamental that students need to acquire.