Mobile-assisted English learning in Indonesian high schools in the covid-19 outbreak: Do students feel empowered?

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Abstract

Mobile-assisted English learning is nowadays trending during Covid-19 pandemics. A number of studies have investigated positive contribution of mobile-assistant to English language learning enhancement. However, students' voice about their position in the learning process is still less discussed. Hence, this current study aimed at describing students' sense of empowerment during their English learning in Covid-19 pandemics. Designed in descriptive survey, this research received 772 out of 1000 voluntarily respondents' feedback from EFL students around Cirebon-City, Indonesia. The results reveal that the enactment of mobile-assisted language learning has positive impact on the students' sense of empowerment. The findings also reveal whatsapp is mostly popular situated in the English distanced classes during the Covid-19 pandemics. The findings suggest the importance of mobile-assisted language learning to be officially promoted in the contexts of Indonesian language learning.

Key words: mobilephone, mobile-assisted language learning, empowerment, EFL students

INTRODUCTION

Mobile-assisted language learning has been enacted worldwide (see, e.g. Zhonggen, Ying, Zhichun, & Wentao, 2018). In language learning, mobile-assisted language learning has been investigated by Botero, Questier, Zhu, & Garc (2018), Cheng & Chen (2019) and Hwang & Fu, 2018; Wrigglesworth (2019) and is challenged time-to-times (Tavakoli, Lotfi, & Biria, 2019). The results show that the enactments of mobile-asssisted language learning successfully provide students security and comfort in their language learning. As the results, the students' learning achievement is confirmed improved. At the same time, due to the dynamics of learning settings, investigation of widen contexts is still on call (Zhonggen et al., 2018). To this extent, this current research takes place. A research question guides this study is formulated "Do students feel empowered in the their mobile-assisted English class?

METHODS

Designed in descriptive survey, this research received 772 out of 1000 voluntarily respondents' feedback from EFL students around Cirebon-City, Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Survey shows various mobile platforms were used in English classroom instruction across research fields. This result indicates there is no fixed studies confirm which mobile-platform dominates the classroom. In terms of language instruction, e.g. English, choices of mobile-assisted learning instruction platform is assumed to be influenced by numerous factors, e.g. teachers, students, and curriculum.

Chart 1. Mobile-assisted English instruction platform across the research field

n=772
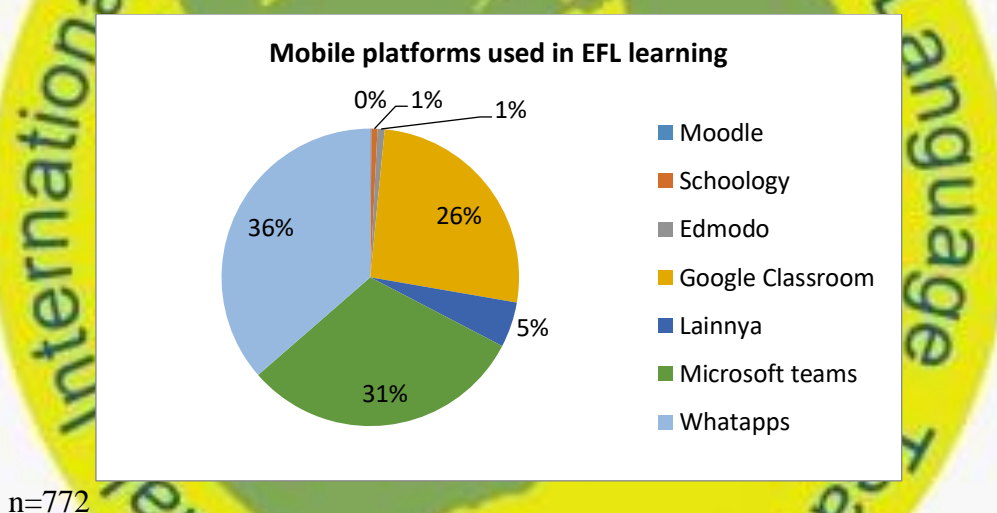
Portrait of student empowerment in Mobile-assisted English learning

Table 1. Student responses in mobile-assisted English learning

No.	Indicators	%
1	Having ability to find alternative ways for task completion	67.4
2	Having freedom to opt tasks	58.6
3	Having ability for negotiating of task completion	46.9
4	having ability for contributing to teacher's decision due to task completion	26.8
5	Having feeling of meaninful learningg	60.2
6	Having sufficient competence required for task completion	59.8
7	Feeling success in learning	45.2
8	Feeling confident for the task completion	37.7

Overal findings indicate the students felt less empowered in terms of the enactment of mobile-assisted English learning. Having sense of empowerment is crucial for building critical pedagogy. As seen in the tables, percentage of student perceives scores are less than 50 %. It implies the syllabus and classroom are not well negotiated with students. In this case, the students are voiceless and the lecturer tends to dominate the decision makings. In the long terms learning, this kind of instruction leads to one-way show off and classroom will be the teachers' not the students'. In short, teacher-centered learning instead of student-centered learning (Misdi, Hartini, Farijanti, & Wirabhakti, 2013). In short, it is important to involve students in designing classroom instruction and put them in task completion to empower them (Misdi, Rozak, Mahaputri, & Rozak, 2019).

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

Even the enactment of mobile-assisted English learning potential for empower language students, however, the findings indicate the students are still less appreciated. Thus, further research needs to reveal factors students' involvement in learning engagement and design.

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