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STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES OF ONLINE ENGLISH LEARNING APPLICATIONS USE IN ENHANCING THEIR SPEAKING ABILITY AT SYSTEM INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

Abstract

One of the factors that influenced in language learning was digital or online applications use. Nowdays, students are commonly use their devices to enhance their language ability, especially in speaking ability. This research was conducted at English class of System Information Department students, Institute of Science and Technology of Padang Lawas Utara. First semester of System Information Department students were the respondents of this research. The survey investigated the following aspects, namely: preferences, actual use, ease of use, experience, and learning opportunities. Moreover, this research also investigated the students to share their positive and negative benefits of online English applications use in the classroom. There were 52 students completed the survey. The results showed that most of students viewed positively responding to the potential utilization and integration of online English applications use. However, there are some students expressed that the use of online English applications in language learning, especially to enhance their speaking ability did not give an efficient or effective method and did not get significant effect on their speaking ability in language learning class.

Keywords: *System Information Students, Online English Apps, Language Learning, Speaking Ability*

INTRODUCTION

System Information Department is one of the departments at Computer Science Faculty, Institute of Science and Technology of Padang Lawas Utara which its vision characterized by superiority in system information based on entrepreneurships. This department involves their activities to operate the computer, to run the systems and programs in computer, to manage and process the database, even to create, to develop, or to modify an application/program, and so on. As for, the language preferences that commonly used to run the whole of the activities related to this department is using English. Meanwhile, English is a foreign language for students of System Information department. They realized that they can't connected to the steps that should be passed when running a system/program in a computer. It caused by misunderstanding and confusing on the commands which are instructed in the computer. Besides, this department is demanded to have a good oral presentation skill to introduce their products because one of the graduate profiles of this department is related to technopreneurship. This amazing condition let them to direct their effort to study about bases English as preparation in the future. Therefore,

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the students prefer to use online English applications to enhance their ability in English, especially speaking English. This learning method hopes that through online English applications can create students' interactive communication and have a good engagement between students.

Regarding to the literature of educational settings, many educators begin to use digital devices such as online applications to enhance, to engage, and to exposure students' ability in language learning. In foreign language learning and teaching, digital devices have been shown many impacts on students' involvement in language learning. Park, et.al., (2012) and Hueroes (2010) stated that there were the differences between students that taught by learning technologies such as mobile learning and learning management systems with the students who were not taught by variety of technologies. Then, some scientists have used the model in connection with online game use to enhance students' ability in language learning (Bourgonjon, et.al., 2010). Moreover, there are some norms and social influences found in which had a massive direct and significant effect on the intentions and attitudes of digital devices users (Nur, et.al., 2020).

Link to the previous explanation, this research aims to investigate the students' perspectives of online English applications use at System Information Department in order to enhance their speaking ability in language learning class.

METHOD

This research conducted at first semester of System Information Department students, Institute of Science and Technology of Padang Lawas Utara. In 2022, there were 52 students enrolled at System Information Department in Institute of Science and Technology of Padang Lawas Utara. There were 27 male and 25 female students. Previously, they graduated from many vary senior high schools in Padang Lawas Utara and out of Padang Lawang Lawas Utara regency.

The first part of instrument in this research was testing students' perspectives of various online English applications which is proposed by Bourgonjon (2010). There are four aspects assessed to gain the students' perspectives of online English applications use, namely: learning opportunities, experience, preference, and also ease of use. The internal reliability coefficients for the original scale equal to 0.70 by using Likert-type scale, where scale 1 up to 5 defined as strongly disagree up to strongly agree.

In order to meet the data required in this research, the researcher adapted and modified the instrument to find out students' perspectives of online English applications use. In addition, there some items changed to meet students' cultural needs of technologies use such as online English apps (about 22 items). It aimed to have an intense preference to stay neutral on the issues in order to avoid confrontation (Carless, 2012).

The second part of instrument in this study contain a frequency scale (about 10 items) which refers to investigate the use of kinds online English applications which is also proposed by Bourgonjon, et.al., 2010). All the items have ranged from scale 1 (never) to scale 5 (very frequently). The researcher was adding two-open ended questions which is about students' perspectives of positive and negative of online English applications use in language learning at System Information Department.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
A. Results
Students' Perspectives on Online English Applications
1. Ease of Use of Online English Apps

Students of system information program were mostly agreeable with items concern to ease of use of online English applications. Most of them were strongly agreed with all the statements on this questionnaire. 73% of students strongly agreed that they know how to use online English applications in English class, over 62% shows strongly agreed with items in number 6 (67.0%) that shows they feel it is easy to use online English applications in the

classroom. Then, the result of the item number 7 (65.6) shows that students argue that their interaction with the applications in the classroom would be easy to learn and to understand. Moreover, the result item number 3 (64.8%) which means that the participant think that online English apps would enhance their effectiveness in learning English, especially speaking ability. Finally, first item reached about 62.0% which shows that in their perspectives of online English Apps able to improve their performance in English class, when they are speaking by using English. These results are not surprising due to the students' preferences in accessing online English apps as media in their language learning and teaching activities (Nur, 2018). Amazingly, participants agreed the least with the items number 4 (54.5%), it means the rest of them think that   online English apps would help them to achieve better scores in speaking test. The last one is the result of item number 2 (57.2%) shows that students think about the power of online English apps will enhance their productivity in the classroom when they are learning speaking.

2. Learning opportunities

The result shows that most of participants strongly agreed with item number 8 (79.0%). Then, about 61% of students are strongly agreed with items number 9 (63.5%), items number 10 (60.7%), items number 12 (67.5%), and items number 14 (64.5%). Only 53.5% agreed or strongly agreed with items number 11. In addition, students felt strongly agreed that online English apps would give them any experiment with knowledge. It regards to the performance and learning productivity, however, it is less enthusiastic. Online English Apps in Indonesia are often connected with others students from other regions, even students in abroad whose English as their native/first language. Hence, most of the participants believed that online English apps offer huge opportunities to interact with other students in a wide area.

3. Experiences with Online English Apps

The majority of respondents (76.4%) in the item number 15 stated that they liked to use online English apps with criteria Often (66.3%) in number 16. Over 65% of item number 18 shows that most of the students did not describe their selves as users of those apps, and over 50% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with item number 19 (57.7%) which shows that they were linked and interacted with others students by different types of online English apps. Some of the students use the most common online English apps such as: Busuu, Eng Breaking, Hello Talk, Speaky, Tandem, MyLanguageExchange, HiNative, and Ablo apps. In addition, the result of item number 17 is 56.2%. Connecting to others by usning an online English apps is a new activity and a new habit foor them. Therefore, it is a potential massive problem for the students and the lecturer to be solved. Overall, students feel surprisingly and amazingly to use those apps in their language learning activities.

Moreover, about 61% of students did not describe themselves as users of apps despite 68% admitting to use online English apps as often criteria. Thinking about that negative connotations makes the respondents have a barrier to use any online language learning apps. In fact, no matter how many frequencies they used the apps and whatever the types of the online language learning they prefer to use, people around them still claim them as users.

4. Preference for Online English Apps about Language Learning

Respondents were amazingly agreeable with all statements on the preferences questionnaire. About 76.0% of the participants were enthusiastic about using English online apps. Then, they took the advantages of online apps utilizes through learning process (71.6%), and they could to learn grammar at once they learn conversations (69.2%).

5. Using English Online Apps in Daily Speaking

Students of System Information department were reported as a huge of users in using English Online Apps in Institute of Science and Technology of Padang Lawas Utara. It has been proven by the result of questionnaire. Respondents recognized that they played many types of

English Online Apps to encourage their English skills. It described that almost 61% of the respondents used their smartphones occasionally, frequently, or very frequently, meanwhile about 55.5% of them used personal computers at home and at campus occasionally, frequently, and very frequently. This report took regularly in a week. The reason underlined to this case were the recognition of using smartphones with iOS and Android operating system were the most frequently used device and software for English Online Apps. Addition, almost of System Information department students also reported that they used English online apps more than three hours per week when they have an English class, or the task of English subject after having class.

B. Discussions
Potential The Positive and Negative Benefits of Using English Online Apps

All of the respondents completed the open-ended questions given by the researchers. Most of the respondents stated that the enjoyment and motivation as the potential benefits of using the English online apps in English learning, especially in learning speaking. Students can learn how the native pronounce well the word by word. That's why the students through their activities in an enjoyable way. They would be more comfortable practicing their English and can fix their mistakes as many as they can. In addition, students believed that through those online apps they can increase their language proficiency, and they got their interest and enthusiasm to learn English more. In other words, they are able to connect to the natives and many vary regions in Indonesia which motivates them to learn. The last but not least, students recognized that English online apps were effective learning tools to use. No matter how much they did the mistakes but they can repeat the materials and pronunciation as many times as they need.

However, the students of System Information department ignored some important process in their language learning. Most of the students preferred like to learn and focused only on one English skill and forget others. For example, because of practicing their English via available apps by natives, they forget to learn grammar. Meanwhile, grammar is necessary to build a good sentence in English. The students learn the speaking instantly without knowing how to build the sentences to be a good speaking and reading.

Moreover, they rarely to attend the class. Because they have found out what they wanted as the learning outcome of English subject. According to the students, speaking is the most important skill to learn because it related to the needed skill in the workplace and their field. They can communicate with others from other countries to have a cooperation companies. In other words, they did not need to have a meet up class because they can learn English instantly in an enjoyable way rather than in conventional way (classroom). Furthermore, the lesson plan most contained to and emphasized in the grammar than speaking skill where as in the end of the learning required one of the expected learning outcomes, namely speaking skill. It is worried that it decreases the opportunities to communicate with peers and lecturer/instructors in language learning.

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CONCLUSION

It was the purpose of this research to investigate the students' perspective in using of the English online apps to enhance their speaking ability at System Information department. The results of this research contribute to the researchers' and participants' understanding of System Information department students' acceptance of English Online Apps in foreign language learning, especially speaking skill. It can be concluded that the integration and utilization of English Online Apps are the alternatives strategies in English class. However, many of the

students have the different way to view this case, one of the views is by using those apps, students ignored some the stretching points, namely grammar not really important to able to speak English. In other words, English online apps were effective and efficient, however, students emphasized on one skill only and ignored other basics because they claimed they have gain what they want instantly in an enjoyable way.

Some limitations need to be pointed of this study. Data collected in this study are specially limited at one department in Institute of Technology and Science of Padang Lawas Utara. Then, many students may be processed in the many ways in other formal or informal academics out of in the classroom. For example, a few of students may take some courses outdoors and have many trainings and practices to improve their English proficiency. In means, many variables that potentially influence the results of this study that could not be avoided and investigated more. The last but not least, variable of this research limited on students' perspective of English Online Apps and speaking skill. There are many English skills that can be investigated to have more results for the next research.

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