SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (SDL) THROUGH MOBILE ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (MALL) IN LEARNING SPEAKING OUT-OF-CLASS – THE USE OF DUOLINGO, CAKE, ELSA SPEAK, MODLY, AND BUSUU APPLICATION

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, students need more time to improve speaking skill by learning speaking out-of-class using mobile application This research aims to analyze the process of students Self-Directed Learning (SDL) using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), and to identify the students' reasons in using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) to build Self-Directed Learning (SDL) in supporting learning speaking out-of-class at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta in academic year 2022/2023. The research method applied descriptive qualitative method. The research collecting data used interview, and observation technique. The result of this research showed that 2nd semester students who used MALL have structured process of SDL which deals with; (a) The students determine learning need; (b) The students determine goals from their needs and define structured objectives to accomplish their goals using a mobile application; (c) The students choose learning materials on the mobile application; (d) The students do learning activity using mobile application; (e) The students evaluate their learning progress using mobile applications as their self-assessment; (f) The students reflect on their learning progress as their self-reflection. Then students' reasons in using mobile application in learning speaking which deals with; (a) Mobile application is flexible in place; (b) Mobile application is flexible in time; (c) Mobile application has clear instruction, enjoyable, effective, and helpful in learning speaking; (d) Mobile application has rich multimedia features that can help students to do speaking practice; (e) The English learning material is available in the application.
Keywords: Self-Directed Learning (SDL), Mobile Assisted Languge Learning (MALL), Learning Speaking Out-Of-Class

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, the landscape of English language learning has been transformed by technology-based tools and resources. Online platforms and apps have made it possible for learners to access educational materials anytime and anywhere, breaking the barriers of traditional classroom settings. These digital tools offer a wide range of interactive and engaging content, such as video lessons, quizzes, and games, which cater to different learning styles and preferences. Additionally, social media and online communities provide opportunities for learners to practice English with native speakers and other learners from around the world, enhancing their communication skills and cultural understanding.

One of the most innovative approaches to digital language learning is Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL leverages mobile devices like Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), smartphones, and MP3 players to facilitate language learning (Hashim et al., 2017). These devices offer the flexibility to learn on the go, making it easier for learners to integrate language practice into their daily routines. Apps designed for MALL provide various features, such as interactive exercises, pronunciation guides, and real-time feedback, which help learners improve their language skills effectively. Moreover, the portability and convenience of mobile devices enable learners to utilize spare moments throughout the day for language learning, thereby increasing their exposure and practice time.

English learning does not always take place in formal classes. In many cases, english is learned in informal situations outside the classes. Out-of-Class Language Learning (OCLL) refers to informal learning activities conducted outside the classroom. These activities are undertaken by students either for language learning purposes or purely for enjoyment (Ibatova, 2019). Speaking, a productive skill, is frequently practiced in OCLL. Research by Lumb (in Haryanti, 2018) indicates that Indonesian university students often engage in speaking activities outside the classroom to learn English. Yulianti et al. (2021) found that students

predominantly use audio-visual media for self-directed learning in speaking English. Thus, OCLL activities, supported by technology, provide opportunities for students to improve their English speaking skills through various suitable activities.

Self-Directed Learning (SDL) is a key component of OCLL. SDL empowers English language learners to take charge of their learning goals by making independent choices in their learning processes outside the traditional teacher-centered classroom (Arndt, 2017). SDL is an informal learning approach where learners determine their own needs, processes, evaluations, and goals. It is crucial for adult learners or higher education students, who spend significant time on learning projects, fostering independent learning styles (Loeng, 2020).

In Indonesia, higher education institutions support SDL through regulations like the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) Number 3 Year 2020, which mandates SDL for university students. This regulation encourages adult learners to actively engage in SDL outside the classroom, as their educational obligations are complex and substantial (Yusran et al., 2022). Adult English learners often prefer Self-Directed Learning (SDL) because it offers greater autonomy and flexibility, allowing them to tailor their learning experiences to fit their unique needs, schedules, and learning goals. Unlike traditional classroom settings, SDL empowers learners to take control of their educational journey, choosing the materials, methods, and pace that best suit their personal circumstances and preferences. This approach is particularly appealing to adults who may have work, family, and other responsibilities that make fixed schedules and rigid structures challenging. Furthermore, SDL encourages lifelong learning and intrinsic motivation, as adults can focus on topics and skills that are directly relevant to their personal and professional lives, making their learning more meaningful and immediately applicable.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an educational approach that leverages mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and PDAs to facilitate language learning (Hashim et al., 2017). It allows learners to access language learning resources and engage in language practice anytime and anywhere, enhancing their learning experience through the use of technology. It serves as an effective medium for supporting SDL in English learning. It caters to language learners' needs by promoting the use of mobile devices (Hashim et al., 2017). In today's smartphone era, numerous applications facilitate MALL, such as self-learning apps, translation tools, and dictionaries. University students, in particular, are the primary users of MALL (Burston, 2014).

At Raden Mas Said Islamic University of Surakarta, EFL students in the English Language Education Study Program utilize SDL with mobile applications to learn English, especially speaking, outside formal classes. These applications aid in improving speaking skills and fostering independent learning (Kusmaryani et al., 2019). Second-semester students in the 2022/2023 academic year used multiple mobile applications for SDL to learn speaking outside formal classes. However, only a few applications provided the necessary materials, and only some students used quiz features for evaluation, such as those in Duolingo as a free language-learning app that offers a gamified approach to numerous language education, Cake as a free English learning app that focuses on improving speaking and listening skills through video-based lessons and daily expressions, Elsa Speak as an AI-powered app designed to help users improve their English pronunciation and speaking skills through personalized feedback, Modly as a language learning app that focuses on conversational practice and vocabulary building through interactive exercises and lessons, and Busuu as a language-learning app that combines interactive courses with social features, allowing users to learn and practice a language with the help of native speakers.

This research builds on previous studies to support its findings. Humaira & Hurriyah (2018) focused on SDL processes among high school students learning English outside the classroom. Mikeladze et al. (2020) investigated the beliefs and behaviors of Georgian adult

English language learners in autonomous learning. Ramadhani (2022) analyzed undergraduate students' reasons for using mobile devices in SDL to enhance listening skills. In contrast, this research aims to analyze the SDL processes of second-semester students in the English Language Education Study Program at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta using mobile applications to support learning speaking outside formal classes. The study seeks to understand students' SDL processes through MALL and their reasons for using mobile applications as support tools in learning speaking outside formal classes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used qualitative research method to describe student Self-Directed Learning (SDL) using mobile application in supporting learning speaking out-of-class of 2nd semester students of English Language Education Study Program at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta in academic year 2022/2023. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative design to analyze of students SDL processes and identify students' reason in using mobile application as supporting media to build SDL in learning speaking out of formal speaking class based on data obtained based on objective facts and circumstances in depth to obtain rich data and a comprehensive understanding. Qualitative description is a qualitative design that produces clear direct but rich descriptions of an experience, perception, or event using common language through simple interpretations during the data analysis process (Suardi, 2017).

The participants of this research were 12 students from 2nd semester students of English Language Education Study Program of 2C class at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta in academic year 2022/2023 who used self-learning application (such as ELSA Speak, Cake, Duolingo, and so on). The data were obtained from students through interview and observation. The in-depth interview chose by the researcher. The aim of semi-structured interviews in this research was to know process students SDL using mobile applications and students' reason using mobile application to build SDL in learning speaking out-of-class openly and widely. The researcher used the interview guide which form of open-ended questions with sub-questions which developed according to the circumstances of the interview. Observation is done by observing the activities of the participants in their mobile application with the video recording which will record by the participants. The researcher used field note to take the important data from the observation. The field note used to conduct the data about the process of students SDL using mobile applications in learning speaking out of formal speaking class.

In achieving, credibility, and validity of the finding, the researcher use triangulation of method. Triangulation of method is the triangulation tecnique to get data from the same source of data using more than one method which can include observation,interview, document, and so on (Denzin, 2015). The researcher used interview, and observation for the same data simultaneously to got a deeper understanding of informants towards their SDL using mobile applications in learning speaking out-of-class and not to seek the truth about the topic. The data has been obtained will be analyzed used theory from Miles and Huberman (2014), there are condensation data, display data, and conclusion drawing and verifying.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
1. Students Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Process using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Supporting Learning Speaking Out-Of-Class

From interviews, and observations, the students have structured SDL process that includes need analysis, goals and objectives, learning materials, learning strategies, self-assessment, and self-reflection.

1.1 Need Analysis

The first process identified in Self-Directed Learning (SDL) among students is the analysis of their needs. During this need analysis phase, students assess their current language requirements and anticipate future language demands. According to the students, speaking is one of the most critical English skills they need to prioritize. They emphasize the importance of speaking skills because it enhances their overall English proficiency, enables effective communication with others, boosts their self-esteem as English graduates, and increases their confidence.

Moreover, the emphasis on speaking skills stems from the students' recognition of its potential benefits. Interviews with students revealed that mastering speaking skills can lead to greater job opportunities, facilitate limitless communication for relationship building, support personal development, and prove useful in various societal contexts. This aligns with expert opinions, which suggest that students need to communicate clearly and correctly in English because it is vital in the international arena and can open doors to a better future (Humaira & Hurriyah, 2018).

1.2 Goals and Objectives

- Goals

In prioritizing and focusing on speaking skills, students set specific goals to deepen their learning experience. These goals stem from their perceived need for improved speaking abilities. The research revealed that students aim to enhance their communication skills, refine their existing speaking proficiency, and support their educational and professional aspirations. These goals align with broader objectives in self-directed learning (SDL), which include improving language skills for academic purposes, engaging in communication with foreigners, pursuing personal interest in spoken English, advancing their careers, and facilitating travel (Mikeladze et al., 2020). Furthermore, Ramadhani (2022) found that students engage in SDL using mobile devices not only to enhance their language skills but also to boost their academic performance.

- Objectives

To achieve their goals, students outline specific objectives and leverage mobile applications as learning tools. After identifying their learning needs and setting goals, students find that self-learning applications make it easier to reach their objectives in learning speaking. The study found that the most popular apps among students are Cake, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Modly, and Busuu. Each of these applications offers unique features that cater to different aspects of language learning. For example, Duolingo provides a gamified learning experience with levels, grammar tips, and AI-driven feedback. Cake offers video-based lessons and pronunciation practice with AI recognition. ELSA Speak focuses on pronunciation with detailed feedback from a speech analyzer, while Modly and Busuu offer conversational practice and structured learning paths aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Students often face potential problems in their learning journey, such as difficulty in maintaining motivation, identifying appropriate materials, and tracking their progress. These apps help mitigate these issues by providing structured learning paths, instant feedback, and engaging, interactive content. For instance, Duolingo's gamified approach keeps learners motivated with rewards and leaderboards, while ELSA Speak's detailed feedback helps students identify and correct pronunciation errors. These features collectively make the learning process more manageable and effective, helping students overcome common hurdles in language acquisition.

1.3 Selecting Materials

In the SDL process, after determining their needs, goals, and objectives, students select their learning materials independently. The research found that students use self-learning applications to access appropriate materials. Each mobile application provides learning materials in different ways to suit students' needs. For example, Duolingo offers materials structured by learning levels with accompanying guidebooks that include grammar tips and useful phrases. Cake allows students to select materials via the Speak feature or follow a pre-arranged learning track. ELSA Speak provides materials tailored to the learner's skill level through the Path feature, while Modly offers topic-based materials and conversational practice through the Chatbot feature. Busuu aligns its materials with the CEFR stages, offering progressively challenging content.

Beyond mobile applications, students also use other resources such as textbooks, e-books, novels, dictionaries, materials from lecturers, and multimedia content from platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Spotify, and podcasts. This diverse approach to selecting learning materials is consistent with findings from studies such as Mikeladze et al. (2020), which showed that learners in Georgia also used a mix of self-selected and teacher-provided materials in their SDL processes. This multi-faceted strategy allows students to tailor their learning experiences to their preferences and needs, enhancing their ability to learn and practice speaking skills effectively.

1.4 Learner Strategies

The researchers found from interviews that students prefer self-learning applications as a supporting medium for learning speaking over other applications for several reasons. High ratings in the Play Store, advertisements, alignment with their learning needs, interactive media, and recommendations from friends or family play significant roles in their choices. These factors suggest that students are looking for reliable, effective, and engaging tools to aid their language learning process.

In the SDL process, after selecting their materials, students engage in learning activities to practice their skills. Self-learning applications like Cake, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Modly, and Busuu provide similar methods for learning speaking. These apps allow students to practice words, sentences, or conversation simulations with native speakers via AI, and they offer pronunciation examples for students to mimic. The AI then evaluates their pronunciation and provides corrective feedback. This method aligns with findings from Fitria et al. (2021), which highlight how self-learning applications like Cake offer speaking practice through simulated conversations and AI feedback on pronunciation.

In addition to self-learning applications, students employ various strategies to enhance their speaking skills. These include having conversations with friends or family, writing down vocabulary, practicing words or sentences after watching videos on Instagram or YouTube, and engaging in self-talk. These activities complement the structured practice provided by mobile apps and offer diverse contexts for language use. Haryanti (2018) found that out-of-class speaking activities, such as speaking with friends face-to-face, conversing with foreign friends, private tutoring, and self-talk, significantly contribute to students' language development.

Students often integrate different learning tools in their SDL process, including textbooks, e-books, and other mobile applications. Each tool offers unique benefits that can be used independently or in conjunction with others to create a comprehensive learning experience. For instance, textbooks and e-books provide detailed explanations and structured content that can build a solid foundation of knowledge. Mobile applications, on the other hand, offer interactive and engaging ways to practice language skills. By combining these resources, students can leverage the strengths of each tool to address different aspects of language

learning. For example, they might use textbooks for in-depth grammar study and mobile apps for pronunciation practice and interactive exercises. This multi-faceted approach ensures that students have a well-rounded and effective SDL experience, allowing them to improve their speaking skills more efficiently and enjoyably.(Haryanti, 2018).

1.5 Self-Assessment

Assessment is a crucial process for gathering information about the results of the learning process. In the context of Self-Directed Learning (SDL), researchers found that students engage in self-evaluation to monitor their progress. Students reported improvements in their speaking skills, indicating that their abilities have become better over time.

Students employ various self-assessment methods to evaluate their progress. Interviews revealed that students assess themselves when completing exercises in mobile applications, reviewing learning materials, advancing to the next level, and taking weekly quizzes. These different approaches to self-evaluation help students gauge their learning achievements and areas needing improvement.

Each mobile application offers unique ways for students to conduct self-evaluations:

- Duolingo Application. Duolingo aids self-evaluation by allowing students to repeat incorrect exercises at the end of each lesson, ensuring they master the content before moving on.
- Cake Application. Cake supports self-assessment through quizzes that review material students have completed, providing a comprehensive understanding of their retention and mastery.
- ELSA Speak. ELSA Speak facilitates self-evaluation by enabling students to repeat exercises they initially performed incorrectly, reinforcing correct pronunciation and speaking skills.
- Modly Application, Modly includes weekly quizzes that review the learning progress over the past week, offering a structured method for continuous self-assessment.
- Busuu Application. Busuu provides a review section at the end of each chapter, allowing students to evaluate their understanding of the material before proceeding to new topics.

These mobile applications not only assist in self-evaluation but also provide feedback that is essential for effective SDL. This feedback loop helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses, adjust their learning strategies, and set new goals. By incorporating a variety of self-assessment methods, students can achieve a more accurate and holistic view of their progress, leading to more effective language learning and continuous improvement in their speaking skills.

1.6 Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is the final stage in the SDL process, where students review their overall English learning experiences. This reflection includes evaluating their use of mobile applications for speaking practice. Students reported that while mobile applications are helpful, they also have limitations, prompting the need for additional media and strategies to enhance learning. They noted that other resources could sometimes be more effective for speaking practice, highlighting the necessity of a multifaceted approach.

When using mobile applications like Cake, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Busuu, and Modly, students set specific learning targets defined by these apps. The research revealed that if students failed to meet these targets, they often switched to different applications or took breaks before attempting to reach their goals again. This adaptability demonstrates their commitment to achieving learning outcomes, despite encountering obstacles with a particular app.

The strategies, self-assessment, and self-reflection processes observed in this study differ significantly from those in the study by Humaira & Hurriyah (2018). In the earlier study,

students had limited and vague learning strategies, struggled to select appropriate English materials, and could not structure their learning effectively. In contrast, the current research shows that students have well-structured learning strategies, often incorporating additional methods beyond mobile applications. Moreover, unlike the previous study where students relied solely on report card scores for self-assessment, the current study's participants employed various self-assessment techniques. They used quizzes, reviews, and progress tracking within the mobile applications to evaluate their learning. Additionally, while earlier findings indicated that students lacked effective self-reflection skills, the present study demonstrates that students can reflect on their progress, identify gaps in their learning, and utilize multiple strategies to address these gaps.

In summary, self-reflection in SDL involves a thorough examination of the learning process, including the use of mobile applications. Students recognize the limitations of these tools and supplement their learning with other resources. Their structured need analysis, goals and objectives, learning strategies, learning material selection, diverse self-assessment methods, and effective self-reflection distinguish this study from previous research, highlighting the advanced capabilities of students in managing their language learning independently.

2. Students' reason in using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) to build Self-Directed Learning (SDL) in supporting learning speaking out-of-class

From the interview, there are five students' reasons in using MALL. The reasons include:

2.1 Increasing Mobilities

Mobile applications can be used anywhere due to their digital nature, allowing them to be easily downloaded onto smartphones, which students carry everywhere. This flexibility means that students can use these apps in various locations, such as at home, in boarding houses, or at college. This convenience aligns with studies showing that students frequently use their mobile phones for learning in various settings (Lai, 2018).

2.2 Time-Saving

Mobile applications offer time-saving benefits as they can be accessed anytime without a fixed schedule. Students often use these apps during break times, in the evenings, after classes, on weekends, and whenever they receive reminder notifications from the app. This flexibility provides students the freedom to learn independently at their convenience (Pulungan & Siregar, 2020). The amount of time students spend on these applications varies; some use them for less than 30 minutes, while others spend more than 30 minutes. Their routine usage also differs, with some using the apps several times a week and others daily. These variations depend on factors like busyness, forgetfulness, or laziness.

2.3 Environmental Friendly

Using technology effectively requires understanding its usage. The research found that students appreciate mobile applications for their clear instructions, which simplify the learning process. Students reported that these applications are straightforward, enjoyable, and engaging, with varied content that prevents monotony. Additionally, the cute themes and animations make learning enjoyable. These apps serve as comprehensive learning tools, aiding in speaking practice and reinforcing learning material. The study found that self-learning applications like Cake, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Busuu, and Modly support students' SDL due to their user-friendly, enjoyable, and effective nature (Botero et al., 2018).

2.4 Rich Multimedia Devices

Students prefer mobile applications for learning because of their rich multimedia content. These apps are praised for being exciting, comprehensive, helpful, interesting, and effective. Observations revealed that mobile applications offer features such as learning levels and rankings, instructional videos, exercises, speaking practice tools, audio pronunciation examples, feedback on pronunciation, and sentence translations. This multimedia approach engages learners by providing diverse content, including music, videos, games, and assessments, making them valuable tools for learning English (Botero et al., 2018).

2.5 Availability of Learning Material

Mobile applications provide a variety of learning materials that facilitate the SDL process. These apps offer extensive English topics, allowing students to choose materials that suit their needs and preferences. They can select from pre-arranged content or explore materials independently. Additionally, the apps provide brief explanations of the learning materials, making them accessible and understandable. This feature aligns with studies showing that self-learning applications, such as Cake, present ideas, thoughts, and materials in a clear language with relevant examples and exercises (Pulungan & Siregar, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The research indicates that students have a structured SDL process using applications like Cake, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Modly, and Busuu. The first step involves identifying learning needs, with a focus on improving speaking skills. The second step is setting goals based on these needs and defining objectives to achieve them using mobile applications. The third step involves selecting learning materials within these self-learning applications. The fourth step is implementing these strategies by practicing words, sentences, or simulated conversations with native speakers, using audio pronunciation examples for correct pronunciation. The fifth step is evaluating progress through self-assessment using the applications, which helps improve speaking skills. The final step is self-reflection, where students review their learning progress.

Students choose mobile applications for several reasons. Firstly, these apps are flexible and can be used in various locations, increasing mobility. Secondly, they save time by allowing learning at any time. Thirdly, they are environmentally friendly, with clear instructions and engaging content. Fourthly, they offer rich multimedia features that support speaking practice. Lastly, they provide a wide range of learning materials, making them valuable for SDL.

While students also use other learning materials and strategies, mobile applications effectively complement and complete their speaking practice. These apps offer features and benefits that other materials and strategies do not provide, making them an essential part of the students' SDL process.

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