PERCEPTIONS AND WILLINGNESS OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS TOWARDS USING TELL IN LEARNING LANGUAGE AT SLB-A YAPTI MAKASSAR

Rahmat J.[1], Abidin Pammu[2], Ria Rosdiana Jubhari[3]

[1,2,3]Universitas Hasanuddin

[1]rahmat.j@outlook.com
[2]abidinpammu60@gmail.com
[3]ac.riajubhari@gmail.com

Abstract

The integration of Technology in the school brings more positive impacts to students and teachers. Teaching and learning can be made more interesting and enjoyable with the use of TELL Technology Enhanced Language Learning). Specifically, the students with visual impairment need assistive technology to make them easier to learn during the learning process. This study aimed to identify the types of technological tools and applications used by students with visual impairment at SLBA-A Yapti Makassar and analyzed the students' perception and willingness in using various means of technology in their EFL Classroom. The questionnaires and interviews were used to perform the study methods in which the researcher used Google form that was sent to the student via WhatsApp feature. Despite the challenge of visual impairment faced by students in integrating technology in the classroom, the results showed that students have positive attitudes about the use of that technology. The paper concluded by proposing some potential solutions to the challenges of successfully incorporating TELL in language classrooms to assist students in their learning. Thus, this paper could be of interest to ELT teachers who want to make some improvements to their teaching methods and use more technologically advanced applications in their classes.

Keywords: TELL, visual–impaired students, technology, perception, language

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English for students is very important for their career future. Since the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 as a major milestone in the regional economic integration agenda in ASEAN, especially in Indonesia where citizens need more struggle to compete with other competitors from other Asian countries. Not to mention, English is the main requirement when people want to study abroad. This condition becomes a high consideration for students to master English.

The competition is more challenge faced by students with visual impairments where they have to struggle more to learn English as visually impaired students have difficulty using their eyes. Some of them are low vision, while others are blind. This condition is the same difficulty where their eyes cannot deal with visualization.

According to the dictionary. Com, visual impairment is "(of a person) having reduced vision so severe as to constitute a handicap." Visual impairment refers to the inability or limited ability to see. Some visually disabled individuals have poor or inadequate vision, while others are completely blind due to a lack of light perception.

People may go blind from birth or experience vision loss as a result of illness, age, or accidents. Deaf-blindness is a condition in which blindness is associated with the inability to hear. It means that the visually impaired student has trouble reading anything from gestures to pictures to text. Some people may be unable to read

anything at all, while others may struggle to read at close range or a distance. (Those who are nearsighted have trouble concentrating on distant objects, while those who are farsighted have trouble focusing on close-up objects.) For those with visual impairments, several everyday tasks are difficult.

To deal with visual impairment students in learning language, employing assistive technology seems to be more effective during the learning process. "Computer Assisted Learning (CALL) is defined as the quest for and analysis of the application of the computer in language teaching and learning," Levy (1997).

CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning): According to Timucin, CALL is a form of computer-assisted language learning (2006) "CALL involves the use of technology in the form of computers and a transformation process in the institution where implementation takes place" TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) is a synonym for CALL, which is described as the use of technologies to promote and improve educational learning (Golshan & Tafazoli, 2014).

Therefore, the existence of computers is very important for students with visual impairment as their assistive technology support their learning process in the class. Warschauer (1996) and Bax (2003) described the roles of technology in language learning using their taxonomies (as cited in Healey, 2016, Warschauer's model is divided into three stages or phases: "behavioristics," "communicative," and "integrative" (Levy, 1997).

However, the use of assistive technology in some special schools in Indonesia still needs to be more considered to deal with visually impaired students in learning the language. Therefore, the study aims to find out the perceptions and willingness of visually - impaired students about their overall learning language experience with TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) and also find out the technological applications and tools that are frequently used at SLB-A Yapti Makassar.

Students' attitudes are more likely to be affected by their teachers' perceptions and use of technology in their teaching methods, according to Cope & Ward (2002).

METHOD
Sampling and Participants

The sampling of this study was students from 10th to 12th at SLB –A Yapti Makassar in which the total number of these participants were 8 students. The researcher used random sampling because only a few have mobile phones as their foremost assistive computers. Meanwhile, other students still depend on their friends' hands when learning.

Instrumentation

Two different types of instruments were used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire provided quantitative information, while the interview provided qualitative information.

Data Collection Procedure

The setting for the survey was informal as the researcher went to SLB-A Yapti Makassar for collecting data from students. The researcher got access to some of the classes and the permission since being a volunteer and teaching English from 2012 until now which means the researcher has strong emotional bonding between the researcher and the students. After that, the researcher interviewed the students one by one based on the listed question to collect data because they got difficulty accessing questions from google form

FINDINGS

This chapter will provide the result data of the interview based on Students' answers to questions conducted 04 Mei

2020 at SLB-A Yapti Makassar. The data then were evaluated using graphical representations such as pie charts, tables and bar charts. The overall results are then addressed in light of the key research issues.
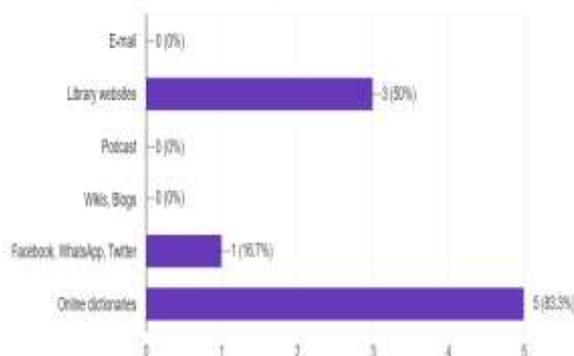
1. Response for Visually-Impaired n.
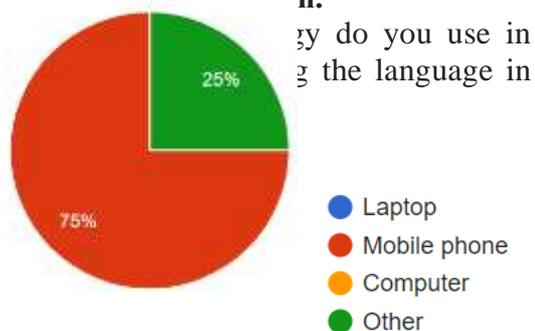
Graphical Representation 1

This pie chart is the representation of responses from the students with visual impairment who were more comfortable using a mobile phone when they are learning the language. Thanks to this tool, it is easy to bring and to be accessed.

It can be seen from this pie chart that almost visually-impaired students (75%) use a mobile phone as a means to learn in EFL class while others (25%) use other tools. Based on the researchers 'observation, it is true that student is more comfortable learning language by using headphone because it is easy to bring and to be accessed.

Respond question 2
Which of the following applications do you use in your study?

Graphical Representation 2

This graphic depicts the response from the visually impaired students that they use the application when they study. It is shown that 5 (83.3%) of 8 students operate online dictionary as their main application when learning EFL in the class, following by library website which is utilized by 3 (50%) students. Meanwhile, only 1 (16.7%) uses Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter during the learning process.

Respond to question 3 – 10

Which of the following aspects or features do you get through using the above devices and applications?

No	Survey Question	Frequency and Percentage					N	Mean	SD
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
3	Improvement of language skills	4(50%)	4(50%)				8	4.50	.536
4	Support learning every time and anywhere	6(75%)	2(25%)				8	4.75	.463
5	Sharing material and information	6(75%)	2(25%)				8	4.75	.463
6	Proper feedback beneficial for learning	5(63%)	3(37%)				8	4.63	.518
7	Promotion of social interaction	4(50%)	4(50%)				8	4.50	.535
8	Effective interaction between teacher-student	6(75%)	2(25%)				8	4.75	.463
9	Promotes different learning styles	6(75%)	2(25%)				8	4.75	.463
10	Use other than academic uses (distract learning)	5(63%)	3(37%)				8	4.63	.518

Graphical Representation 3

This table represents responses of some aspects or features that visually-impaired students gained when utilizing the devices and the applications during the learning process. Based on the table above, there is the same number of students choosing questions 4, 5, 8 in which 6 students (75%) strongly agreed and 2 (25%) agreed. In addition, questions 3 and 7 show the same percentages which 50% (4 students) of the total percentage is in strongly agree and agree respectively.

Likewise, the same percentages (63%) are in questions 6 and 10 in which 5 (63%) strongly agreed and 37 (%) agreed with those questions.

Based on the research in the world, it has been shown that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can promote better student learning and teaching methods. A report by Innosencia Eligi and Kelefa Mwantimwa (2017) in their journal **ICT accessibility and usability to support the learning of visually-impaired students in Tanzania** found that ICTs supports creative learning, encourage self-directed learning and encourage participatory and collaborative learning. The UDSM units surveyed, on the other hand, faced issues such as a lack of special ICTs to address the needs of visually impaired students, inadequate guidance on how to use special ICTs, and a scarcity of ICT experts.

2. Response for Visually-Impaired Students' Willingness

To make effective this study, the researcher analyzed deeply the visually – impaired students' willingness about their satisfaction and obstacle, and also what kind of other technology and application that they want to use in the class at the school of SLB-A Yapti Makassar. The students were sorted from 1 to 8 based on their turn of the interview session.

Response to question 11

Are you satisfied with the technological tools and applications that you use in your classroom? Why?

According to responses from students with visual impairment, most students said that the tools that they utilized are satisfied as student 1 said "Yes! Because those tools can assist me in learning English" or students 7: "this tool can increase my language skill" although there are some students expressed their unsatisfied in using the tools due to consuming time and his visual impairment which make it ineffective to be used during the study. As a response student said, "The application does not fully help me because it sometimes takes time to be accessed." While there was one student who chose not to respond to this question.

Response to question 12

What will be some possible obstacles to implementing new technological applications in your classroom?

From the response of the visually-impaired student, mostly the obstacle that they faced were internet access. There is no internet access provided by this school so, the students have to provide it by themselves. For instance, student 1, 7 and 8 express their complaints when learning during the learning process; S1: "there are no internet aces for us," S7: my phone is hard to download material due to weak internet access and S8: "We need the struggle to learn and to buy internet packet to study because the school does not provide internet aces for us." Other obstacles come from the applications themselves in which some of them are difficult to be operated. According to student, teacher who used new application like zoom, an online learning platform, should be demonstrated in a detailed way "although zoom application has already explained in a detailed way, it is still difficult for us to be demonstrated" (students 4). Also, other students thought the same thing where the teacher only sent a link without an explanation of how to operate it.

Response to question 13

What is your suggestion to your teacher to make effective learning English in your classroom?

This question aims to address the EFL teacher to improve the quality of learning the language in the class. There were several suggestions from the students that had already been expressed during the interview. Most students stated that the teachers should implement effective strategy-making students more enjoyable and ease them to understand the material given during learning language. In addition, they also suggested that teacher should deliver their material or lesson slowly due to the poor English skill of students. As some students 2 to 5 mentioned S2: "The teacher should explain slowly because it is difficult for me to figure out the material." S3: I suggest providing easy-to-understand material and a more effective learning approach. S4: I find it difficult to understand the material given because I don't understand English. The explanation from the teacher must be improved because sometimes I am not precise in writing words such as missing letters or incorrect writing." And S6: "I hope the teachers clarify the material more and how to convey the material in a relaxed manner and simplify the material so that it is easy to understand. Another student suggested that there should be an English meeting or club outside of the learning schedule that could facilitate them more in improving their language skill. According to S5 "I suggest making English study groups not only held in class but also outside the classroom to make it more effective and because in the classroom we only learn for a few minutes. While outside the classroom we are free to ask more relaxed."

CONCLUSION

It is worth taking into consideration that learning the EFL language need appropriate tools and applications in assisting visually – impaired students to improve their study in the EFL context. Based on the result of research when asking students' perceptions, most students stated that the mobile phone is the most appropriate tool to be used in learning the language. Students consider the mobile phone is most confrontable to be utilized due to their small size and easiness to be operated compared to other tools such as laptop, computer and others. In terms of application, students more enjoyed learning language by using online dictionaries such as google translate that can be accessed by a screen reader. Meanwhile, there is some point of students' willingness. Although the students considered that they were satisfied with the tools and application during the learning process, they were still constrained by an internet connection which is not provided by the school. Therefore, this point must be the most considered point that the school provided. Furthermore, the students also suggested the teacher find an appropriate strategy of learning to make them easily learn the language, and to deliver the material slowly due to their visual impairments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bax, S. (2003). CALL – past, present and future. *The system, 31(1)*, 13–28.

Cape, C& Ward, P. (2002). Integrating learning technology into classrooms: The importance of teachers' perceptions. *Educational Technology & Society, 5(1),* 67-74.

Golshan, N., & Tafazoli, D. (2014). Technoloy-Enhanced Language Learning Tools In Iranian EFL Context: Frequencies, Attitudes And Challenges. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 136*,114-118.

Innosencia Eligi, Kelefa Mwantimwa. (2017). *ICT accessibility and usability to support learning of visually-impaired.* International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology.

Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-Assisted Language Learning: Context and Con ceptualization*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Timucin,M. (2006).implementing CALL in an EFL context.*ELT Journal,60*,262-271.

Warschauer, M. (1996) .Computer Assisted Language Learning: an Introduction. In Fotos S. (ed.) *Multimedia language teaching*, Tokyo: Logos International: 3-20.