

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter involves the background of the study, which informs a brief explanation regarding the topic. It also consists of research questions, the scope of the study, the purposes of the study, definition of key terms and the last is the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The advancement of mobile technologies particularly in online learning settings, has pushed the need to not only identify but also implement the proper assessment practices in online learning settings into the surface. Despite the fact that technology presents a wide range of innovative and possibly creative alternatives, particularly in technology-based assessment practices, there are also significant difficulties and disadvantages. As a result, some innovations from researchers as well as educators are generally needed for more effective assessment method that can represented the varied nature of students' learning (Cong-Lem, 2019). In the field of language assessment, mobile technologies' role also can be important, specifically to the alternative form of language assessment called Dynamic Assessment (DA) (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). According to Lantolf and Poehner (2004), DA is interactive assessment approach that integrating not only assessment but also instruction into pedagogical activities in order to promote students' development using useful forms of mediation that are fully aware to the students' performance during the process of assessment. The product of it is a relatively current method named Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA) (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016) that is developed from the earliest method that already existed called Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

MALL is one of the most innovational current technology forms in terms of supporting language learning (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). Looking back to its journey to MALA, it begins with the first published handheld mobile technology for language learning studies that reported on the impact of Personal

Digital Assistant (PDA) based word processing programs in improving the L1 English writing ability of Canadian secondary school students (Callan, 1994 cited in Burston in 2014). Over the years, most of the rest of the studies have explored more and also indicated some significant impacts of MALL for language learning (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2007; Stockwell, 2010; Mosavi & Nezrat, 2012; Burston, 2013). Besides providing many positive impacts that enhanced learning opportunities, mobile devices also support a new delivery mode of assessment by mobile devices named Mobile-Based Assessment (MBA) (Stavros, 2018). Furthermore, it also allows an opportunity for peer assessment (PA) which is known not only as a collaborative activity but also considered to have positive opportunities in the evaluation processes of learning (Vanderhoven et al., 2015; Kollar & Fischer, 2010; cited in Güler, 2016). Therefore, in the particular field of language assessment, the term of Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA) has been used to join the two disciplines such as MALL and language assessment (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016).

Although some numbers of studies concern with learning in mobile exist, the fact shows that relatively not many studies provide observations into mobile-based language assessment in particular. The previous study regarding MALA was intended to investigate the feasibility of MALA in assessing not only speaking but also the students' attitudes toward it (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). Using a basic qualitative research design, the study revealed mixed attitudes towards MALA from the perspective of the students. In comparison, Fasa and Purnawarman (2020) investigated the impacts of MALA on students' belief about language learning (BALL). Another study reported on a study exploring the effect of Mobile-based Dynamic Assessment (MbDA) on improving students' oral fluency (Rezaee, Alavi, & Razzaghifard, 2019). They did not use the term MALA but basically, the principal was quite similar. This study revealed that the students in the experimental groups who received MbDA improved their speaking fluency significantly compared with their partner in the control group. The results of this study indicated that MbDA created the students an opportunity to give peer feedback more effectively using mobile devices.

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MOBILE-ASSISTED LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT (MALA): THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES IN ASSESSING EFL ACADEMIC ORAL PRESENTATIONS

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However, previous studies regarding MALA indicated some research limitations, especially in terms of giving a brief explanation of how MALA was implemented and what the advantages and disadvantages of MALA in particular field like academic oral presentation. The study from Tarighat and Khodabakhsh (2016) only used a basic qualitative design with only students' interview as a single data while both of the studies from Rezaee, Alavi, and Razzaghifard (2019), as well as Fasa and Purnawarman (2020), only focused on the potential effect of MbDA and MALA on students' oral fluency and their attitudes. Therefore, the present study is intended to make a contribution towards addressing the gap of literature by providing specific insight into this issue. The aim of this study is to investigate the potentials of MALA implementation in supporting students in EFL academic oral presentation classroom and the students' perception toward MALA implementation in academic oral presentations class.

1.2 Research Question

1. What are the potentials of the Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA) implementation in supporting students in EFL academic oral presentation?
2. How do students perceive the implementation of Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA) support their academic oral presentations performance?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study are divided into two, based on the research questions stated above, namely:

1. To investigate the potentials of the implementation of MALA in supporting students in EFL academic oral presentations class.
2. To explore the students' perception of MALA implementation in supporting their academic oral presentations class.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study primarily focused on the implementation of MALA in the field of EFL online academic oral presentation class. Furthermore, this study is also

aimed to reveal the advantages and the disadvantages of MALA implementation in academic oral presentations class through the students' perceptions toward it.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Practically, the results of the study are expected to give brief and useful information for the educator on how to use MALA in EFL academic oral presentation class. Particularly for education managers and stake holder in concerning the technological support required for teachers as well as students in implementing this method. Moreover, theoretically, the results of this particular study are expected to interpret MALA implementation through the angle of not only cognitive but also sociocultural perspectives. Finally, this study is also aimed to contribute to a new coming study that concerns the mobile-assisted language assessment issues in the English language teaching studies, specifically in language assessment field.

1.6 Clarification of key terms

In order to avoid some misunderstanding, some terms that are used in this study are defined as follows:

- Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA)

Mobile-Assisted Language Assessment (MALA) is the combination of two different method of assessment, they are Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Portfolio Assessment which is consecutively a subdivision of Dynamic Assessment (DA) in the field of online language classroom (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). The term MALA in this study refers to the mobile application that researcher uses which is called WhatsApp.

- Peer assessment (PA)

Peer assessment (PA) is known as collaborative activities that demands the active involvement of at least two students as peer, and it is considered to have positive impact in the evaluation processes of learning (Vanderhoven et al., 2015; Kollar & Fischer, 2010; cited in Güler, 2016). The term PA in this study refers to the assessment method that is integrated in the process of Mobile-Assisted language assessment.

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- Oral presentation (OP)

From EFL point of view, Oral presentation (OP) is a kind of form of public speaking where the students, could be individually and in groups, present a prepared speech on a certain topic in English the class and supported by some visual aids (Chen, 2011; Sundrarajun & Kiely, 2010). The term OP in this particular study refers to the learning activity that is observed in the class.

1.7 Thesis Organization

Chapter 1 shows the background of the study, research question, objectives of the research, significance of the study, the scope of the study, definition in terms and the organization of the proposal's chapter. In chapter 2, it reviews the issue of MALA and the literature related, also includes the issue of peer assessment and oral presentation. Chapter 3 discusses the method that will be used in the research. It includes the design, site, participants, data collection technique, and data analysis. Chapter 4 discussed the findings and the discussions of the present study. It reports on and discusses the implementation of MALA in supporting EFL academic oral presentation and the students' perception on the implementation of MALA in supporting their academic oral presentation performance. Lastly, chapter 5 discussed the conclusions, the implications and limitation as well as the recommendations for future research. It reports on the overall results of the study and how it contributes to not only the existing studies but also the future studies who concerns with this issue of MALA implementation. It also covered the research limitation which have been sorted out from the whole process of the study. Several recommendations for researchers as well as the stake holder were fully given respectfully.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the introduction of the research. It includes the background of the study, research questions, and purposes of the study, also the significances and the definition in terms. The following chapter will review the relevant literature of the study, which involves the concept of MALA, the concept of peer assessment, and its relation with students' academic oral presentation.

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