

Investigating the Use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) for Listening Instructions in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang

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Abstract: Listening is essential for effective communication but often poses challenges in traditional teaching settings, where exposure to authentic materials is limited (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). However, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) provides mobile access to interactive audio content, enabling adaptive learning experiences (Burston, 2014) and continuous exposure to varied accents (Godwin-Jones, 2017). This study explores the implementation of MALL for listening instructions in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang, focusing on the research questions: “Has SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang incorporated MALL into their teaching practices?” and “How does MALL contribute to improving SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang students' listening skills?” This qualitative research employs observation and semi-structured interviews to examine MALL's application in real classroom settings, aligning with the (Creswell, 2014) emphasis on context and utilizing thematic analysis to identify emerging patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Findings reveal that while SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang has started incorporating MALL, there is significant potential to enhance its integration further and positively impact students' listening skills. These results highlight the importance of integrating mobile technology into educational curricula to enhance language learning outcomes.

Keywords: English language teaching and learning, Listening Skills, MALL, Teaching Media

INTRODUCTION

Listening skills are crucial in English language learning, forming the foundation for effective communication and comprehension. Listening, one of the key receptive skills involves passively hearing words and actively understanding the meaning, context, and nuances the speaker conveys. As Brown and Lee (2015) explain, listening requires complex cognitive processing, where learners must quickly decode and interpret auditory information to respond appropriately. This underlines the importance of enhancing listening skills to help learners become more proficient and confident in real-life communication.

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In recent years, technology has become an integral part of language education, with mobile technology giving rise to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Burston (2014) says that MALL enables adaptive and individualized learning, allowing learners to access materials at a pace and in a manner that suits their unique learning needs. This means that MALL has emerged as a promising method for improving language skills and providing learners with interactive and flexible learning tools. Through various apps and platforms, mobile devices offer instant access to authentic audio materials, enabling learners to immerse themselves in real-world language use anytime and anywhere. Burston (2014) highlights that MALL facilitates adaptive and personalized learning, allowing students to engage with content at their own pace and according to their unique needs.

Moreover, MALL has shown effectiveness in addressing common challenges in developing English language listening skills. These challenges include limited exposure to native speakers and difficulty accessing authentic listening materials. Mobile applications that feature audio and video content can simulate real-life contexts, helping learners understand different accents, intonations, and speech patterns. Research by Zhang and Zou (2020) indicates that learners using MALL tools for listening practice significantly improve their ability to comprehend spoken English compared to those who rely on traditional learning methods.

Additionally, advancements in MALL have incorporated interactive features, such as gamified listening exercises, voice recognition, and automatic transcripts. Kukulska-Hulme (2020) emphasizes that these innovations make learning more engaging and motivating as they cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. This provides learners with varied and stimulating ways to practice listening and encourages greater autonomy and sustained self-directed learning, which is essential for mastering language skills.

Given these benefits, it is essential for educational institutions to incorporate MALL into their curricula strategically. Adequate support, such as teacher training and clear guidelines for effective technology use, can ensure that MALL's potential is fully realized in enhancing English listening skills. By leveraging these technological advancements, educators can create a more effective and immersive language learning environment.

One of the primary problems identified in English language education is the persistent issue of low listening proficiency among students when traditional teaching methods are employed. Listening comprehension remains a significant challenge because it requires real-time processing of language input, which is often underemphasized in conventional classroom settings. Traditional approaches generally lack sufficient authentic and interactive listening activities, making it difficult for students to develop the necessary skills to understand varied accents, intonation, and the natural pace of native speech. As a result, students often feel unprepared for real-life communication, which can hinder their overall language development. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) argue that listening is often the least systematically taught skill, despite its critical role in language acquisition.

This challenge has prompted educators and researchers to explore more effective solutions, such as integrating MALL into the curriculum. MALL leverages the portability and advanced functionalities of mobile devices to provide learners with immersive and engaging listening experiences. Through various applications and resources, MALL offers

access to authentic audio and video content, real-time feedback, and personalized learning pathways. Godwin-Jones (2017) emphasizes that MALL facilitates continuous exposure to language, which is crucial for building listening proficiency. Moreover, MALL's interactive features, such as speech recognition and gamified listening exercises, motivate students and promote active engagement with listening materials. Studies by Sun and Dong (2021) have shown that learners using MALL tools significantly improve their listening skills compared to those relying on traditional methods, indicating the potential of mobile technology as a powerful educational tool.

Although mobile technologies are widely used in education, research on their role in enhancing listening skills in Indonesia remains limited. Studies by Suardana and Sukardjo (2020) and Gholami and Saberi (2018) demonstrate that MALL improves listening comprehension and provides access to authentic audio materials not available in traditional classrooms. In addition to these studies, recent open-access research further supports the effectiveness of MALL in enhancing listening skills within the Indonesian context. Hilman and Putri (2023) found that MALL dramatically increases student achievement, engagement, and participation by providing interactive listening activities tailored to individual learning needs. Similarly, Mutiaraningrum and Nugroho (2021) highlight the usefulness and adaptability of smartphone applications, which allow students to access real audio resources and practice listening comprehension beyond the traditional classroom setting. Rahmawati and Sudaryono (2020) also emphasize that MALL helps address common listening skill acquisition issues, such as tone and accent differentiation, which are particularly challenging for Indonesian learners with limited exposure to native English contexts. Furthermore, MALL offers multimodal input by integrating auditory and visual cues, which enhances comprehension and retention. These findings underscore the potential of mobile technology to revolutionize language learning by providing engaging and accessible resources that cater to the specific needs of EFL students while addressing gaps in conventional teaching approaches (Hilman & Putri, 2023; Mutiaraningrum & Nugroho, 2021).

However, most of these studies have been conducted in different cultural and educational settings, creating a gap in understanding how MALL can be effectively utilized in Indonesian high schools, particularly in Tanjungpinang. While MALL has been explored in urban educational contexts, students in less urbanized areas face unique challenges, such as limited access to resources and varying levels of digital literacy, which necessitate further investigation (Arief & Nurnaningsih, 2019).

Given the benefits and growing relevance of MALL, this study aims to explore the implementation of MALL for listening instructions in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang. The central research question, "Has SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang implemented MALL in their teaching practices?", "How does MALL contribute to improving SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang students' listening skills?" aims to understand the current state of mobile technology integration at the school and assess the opportunities for further improvement. As mobile technology becomes increasingly accessible, investigating its application in local educational contexts is vital for enhancing the effectiveness of language teaching.

METHOD

This study utilizes a qualitative observational approach to explore the implementation of MALL for listening instructions in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang. By utilizing observations as a primary data collection technique, the study aims to capture the nuanced interactions and engagement levels of students while using mobile applications for language learning. Observations will be conducted in real classroom settings, allowing the researcher to gather firsthand insights into how students utilize MALL tools during listening exercises. This approach aligns with Creswell (2014), who emphasizes the importance of context in qualitative research, as it enables a deeper understanding of the learning environment and the dynamics of student participation. Lestari and Mulyadi (2019) also assert that observational methods enable teachers to evaluate students' processes and strategies during listening exercises in addition to the exercises' results. Using observation as the main method of gathering data in the context of SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang gave researchers important information about how students use Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) platforms and how these tools affect their listening comprehension.

In addition to direct classroom observations, semi-structured interviews are utilized to gain more insights. As Leavy (2017) emphasizes, semi-structured interviews with students and teachers supplement direct classroom observations to provide a more in-depth understanding of participants' attitudes and experiences using Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Interviews record reflections, problems, and perceived efficacy of mobile applications, providing insights that observations do not necessarily reveal (Pritasari & Sudaryono, 2021). This dual-method approach, as advocated by Cohen et al. (2018), increases the richness and depth of qualitative data, allowing for a thorough examination of MALL's educational impact. Thematic analysis, as recommended by Braun et al. (2013), would find patterns and themes in the data, correlating MALL usage to improved listening skills and providing actionable recommendations for educators.

The study utilized structured classroom observations at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang to analyze the integration of MALL in English lessons, focusing on key aspects such as the use of mobile devices, platforms like YouTube and Kahoot, teacher guidance, and student engagement. Challenges, including connectivity issues, device availability, and low battery power, were also documented. Indicators observed included collaborative versus individual device use, clarity of teacher instructions, and students' engagement levels (active, passive, or uncertain). Conducting observations in authentic classroom settings ensured accurate insights into teaching and learning dynamics. Additionally, interviews provided nuanced reflections on learning experiences and challenges, offering a comprehensive understanding of MALL's role in enhancing listening skills. This multifaceted approach contributes to the broader understanding of MALL in education, presenting practical recommendations for its effective implementation.

RESULTS

Observation and Interview Result

This part outlines the study’s findings derived from classroom observations and interviews conducted at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang. The results focus on how MALL was implemented to improve students' listening skills. The finding is divided into key areas, such as the utilization of mobile devices in classroom activities, the types of MALL platforms used, the teacher’s role in supporting MALL integration, student participation, and challenges encountered during its application. Additionally, the analysis evaluates the impact of MALL on students’ listening comprehension while identifying aspects that need improvement to maximize its effectiveness in the teaching and learning process.

Table 1. Observation Result: Investigating the Use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Enhancing English Listening Skills In SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang.

Observation Aspect	Indicator	Notes
MALL Aspect		
Use of Mobile Devices in Learning Activities	Are students using mobile devices during the learning process?	Observant 1: Yes Observant 2: Yes Observant 3: Yes Observant 4: Yes
	Are the devices used individually or in groups?	Observant 1: Individually and Group Observant 2: Individually 90% and Groups 10% Observant 3: Mostly Individual Observant 4: Individual and Group
Types of MALL Applications or Platforms	Types of MALL applications/platforms used (if any): App names, duration, purpose	Observant 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> App names: YouTube, duration: 3 Minutes, purpose: BKOF App names: Kahoot, duration: 3 Minutes, purpose: JCOT, ICOT Observant 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> App names: YouTube, duration: 3 Minutes, purpose: BKOF App names: Kahoot, duration: 3 Minutes, purpose: JCOT, ICOT Observant 3: Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> App names: YouTube, duration: 3 Minutes App names: Kahoot, duration: 3 Minutes Observant 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> App names: YouTube, duration: 3 Minutes, purpose: to improve student’s listening skills

Teacher's Role	Does the teacher give specific instructions on using mobile devices or particular applications?	Observant 1: Yes Observant 2: Yes Observant 3: Yes Observant 4: Yes
Student Response	Student participation in activities using MALL: enthusiastic, passive, sceptical	Observant 1: Sceptical Observant 2: Enthusiastic Observant 3: Sceptical Observant 4: Some students actively participate in the learning process
Challenges or Obstacles	Technical or non-technical challenges faced during the use of MALL	Observant 1: Connectivity, device, and condition around the class Observant 2: Connectivity, celluler data Observant 3: Speaker, they didn't bring earphones, didn't have much battery, and had no electricity Observant 4: Data Connection: Some students didn't bring smartphone
Listening Skills Aspect		
Listening Skills Aspect	Activities or exercises aimed at enhancing listening comprehension (e.g., audio drills, podcasts)	Observant 1: Audio Drills, students are asked to watch a video and then write down the vocabulary in the video, they are able to hear in English and show the contextual form. Observant 2: Audio drills Observant 3: Using Audio Observant 4: Audio Drills, students are asked to write 20 vocabulary and the can show the contextual vocab
Effectiveness in Listening Skills	Evidence of improvement in listening comprehension (e.g., better focus, understanding)	Observant 1: Students have difficulty focusing when given words to write, requiring repetition 3 times, especially on sentences with similar pronunciation. When asked to write vocabulary, they give a lot of vocabulary showing that they have good skills. Observant 2: Better focus and understanding

		<p>Observant 3: Write a pre-test (word, phrase, sentences) and then find vocabulary from the short video (2 minutes)</p> <p>Observant 4: students are still difficult to listen to the word instructions spoken by the teacher and still have to be repeated 3x repetitions.</p>
Objectivity in Use of MALL	Measures of objectivity (e.g., equal access, standardized use across students)	<p>Observant 1: Equal Access</p> <p>Observant 2: Equal Access</p> <p>Observant 3: Equal Access</p> <p>Observant 4: We prefer to pay attention to basic skills in listening</p>

Implementation of MALL in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang

The results focus on how MALL was implemented to improve students' listening skills. Key findings highlight the utilization of mobile devices in classroom activities, the types of MALL platforms used, the teacher's role in supporting MALL integration, student participation, and challenges encountered during its application. Additionally, the analysis examines the impact of MALL on students' listening comprehension while identifying aspects that need improvement to maximize its effectiveness in the teaching and learning process.

The observation results show that students actively use mobile devices during the learning process, both individually and in groups. The main applications used are YouTube (with an average duration of 3 minutes for Building Knowledge of the Field [BKOF] activities) and Kahoot (for Joint Construction of Texts [JCOT] and Independent Construction of Texts [ICOT]), with specific instructional guidance from the teacher.

Teachers actively integrate MALL into their teaching practices by providing structured instructions on how to use mobile devices for learning. The interview results show that teachers recommend specific applications, such as the Erlangga app, which provides learning materials with QR code support. The teacher also noted that YouTube is widely used for listening exercises, allowing students to listen to native speakers for pronunciation and intonation practice.

Student engagement levels varied. Some students were enthusiastic about using mobile applications, while others remained sceptical. Challenges such as unfamiliarity with digital learning tools and reliance on traditional teacher-led instruction were observed. These findings suggest that while MALL is present in classroom instruction, its effectiveness is influenced by how well students adapt to and utilize these technologies.

Despite the integration of mobile technology, several challenges were noted. Technical issues such as network connectivity and device availability were significant barriers, particularly when students accessed online materials. Observers also reported that some students lacked essential learning tools, such as earphones, making it difficult for them to fully engage in listening activities. Additionally, students' limited vocabulary posed



challenges when using platforms like YouTube for listening practice, as they struggled to comprehend unfamiliar words.

Effectiveness of MALL in Improving Listening Skills

The study also examined how MALL contributed to the improvement of students' listening skills. Based on observations, listening activities such as audio drills were incorporated into lessons, with students asked to write down vocabulary from videos and demonstrate their understanding in a contextual form.

The results indicate that MALL provides students with exposure to authentic listening materials, helping them develop their listening comprehension. However, variations in student performance were noted. Some students exhibited better focus and understanding, while others required multiple repetitions of the audio materials, particularly for words with similar pronunciations. Observers noted that while MALL enhances vocabulary retention, its effectiveness in improving listening comprehension depends on the individual learner's proficiency and prior exposure to English.

From the perspective of effectiveness, teachers reported that mobile applications helped students become more accustomed to native English pronunciation and intonation. Compared to traditional methods, mobile technology offered more engagement due to its interactive and flexible nature. Teachers also noted an increase in student motivation when using mobile devices, as digital learning tools provided more dynamic and self-paced learning experiences.

Despite these benefits, teachers highlighted that some students still struggled with comprehending spoken English, reinforcing the need for adaptive listening exercises and additional vocabulary support. Moreover, while access to MALL was generally equitable, the success of learning was largely dependent on technical support and how well instructional methods aligned with students' existing listening skills.

Overall, the study suggests that while MALL has a positive impact on students' listening skill development at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang, its implementation requires ongoing support to address challenges related to technical infrastructure, student readiness, and content adaptability.

DISCUSSION

Integration of MALL in English Learning in SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang

The results from the observation highlight that MALL tools are widely integrated into English listening activities at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang. All four observers reported consistent use of mobile devices during lessons, with applications such as YouTube and Kahoot being prominent. These platforms served varied purposes, including Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) and Joint Construction of Texts (JCOT). The teacher's role was critical in guiding students, as all observers noted explicit instructions provided to support the use of these tools. This aligns with Kukulska-Hulme et al (2020), who emphasize that teachers play a vital role in ensuring the pedagogical relevance and accessibility of mobile technologies in classrooms.

Regarding the development of listening skills, activities such as audio drills were implemented to improve comprehension. Students were engaged in tasks like watching videos and identifying vocabulary, which encouraged contextual learning. Observers reported mixed outcomes; some students showed better focus and understanding, while others struggled with complex pronunciations or required repeated instructions. These findings resonate with Sun et al (2021) analysis, which suggests that while MALL fosters listening improvements, its effectiveness varies based on individual learner capabilities and task complexity. Despite these challenges, evidence of vocabulary retention and enhanced contextual understanding indicates progress among students.

However, technical and logistical challenges limited the seamless integration of MALL. Observers identified issues like connectivity problems, device availability, and inadequate preparation (e.g., missing earphones). These obstacles hinder equitable participation and emphasize the need for standardized infrastructure and resource planning. Objectivity in the use of MALL was observed to be largely consistent, with all students receiving equal access to resources. Nevertheless, a focus on enhancing basic listening skills remains necessary to ensure MALL's effectiveness across varying student proficiencies. These findings underscore the importance of addressing these barriers to optimize MALL's potential in improving listening skills.

MALL Effectiveness in Improving Listening Skills

The integration of mobile technology into English teaching was notably prevalent among the observed educators. Based on teacher interviews, mobile applications, such as the Erlangga QR feature and YouTube, were frequently utilized to facilitate learning. Teacher reported using native speaker audio embedded in applications to enhance listening comprehension. This aligns with Kukulska-Hulme (2020), who emphasized the importance of MALL in providing authentic language exposure, enabling learners to engage with native-like materials in a flexible manner.

Students largely affirmed the effectiveness of mobile devices in improving listening skills. Responses in the surveys indicated that most students experienced improvements after using mobile-based applications, with a significant preference for audio and visual content over traditional methods. However, unlike studies by Zhang et al. (2020), which report consistent improvements in listening comprehension across learners, our findings showed variability in students' focus and understanding. Some students required repeated instructions, particularly for words with similar pronunciations, indicating that individual differences significantly influence MALL's effectiveness.

The study also explored the objectivity of MALL's implementation, focusing on whether all students could equally benefit from its usage. While most students used mobile applications during assignments, observations revealed disparities in their ability to utilize advanced features or applications, often relying on AI tools like ChatGPT for basic translations. This suggests a lack of adequate training in effectively using MALL tools, echoing the findings of Burston (2014), who emphasized the need for teacher-guided implementation to ensure equitable access.

Rahmawati et al (2020) underscore the significance of using audio-based observation techniques to develop listening skills, particularly in EFL classrooms, a finding that resonates with this study's focus on audio drills and video-based tasks as central components of MALL activities. These tasks provided students at SMAN 5 with authentic listening experiences; however, consistent with Rahmawati and Sudaryono's findings, students struggled with tone and accent differentiation, requiring repeated exposure to audio materials to improve comprehension. The semi-structured interviews with teachers further highlighted MALL's role in teaching English listening skills, with teachers emphasizing that mobile devices, including applications like Erlangga and YouTube, offered valuable exposure to native-like pronunciations. This finding aligns with Godwin-Jones (2017), who noted that mobile technology bridges the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use. However, unlike Gholami et al. (2018), who reported seamless student adaptability to MALL tools, this study identified challenges such as students' reliance on teachers for translation tasks and limited vocabulary. This supports our observation of frequent AI tool usage, like ChatGPT for basic translations, that further reflected a dependency on external support rather than fostering autonomous learning, emphasizing the need for additional scaffolding to maximize MALL's potential in listening skill development.

Teachers consistently highlighted the motivational advantages of using mobile devices in language learning, noting that students displayed greater enthusiasm and a stronger willingness to participate in listening exercises. These observations align with Sun et al. 's (2021) findings, which emphasize MALL's potential to enhance student engagement through multimodal input. However, challenges such as connectivity issues and limited student readiness were also identified, reflecting Zhang & Zou (2020) analysis of the technical barriers commonly encountered in mobile learning implementation.

The findings indicate that while MALL offers significant benefits for developing listening skills, its successful application requires careful planning to address issues of accessibility and adequate training. Teachers play a critical role in guiding students to harness MALL effectively, as underscored by Brown et al. (2015). Future research could explore the long-term effects of MALL on language proficiency, with an emphasis on diverse student populations to ensure its inclusivity and effectiveness across various educational settings.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study affirm that SMAN 5 has indeed implemented MALL in its teaching practices. Teachers actively incorporated mobile applications such as YouTube and Kahoot into classroom activities to facilitate English listening skills. Guided by structured instructions, these tools were used for diverse learning objectives, including vocabulary building and contextual comprehension. Observations further revealed a balance between individual and group usage of mobile devices, ensuring flexibility in learning approaches. These practices reflect a concerted effort to integrate MALL into English teaching, aligning with the broader goals of modern educational technology adoption.

The research also highlights that MALL has a positive impact on improving students' listening skills at SMAN 5, though the results are nuanced. Students demonstrated enhanced

vocabulary retention and contextual understanding through interactive activities like audio drills. However, challenges such as difficulty in focusing on similar pronunciations and repeated instructions indicate varied effectiveness among learners. These mixed outcomes suggest that while MALL provides a robust platform for listening skill enhancement, its success heavily depends on individual learner readiness and the design of instructional activities.

In conclusion, SMAN 5 has successfully implemented MALL as a teaching aid, and its role in improving listening skills is evident but not without limitations. To maximize MALL's potential, addressing technical and logistical challenges, such as connectivity and resource availability, is critical. Moreover, continued teacher support and a focus on tailored instructional strategies are essential to ensure equitable and effective learning outcomes. This study underscores the transformative potential of MALL in language learning while highlighting areas for improvement to enhance its impact on listening skill development.

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