

## TEACHER'S BELIEFS ON INTEGRATING MOBILE APPLICATION IN EFL CLASSROOM

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### Abstract

21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessitate the abilities that students' need for their career development in the current era. The utilization of Mobile Application in teaching and learning process as the integration of Information and Communication Technology in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning demands the teacher to get used of it. Hence, this study aims to investigate teacher's belief on integrating Mobile Application in EFL classroom. To reach the objective, a case study on an individual teacher used in this research. The participant was purposively selected because she was considered as the informant who could give sufficient information to answer the research questions. The finding of this study was teacher believes that utilizing Mobile Application is very important as Mobile Application has ability to make transformation of educational aspects by making use of it to reach instructional objectives then the quality of teaching and learning will improve.

**Keywords:** Teacher's beliefs, mobile application, EFL Classroom

### Introduction

Beliefs play a key role in teachers' classroom practices and their professional development. Teachers make decisions about their classroom teaching regarding beliefs they have about language teaching and learning [1]. They emphasized that teachers' beliefs have a great impact on their aims, procedures, their roles, and their learners. In addition, teachers have beliefs about language learning and these helped them get a special approach to language teaching[2]. Teachers' beliefs have a greater effect than the teacher's knowledge on planning their lessons, on the types of decisions they adopt, and on classroom practice.

A belief is a kind of knowledge that is subjective and experience-based. In addition, belief as a personal judgment formed from experiences. A belief is any premise that starts with the term "I believe that[3]." Beliefs that are related to other beliefs are regarded as "core" or "central beliefs." If a belief is associated with other beliefs, it will have more outcomes to them. In line with this; teachers' beliefs are assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught. Besides, belief as proposition which may be consciously or

unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is imbued with emotive commitment[4]. Teachers' beliefs, therefore, can be generally said as assumptions about students, classrooms, and academic materials imbued with commitment to reflect their beliefs on the method or strategy they use.

Considering that technology is crucial in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, teachers cannot stay put. Instead, they must be able to adapt. The rapid growth of technology has naturally influenced every aspects of language teaching process. Technology can be applied to teaching practices to enhance and facilitate foreign language learning. Using technology has positive effects on teaching and learning English. Computer, internet, smart boards, cell phones, video games, music players etc. are used in the target language learning process to raise students' motivation and language awareness. In this case, the integration of technology in the classroom is viewed as an important strategy to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

However, teachers are not always interested to change. Teachers who were not born into the digital world (digital

immigrants) assume that learners are the same as they have always been, and that the same methods that worked for the teachers when they were students will work for their students now[5]. That assumption, however, is no longer valid in this era. Teachers should be adaptive which means that they should start believing that integrating technology in the classroom is an effective way to improve the quality of education. Teachers can choose the technologies that can be deployed in accordance with the pedagogical methods and the language skills in the teaching.

Modern technology has provided many inventions for human life. In communication field, mobile phone has played pivotal role in shaping our life and it goes without saying that education will try to reap its benefits. Internet, used to be accessed through personal computer, can be operated through mobile phone and this allows students who are mostly at their teen and youth period to go online anywhere and anytime[6]. Compared to personal computer, mobile phone has been primarily used by teens to access. Regarding the 21st century, the use of technology is a must that the teacher can use it in teaching and facilitate the students to reach the goal, one of them is mobile application. Trying to establish a relation of these beliefs with the actual technology based activities they implement in their classes will show the underlying reasons why some technologies are used and why others are not, why some activities work and others do not, and what learning objectives are defined and how effective they consider these to be.

A number of studies related to the teacher's beliefs on technology integration have been conducted by prior researchers. Fauzi *et al* investigated how teacher beliefs were related to technology integration practices[7]. The findings revealed that beliefs about the nature of knowledge and learning were significantly correlated with beliefs about effective ways of teaching, and beliefs about effective ways of teaching were significantly correlated with technology integration practices. Besides, O'bannon *et al* investigated how teachers and students

perception related to the use of mobile phone in the classroom[8]. The finding revealed that most teachers and students supported the use of mobile phone in the classroom. They perceived many features of mobile phones were useful for teaching-learning process in the classroom.

Evident in this literature are the influences on teachers' beliefs about technology. Influences include technology in society and working life, teacher competency, access in classrooms, the nature of the subject or task and associated pedagogies, how children learn, and the learning outcomes to be achieved. There is a link between teacher beliefs associated with constructivist approaches and using technology as a partner to facilitate creative thinking and learner-centered activities. Reflecting on the current educational reform agenda in Indonesia, teachers are being asked to employ contemporary learning resources and activities that will ensure a digitized curriculum through digital pedagogies. Moreover, the utilization of Mobile Application (MA) in teaching and learning process as the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in 21st century learning demands the teacher to get used of it. Therefore, this research attempts to answer what is teacher's belief on integrating mobile application in EFL classroom.

### **Methodology**

A qualitative case study is research which tends to explore depth phenomenon and provide the best understanding of a research problem by revealing the general characteristic of issues[9]. In line with the explanation above, this study employs a qualitative case study to explore the teacher's beliefs on integrating mobile application in the class. Furthermore, a single English teacher from one of Vocational High School in Karanganyar, Central Java, Indonesia was purposively selected as the research subject; it was found that the teacher in that school has been integrating mobile application in the class. The rationale of choosing this design and the teacher is due to the fact that the

intention of this study is to get deep understanding on teacher's belief on integrating mobile application in EFL classroom as well as to what extent the application is applied. Therefore, the investigation was targeted only to English teacher who can provide data to answer the research questions. The data collected through in-depth interview. Interview is used to provide structured data with greater depth. It is used to find out teacher's belief on integrating mobile application in the classroom. In analyzing the data, the researchers adapt Miles, Huberman, and Saldana analytical procedures[10]. The steps begin with the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full body of written-up, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials. After that, the process showing data simply in the form of words, sentence, or narrative in order that the data collected are mastered by the researcher as the basic to take appropriate conclusion. The last stage is drawing a conclusion and verification. In drawing conclusion, the researcher verifies the data by correlating to the theory and previous research.

### **Findings and Discussions**

Regarding the topic of this study, the teacher has been integrating ICT in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In teaching process the teacher implemented the ICT through the use of mobile application. Teachers' beliefs about teaching include their beliefs in class and clear implementation, methods or media implemented, teaching resources, effective teaching, classroom management, and good quality language teachers[11]. Therefore, teacher believes that it is very important to use technology such as mobile applications in the 21st century era. Interestingly, her beliefs reflect activities in teaching practice. The belief behind the teacher about mobile application integration will, of course, influence the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. From the result of the interview, it was revealed that the teacher believes that integrating mobile

application in the classroom is very useful. It is beneficial for both teacher and students as well. It can also motivate students to learn more because of the interesting display provided by the application in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the implementation of mobile application is not merely about 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, the indicators of skills or aspects being learned are not neglected. Mobile application can also provide students with authenticity, curiosity and creativity. The teacher described her beliefs about the implementation of mobile application:

In this era technology developed very rapidly. Various technologies such as internet computers and social media are things that are always used every day, like a mate. As we are living in 21<sup>st</sup> century, everything is always seen from the use of technology. I believe so much that technology will improve the quality of teaching and learning process and bring changes in learning activity. Motivation which is very essential in language learning, can be easily increased and sustained by the use of technology. That also happens in the classroom. In teaching process especially, the use of mobile application encourages students' interest and motivation.

In line with this, the role of the teacher in the classroom is as a facilitator, for example, she facilitates what students need in the classroom and also as a counselor because she also helps students when they get into trouble - the teacher defines mobile applications as one of the media in the teaching-learning process. Interestingly, her belief is reflected in the way she taught in the classroom. The result of observation showed that through the use of mobile application, she encourages students to learn a given topic in pair using their mobile phone. The teacher explained her view about mobile application in relation to the role of teacher:

I agree that mobile application will never be able to substitute a role of teacher in the classroom, but we have to take into account that it is teachers who are able to integrate mobile application in the classroom that will substitute the teachers who do not believe on the advantages of mobile application. I believe that teacher is the best

model in the classroom and students can learn from them.

In this case, the teacher believed that students' role in teaching and learning is active recipients of information. Practically in the classroom, the teacher conducts teaching and learning with the basis of student-centered. She asked the students to be active in learning by dividing them into some groups or sometimes in pair. Then, each group should open the application to discuss the topic being learned. During the teaching and learning process, she also approached each group to monitor the students and help students whenever it was necessary. Additionally, the teacher also believes that the use of technology is one way to encourage students' learning style into multi-sensory learning. In the class, the teacher wants the students to be aware of their roles, that is, as an active participant. This is a representation of her belief believing that the teacher's role should be a facilitator. Further, referring to the concept of digital immigrant and digital native proposed by Prensky [5], the teacher is actually categorized into digital immigrant teacher since she was not born in the digital era. The teacher, however, is not resistant to change. She believes that integrating technology in the teaching and learning process brings about a great impact on students' learning. Thus, she believes that in this digital era, teachers should be ICT literate to face the challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

She explains:

Students cannot be effective in tomorrow's world if they are trained in yesterday's skills, no matter how sophisticated the tools are, the teacher is still the most influential "tool" in the classroom. I was not born in the digital era, I am sure that my students are better in using technology than I am, but it is not a problem as I can also learn from many sources about technology. By following this digital era in the implementation of teaching, I believe that it will bring about change in our education, that's better education with better creativity.

Furthermore, in the classroom, the teacher used an application to teach English that has many useful features to help students learning by themselves. The teacher believes that integrating mobile application in the classroom will be very helpful since the students can learn not only the theory but also the real practice. She explains:

The use of mobile application is very helpful in the process of teaching and learning because I saw students enthusiastic when learning using mobile phones. They were very interested and enthusiastic in learning. Therefore, students can actively participate in learning activities because using mobile phone in classroom and the current teaching style refers to the student center.

In addition, factors that influence a teacher's beliefs may come from the teacher's own experience as language learners, the experience of what works best, established practices, personality factors, educationally based or research-based principles, principles derived from an approach or method (Richards & Lockhart, 1994: 30-31). In this study, the researchers interviewed a teacher in order to investigate those factors. It is found that several factors shaped a teacher's belief. It can be explained as follows:

The factors that influenced me to integrate mobile application in the class are experience and personality factors, because I realized that the demands of teachers at this time is to understand technology, so I attended various workshops on MALL (mobile-assisted language learning) and then I tried to implement it in teaching.

Experience is necessary to enhance the way in teaching students. It has a big impact on shaping the teacher's belief and practices. The teacher mentioned that the more she practiced teaching-learning, the more she would be easy to handle the students. Professional development activities can support it. These activities are aimed to change teachers' knowledge, beliefs and instructional practices. She believes that integrating technology including mobile application brings about a great impact on students' learning

## Conclusion

In this paper, teacher's beliefs about mobile application have been presented based on a depth interview. The results reveal that the teacher believes that utilizing mobile application is very important as mobile application has ability to make transformation of educational aspects by making use of it to reach instructional objectives then the quality of teaching and learning will improve. As evident in both the mobile application beliefs, the teacher is acknowledging the role of mobile application as a knowledge construction tool through collaborative activity, the teacher believes that mobile application is very important to be implemented in the teaching and learning process as it will give advantages for teachers, students, as well as education development in Indonesia. In addition, the teacher also believes that mobile application is a learning tool to enhance curriculum and its use relates to real life practices. This research implies a number of suggestions for EFL teacher. First, it is necessary for teachers to equip themselves with *mobile-assisted language learning* training, seminar, or workshop before they use it in the classroom further they are confident in using it. Second, teachers should care for their students' motivation and participation by demonstrating proper personal and teaching behavior integrated with mobile application in the classroom. It is because better technology integration will lead to better understanding in this 21st century learning.

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