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Mobile Seamless Language Learning Framework to Improving Students' Speaking Skills for Junior High Students during Pandemic Convid-19: A Case Study in Indonesian Context

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ABSTRACT

English is a course that requires a special learning design during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is because nowadays during the Covid-19 pandemic, learning is being delivered through online learning environments. In addition, there are several competencies that must be achieved in this study. In this paper, a mobile seamless language learning framework for junior high students is proposed based on infrastructure owned by junior high schools in Indonesia. The proposed mobile seamless language learning design uses almost all dimensions of mobile seamless learning, except for the across location dimension which is not possible to implement during this pandemic period. Moreover, elements of language learning pedagogy are part of an important component in this design.

Keywords: mobile seamless learning, seamless language learning, second language learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the Covid-19 pandemic broke out in Indonesia, in mid-March 2020, the Indonesian government closed all schools from early childhood education to higher education. Therefore, the Indonesian Ministry of Education decided that the learning process must take place from home through online learning until December 2020. To support this learning, various digital platforms and features are used, such as learning management system applications which are more intended for content delivery, messaging applications, social networks applications, and video conference applications as well.

One of the courses that require a specific learning strategy during the learning process from home is the English course. This is because there are several competencies to be achieved, namely grammar, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The speaking skills are complex competencies that require specific strategies when presented in online learning.

Speaking is one of the four skills that allow a person to understand and produce spoken language for appropriate and effective interpersonal communication, especially in the process of second language learning. Speaking skill is a productive oral skill that builds

systematic verbal speech to convey meaning [1]. Gani, et al emphasize in communicating, one must be able to compose and organize ideas, compose sentences, and express them with good pronunciation and language that the listener can understand. In addition, someone conveys the meaning of the language according to the context they are talking about. Therefore, the speaking skill is a complex ability in which there is a cognitive process, namely conceptualization, utterance formulation, speech articulation, and self-monitoring [2].

In foreign language learning, motivation plays an important role in maintaining the sustainability of learning activities which is a form of internal strength, so that when learning motivation has been formed, learning participants will use an active learning attitude in learning, expressing interest in learning which in turn students can focus on learning so that they can master knowledge [3]. To achieve this condition, a learning design is needed that is able to make learning participants immerse in the learning process, this condition is known as the flow state of learning.

Learning is a dynamic process and in order to present this flow of learning requires continuity in learning without pause (seamless) which allows learners to learn

in various scenarios. The learning process can occur in formal or informal conditions, inside the classroom or outside the classroom, individually or socially, digital and non-digital media, as well as a physical or virtual environments. To accommodate a seamless learning model, inter-context connectivity is needed and mobile technology is a tool that can bridge this context-sensitive learning. Being so, Wong's created 10 dimensions of the Mobile Seamless Learning environment [4].

The implementation of online learning in Indonesia has also encountered many obstacles including inadequate internet network infrastructure and the fact that not all students have personal computers and internet networks at home. However, almost all students have smartphones that rely on the use of mobile data to access content via the internet. Therefore, this paper proposes a mobile seamless language learning framework that is used to improve speaking skill competence in junior high school students in Indonesia by considering the constraints of their technological infrastructure.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Seamless Learning

Seamless learning is a learning approach that emphasizes continuity, continuity and connectivity in the learning process using technology, resulting in cross-context learning that is not limited to time and space. Wong's define seamless learning as an approach that uses learning models that combine many fields of learning theory [5]. Seamless learning is currently generally seen as a special form of mobile and ubiquitous learning in a technology enhanced learning community [6]. This is because mobile devices and ubiquitous technology support learners to learn at the right time and place in a personal and cross-context.
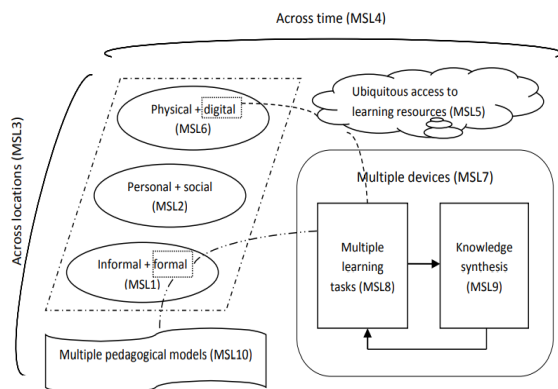

Figure 1   Visualization of Mobile Seamless Learning Dimensions

Figure 1 is a visualization of 10 dimensions of mobile seamless learning [5]. The seamless integration between various dimensions is aimed at creating learning experiences for learners. The foundation of a seamless learning model is connectivity. Connectivity in the

dimensions depicted in Figure 1 can be realized through the use of mobile / ubiquitous technology. The function of mobile / ubiquitous technology here is bridging the separate contexts and increasing the student's interaction. There are three levels of interaction that can be created through this technology, namely: level 1 learner - self interactions; level 2: learner - human interaction and learner - non human interaction; and level 3: learner - instruction interactions [7].

2.2. Seamless Language Learning

Learning a language requires continuity in learning. Based on empirical data, learning in the classroom, in this case the formal learning setting (generally the time allocation is limited) is not sufficient to master a language skill such as speaking. Therefore, extra learning is needed that does not only occur in a formal learning environment. The integration of formal and informal settings in language learning has long been carried out by language learning theorists [5]. Aguilar's wrote in their book that the use of web technology and social media can increase learner engagement in completing tasks and this is because this technology provides rich resources that can support learner learning both inside and outside the classroom [8]. To bridge in-class learning (formal learning) and out-class learning (informal learning) requires a seamless learning approach or better known as seamless language learning (SLL). SLL is a combination of language learning theory and the existing dimensions of seamless learning which emphasizes how to connect activities of language learning that occur in different learning spaces [9].

2.3. Design and Discussions

Figure 1 is a mobile seamless language learning framework aimed at improving speaking skills for junior high students in cities in Indonesia where the internet network is adequate and students have a smartphone device that can access the internet with at least a mobile data package. Figure 1 uses several dimensions of mobile seamless learning [5], including formal and informal learning (MSL 1), personal and social learning (MSL 2), across time (MSL 3), ubiquitous access learning resources (MSL 5), encompasses digital and physical worlds (MSL 6), combination use of multiple device types (MSL 7), seamless switching between multiple learning tasks (MSL 8), knowledge synthesis (MSL 9), and Encompasses multiple pedagogical and learning activity models (MSL 10).

The proposed mobile seamless language learning framework in this paper, namely the across locations dimension (MSL 4) is not used. This is because during the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers and students carried out the teaching and learning process from their respective homes, so there was no transfer of learning

locations. In addition, the combination uses dimension of multiple device types (MSL 7) emphasizing on technology features of web and mobile applications such as the use of LMS, mobile messaging applications, as well as video conference applications.
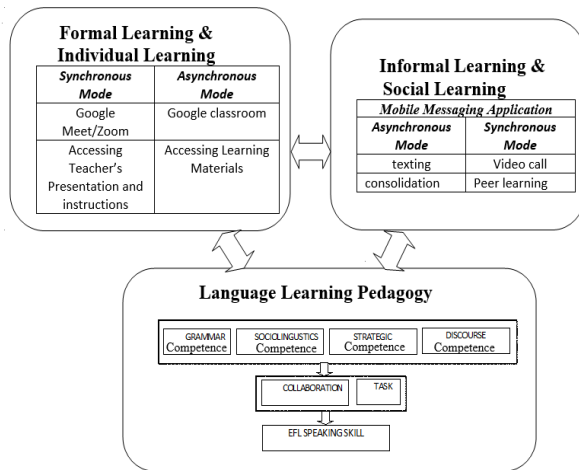

Figure 2   Mobile Seamless Learning Framework: Promoting EFL Speaking Skill

Seamless language learning is a model that emphasizes the connectivity of learning activities that occur in different learning spaces [9], [6]. In Figure 3, mobile seamless language learning shows that formal learning and individual / personal learning are in one context which is presented through synchronous and asynchronous modes in accessing learning resources. However, in this design, synchronous learning using video conferencing is carried out with a short duration considering that the students' ability to access the internet is minimal. This video conference is intended to provide brief explanations and motivation to students. The formal learning setting is then followed by an informal learning session that utilizes a mobile messaging application in doing virtual consolidation. Collaboration in doing tasks can be provided in synchronous and asynchronous modes.

These competencies are developed through the process of working on projects with peer learning. The implementation of this language learning pedagogy uses the dimension of mobile seamless learning so as to create technological learning in various contexts and achieve flow learning conditions. According to Csíkszentmihályi [10] flow is an optimal psychological condition experienced by a person when engaged in a challenging activity in an effort to achieve a skill in which a person will immerse and concentrate on the given task. This can result in deep learning with a maximum level of personal satisfaction. Therefore, a learning designer needs to understand how learners enter this flow state, and how this condition can be maintained even though there are changes in learning settings or contexts which ultimately lead to a contribution to effective and efficient learning [11].

In the seamless language learning design, the elements of language learning pedagogy that are specific to improving EFL speaking skills adopt the required competencies and develop speaking skills [12]. In general speaking is a skill that is difficult to master because there are many competencies that must be possessed to master this skill, including grammar competence, sociolinguistics competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence [12]. Thus, it takes a proper design to achieve speaking competency. In addition, students also struggle with anxiety when they desire to communicate in English. Therefore collaborative learning can help reduce anxiety in learning English [13]. This is in line with Gerlach's who states that collaborative learning occurs through a natural social process where all those involved in collaborative learning activities communicate with each other [14]. When they work to complete a project peer-to-peer it can stimulate a learning mechanism [15]. Babiker [16] also said that collaborative learning techniques can improve students' speaking skills effectively, because techniques help students communicate between them. In addition developed the Collaborative Learning Intervention Module to Improve Speaking Fluency [17].

3.   CONCLUSIONS

Learning during the Covid-19 outbreak pandemic had an impact on the transformation of learning from a traditional classroom (face to face meeting) to a virtual classroom (online meeting). Changing the learning mode requires an appropriate learning design. This paper focuses on learning English in junior high schools in Indonesia specifically on the mastery of speaking skills. To master these competencies, a learning framework that uses a seamless learning approach was designed by implementing language learning theory. The seamless language learning design proposed in this paper uses all dimensions of mobile seamless learning, except for the across location dimension (MSL 4). This is because during the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings in class were eliminated and students were required to study from home.

In general, the proposed mobile seamless language learning framework consists of three parts, namely: (1) formal learning and individual learning, (2) informal learning and social learning, and (3) language learning pedagogy. In bridging the existing dimensions of the proposed framework, asynchronous and synchronous modes are used using various mobile and web based platforms. Both formal and individual learning use video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Google Meet for synchronous modes and Google Classroom as a learning management system (LMS). For informal and social

learning, mobile messaging applications such as WhatsApp are used.

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