The Students’ Perception Toward the Use of Smartphones in Learning English at MAN Sidenreng Rappang

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Abstract
Technology and education are two things that cannot be separated until now. Especially when the pandemic outbreak hit which required the education world to implement an online learning system, smartphones became one of the choices for learning media. However, researchers found a phenomenon that occurred in MAN Sidenreng Rappang after the covid-19 pandemic, where students could use smartphones in the learning process in the classroom. This study aims to determine how students' perceptions of smartphone use in learning English at MAN Sidenreng Rappang. Participants in the study consisted of seven students from twelfth grade. In addition, this study used observation, interview, and documentation techniques to obtain data. From the findings, researchers found that smartphones can be used as one of the learning media in accordance with the results of research that shows a positive impact related to the use of smartphones in learning English in the classroom, such as making learning more fun, making it easier for students to access learning materials. Smartphones also provide various features and applications that help in the learning process, such as easier assignment collection, helping the translation process, and various applications that can support the learning process. The use of smartphones also improves students’ skills, especially in improving vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills. In addition, the use of smartphones also motivates students to learn. But from the findings, researchers also found several obstacles faced by students while using smartphones, such as disruption of learning focus, data packages, and poor internet connection.

Keywords
Learning English During Post-Pandemic, Perception, Smartphones
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Introduction

Technology has an important role in improving the quality of education because the exchange of information is accelerating with the times. Mohammadi et al. (2020) revealed that technology is developing in various aspects of life, including education. According to Ta’amneh (2021), one of the benefits of information and communication technology in education is to facilitate the field of teaching and learning by using various types of technology such as smartphones, computers, tablets, and laptops. The advancement of educational technology cannot be separated from the changes that take place in the fields of technology and education. Information technology is currently experiencing extraordinary developments, such as the use of digital books, wireless technology, electronic portfolios, and so on. Mastery of information technology is an absolute value that must be mastered by students to face the era of globalization with competition for rapid technological advances.

Technology is very influential in various aspects of life. Humans have relied on technology, especially cell phones, to encourage communication and mobility of life because many things can be accessed through cell phones, especially smartphones (Pham, 2022). Apart from being used as a communication medium, smartphones can also be utilized as a learning tool to improve students’ ability to learn English if used properly. The use of smartphones for education is increasingly popular around the world, and many people, especially students and teachers are using these smartphones to share knowledge and reference dictionaries (Mohammadi et al., 2020).

Technology and education cannot be separated. Maritsa et al. (2021) revealed that technology plays an important role in education as a bridge to teaching. Maritsa et al. also added that every party involved in the world of education must master the existing technological progress. This statement provides a strong foundation for why this research is important to do. Smartphones, as one of the media technologies, are beneficial to education, particularly in English. A study conducted by Angkasa et al. (2023) uncovered a beneficial effect of smartphone use on student learning results. Many researchers mention the advantages of smartphone media in the learning process such as easier access to teaching materials and flexibility (Alrefaai, 2019; Kukulska-Hulme & Pettit, 2009 & Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008).

Technology is needed in education at the time of the coronavirus three years ago, precisely in March 2020. The World Health Organization (WHO) disseminated that the coronavirus had become a pandemic throughout the world. As a result, the government must enforce a reduction in activities to break the chain of spreading the coronavirus, the covid-19 pandemic also has an impact on the education system. Learning that was originally based on face-to-face directly in the classroom must be replaced with a virtual learning system from home. This is regulated through the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) notification about Covid-19.
Number 4 of 2020 concerning the implementation of emergency education and applies whether the education is received online or remotely. In the learning process, teachers and students utilize technology. Smartphone is one of the most widely used media in the learning process because smartphones are one of the effective media to be used for distance learning (Maknuni, 2020). In some schools, the use of smartphones during the post-pandemic has become a new thing in the world of education.

In Indonesia, online education is a new phenomenon. In the process of online instruction and learning, students and teachers are required to be able to adapt to existing changes. Yuzulia (2021) emphasized that teachers, students, and parents face various problems in online learning in terms of technology, knowledge, time, internet connection, and so on. Maming & Sudarmanto (2022) said that students experience many complaints due to distance learning, especially in learning English. For approximately two years, students learn from home using various applications from smartphones, computers, and laptops by relying on internet connections from students’ homes until in early 2022 the face-to-face learning process at school resumes.

Many schools now permit pupils to use smartphones during class instruction after the covid-19 phenomenon ended because smartphones are considered to be used as a learning medium. Smartphones with all the services offered bring some convenience that supports learning (Khotimah et al., 2021). This claim is corroborated by the findings of Papadakies (2018) which shows that the features of smartphones create a comfortable and meaningful learning atmosphere. Alrefaai (2019) also shows that the process of learning English becomes more interesting with the use of smartphone media. In MAN Sidenreng Rappang, mobile devices are also used to teach English. According to one of the teachers at the MAN Sidenreng Rappang, the policy was made to follow the era of technology by leveraging digital learning.

There are several previous studies related to this research. Ahmad (2020) found that students are interested in using smartphones as a collaborative medium that can be used for flexible and individual learning activities. Maknuni (2020) who found that smartphones have a major influence on the learning process in the pandemic era because smartphones are one of the effective media used for distance learning. Faradika (2020) who found that the reason teachers use smartphones to teach English is because smartphones are an interesting, efficient, and effective learning medium with various learning applications. Research conducted by Akmal (2020) which found that students are excited to learn Arabic using smartphone media. Shofiah (2020) who found that students are more active and like to study Islamic religious education subjects using smartphones. Arsita et al (2021) who revealed that the use of smartphones to learn mathematics during the covid-19 pandemic is considered less effective to use because it affects students' understanding of the information presented by teachers.

Another similar study is the research conducted by Rahma (2020) found that the use of smartphones in the learning process greatly increases student motivation and learning outcomes. Research conducted by Fitri et al (2022) revealed that smartphones increase students' interest in learning. Last but not least, research conducted by Anggraini (2022) found that the implementation of smartphone media in learning has a positive impact on student achievement. Based on these previous studies, it is clear that the use of smartphones is not only useful for English subjects,
but can also be used in other subjects such as mathematics, Islamic religious education, Arabic etc. and is proven to increase student interest, motivation, and learning outcomes.

Based on the results of pre-observations made by researchers at several high schools in Sidenreng Rappang regency, the researchers found a phenomenon that students at MAN Sidenreng Rappang can use smartphones in the learning process, especially in learning English. The researchers also found that there are several schools that prohibit the use of smartphones in the learning process in the classroom, such as at SMAN 1 Sidenreng Rappang, SMAN 4 Sidenreng Rappang, and at SMKN 2 Sidenreng Rappang. This study complements previous research conducted by Faradika (2020) which was only limited to examining how teachers' perceptions of using smartphones to teach English. This study examines how students' perceptions in learning English using smartphones.

The purpose of this study was to find out how students' perceptions in using smartphones to learn English during the post-pandemic at MAN Sidereng Rappang. The novelty of this study is that previous studies on the same topic mostly examined how the use of smartphones in learning English at the university level, while this study examined how students at the high school level perceive the use of smartphones in learning English during the post-pandemic. Although in several previous studies there were those who examined the same topic at the high school level, the research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and on average used the type of design survey research while this study used a qualitative approach. The results of this study are expected to introduce teachers that smartphones in addition to being used as a medium of communication, smartphones can also be used as learning media in the classroom if used correctly.

**Method**

This research used a type of case study research with a qualitative approach. To obtain information, researchers selected seven twelfth-grade students at MAN Sidenreng Rappang as respondents in this study. Respondents in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique. To obtain data, researchers used interview, observation and documentation technique. The researchers conducted two interviews with respondents so that the data obtained in the field was saturated. In the process of data processing, researchers used Nvivo 12 to make it easier for researchers to analyze data.

The study was carried out at MAN Sidenreng Rappang which is located at Jalan Poros Pinrang No.1A, Duampanua Village, Baranti District, Sidrap Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The reason why the researcher conducted research in MAN Sidenreng Rappang, is because MAN Sidenreng Rappang is one of the schools that applies Smartphones in the teaching and learning process, 22 while some schools prohibit students from operating smartphones in the learning process.

In qualitative research, the term research subject or respondent is also called an informant. Informants are people who provide information about the data being studied by researchers (Gay et al., 2012). Population is the whole object to be studied. Population, according to Gay et al (2012), is a generalized category consisting of several individuals with certain attributes and characteristics selected by researchers for study purposes before drawing conclusions. All subjects to be studied must have similar properties so that the findings carried out can be
generalized. The population in this study were twelfth-grade students of MAN Sidenreng Rappang. The population in this study was five classes with a total of one hundred and fifty students. Subject selection in this study was carried out using a purposive sampling technique. According to Rai & Thapa (2015), purposive sampling is a data collection technique where researchers rely on their judgment to select members of the population who will participate in their research. To obtain the information, the researcher took seven twelfth-grade students of MAN Sidenreng Rappang as respondents in this study. The researcher chose the twelfth-grade students because they have had longer experience using smartphones in the learning process, especially in learning English, which is more than two years.

The effort to organize, process and break down an event into small units is called data analysis. Data analysis also means systematically organizing the results of the data that has been collected, then the data is interpreted to produce an opinion, thought, idea, or new theory. Activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continue continuously until completion. The researcher's next step is to examine the data from respondents after all the information has been gathered. The researcher adopted the 3 stages of qualitative data analysis according to Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010), the data analysis activities in this study are as follows:

1. Familiarizing and organizing Researchers must deeply understand the data that has been collected by reading and continuing to read until they are accustomed to audio recordings of written data. with the data that has been collected. In this study, the researcher will make transcripts of the interview results to make it easier to study the data. According to Creswell (2012), The process of transcribing involves turning audio-recorded data into written data.

2. Coding and reducing the coding stage is the core stage of qualitative research. After the interview results are made in the form of transcripts, researchers will study and process the data then filter the necessary data, and then group based on the themes of the interview questions. The next stage is for researchers to do coding so that the data is easier to analyze.

3. Interpreting and representing the research's final phase of qualitative data analysis is data interpretation and representation. Data analysis is followed by interpretation and discussion based on themes. Interpretation is the process of interpreting, explaining, and providing a reasonable explanation for the data that has been coded previously. In making judgments, the researcher in this study used interview results as evidence.

Results

Based on the study's findings, researchers found several students' perceptions about smartphone use in learning English. Information in this study was identified through two interviews. In this study, there were several students' perceptions about the use of smartphones in learning English. To find out this data, researchers first made direct observations at MAN Sidenreng Rappang related to how to use smartphones in the English learning process. The results of observations show that students use smartphones as one of the learning media, including in English language learning. The results of researchers' observations show that students behave well during the use of smartphones in learning with no noise and use smartphones according to learning needs. Students use smartphones as a learning medium to facilitate learning English, for example in translating sentences or...
vocabulary and to access the internet. Students look very enthusiastic and active by using smartphones in learning English, students can understand what is said by the teacher and occasionally answer using English.

However, it is undeniable that the use of technology in the learning process certainly has a negative impact on students. From the observations, the way teachers respond to the negative effects of smartphone use is by collecting students' smartphones when not in use. In the learning process, sometimes teachers use a smart TV, or learning is carried out in the discussion. So that, the steps taken by teachers at MAN Sidenreng Rappang to respond to the negative effects of smartphone use which are likely to have an impact on students' lack of concentration are to reprimand and ask students to collect smartphones if they are not needed in the learning process.

Moreover, researchers found several students' opinions about the use of smartphones in learning English. Information in this study was identified through two times interviews. In this study, there were several student opinions about the use of smartphones in learning English. The results are as follows:

1. Making learning more enjoyable

The students as respondents in this study gave several opinions about the benefits of smartphone use in English language learning identified by respondents 1, 5, 6, and 7. This can be seen from the data presented in the form of a diagram in figure 1, some respondents said that one of the benefits of using a smartphone in learning English is to make learning more enjoyable. Applications used in the learning process such as the use of the Quizizz application, and learning through videos and songs via smartphones make students feel enjoyable.

![Figure 1. The Students’ Perception on Benefit of Smartphone](image)

2. The Ease of Access learning materials

This benefit was stated by respondents 2 and 6. From the interview results which can be seen from the data presented in the form of a diagram in figure 2,
Based on the diagram, it can be concluded that two out of seven students agree that the features contained in smartphones can make it easier for students to access material that is not understood by students through the internet easily. This convenience makes students helped in the process of learning English in class.

3. Smartphone applications and features that help the learning process

From the interviews, researchers found that some respondents revealed the existence of several applications and features that help students in the process of learning English. The researchers present the data in the form of a hierarchy chart which can be seen in figure 3 below.

Figure 2. The Students’ Perception on Benefit of Smartphone

Figure 3. The Students’ Perception on Benefit of Smartphone
From this data, some respondents agreed that there are applications and features on smartphones that can help students learn English, such as Google Classroom, WhatsApp application, Quizizz application, google translate and ChatGPT.

4. Improving skills in English

From the interview data, researchers analyzed students' perceptions of the benefits of using smartphones, one of which was improving skills in English. Researchers highlighted the skills mentioned by respondents were speaking, vocabulary, pronunciation and listening skills. Respondents agreed that the use of smartphones by utilizing existing features, can improve their skills in English.

5. Motivating to learn

The students gave opinions on the benefits of smartphone use in learning English identified from all participants. This can be seen from the data presented in the form of a diagram in figure 4 below.

![Figure 4. The Students' Perception on Benefit of Smartphone](image)

From the diagram presented above, it is concluded that all respondents agree that the use of smartphones in learning English increases student motivation to learn because students find it easier to learn English with the help of smartphones.
6. Obstacles faced by students in learning English using smartphones

Some students in this study also revealed that there were several obstacles they faced while learning English using smartphones. Researchers present data in the form of a hierarchy chart about the obstacles experienced by students in learning English with smartphone media which can be seen in Figure 5 below.

![Obstacles faced by students in learning English using smartphones](image)

**Figure 5. The Students’ Perception on Benefit of Smartphone**

From the data above, based on the results of interviews, researchers found several students who revealed that there were obstacles they experienced while learning English using smartphones, namely disruption of learning focus due to social media notifications, internet connections and constraints on data packages.

**Discussion**

This study aimed to investigate the use of smartphones to learn English from the student’s point of view. According to the results of research, learning English feels more fun using a smartphone, learning feels easier with the help of features available on smartphones. According to Aamri (2011), learning English becomes easier because of the completeness and proficiency contained in smartphones that make students happy in learning. Students also revealed that listening to songs, learning through videos, or playing while learning using the Quizizz app, and learning via the internet make lessons fun. This is supported by the results of previous research conducted by Rasheed et al (2019) which confirmed that smartphones help students learn English, one of which is because of internet access that makes students feel comfortable learning.

Furthermore, students’ answers during interviews showed that students were easier to learn English because they could access the internet to search for material that was not understood through smartphones. Rogozin (2012) argues that using
smartphones as a means of learning implies that students are allowed to understand the lesson thoroughly because students can utilize the internet to search and develop information about the subject matter being studied. Smartphone features have many benefits that can be used in the learning process including in terms of using the internet to find additional subject matter. This is in line with what was revealed by Arsita et al (2021) which revealed that smartphone features help students to search for additional materials and references through the internet.

The results of the interviews conducted showed that students felt helped in the learning process using smartphones because of the features and applications that facilitate the learning process. Lestariningisih et al (2022) said that smartphones help students improve the learning process in today's technology-oriented era. The use of smartphones as a learning medium provides many benefits for students and teachers, such as making it easier to send assignments and access materials using Google Classroom and WhatsApp Applications, helping in translating, utilizing ChatGPT, and using the Quizizz application that can help to improve student skills. This statement is supported by previous research conducted by Ahmad (2020) which revealed that students show a positive attitude about using smartphones as a learning tool.

Another thing that should be noted, the students agreed that smartphone education can improve their English skills, especially speaking, listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation. From the results of the study, researchers found that students like to learn through videos and songs sent by teachers. Students practice listening and improve their English skills through English videos and songs. Ratminingsih (2016) established that using songs to teach English listening is a successful method. According to Chiu (2015), smartphones in language learning have many benefits, especially in speaking and pronunciation, vocabulary, and listening skills. Many students in the study agreed that smartphone use in learning English improved their learning outcomes and skills. Students realize that smartphone features affect their skills. These results support the findings of Fitri et al (2022) who argue that the use of smartphones in the learning process makes learning outcomes increase.

In addition, from the data, it was found that the use of smartphones arouses students' motivation to learn English. Students agree that lessons that feel easy with various features and applications that can be used in learning English affect student motivation in learning. Hutami (2023) revealed that smartphone technology is an innovation in education. The use of features found on smartphones makes students motivated to learn, for example, students more easily find the vocabulary and materials needed easily through smartphones. The students stated that the use of smartphone features was helpful and added motivation. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Faradika (2020) and Rahma (2020) which revealed that smartphone use affects student learning motivation. Therefore, smartphone features can support student learning motivation. However, during the COVID-19 era, research findings conducted by Maknuni (2020) found that one of the obstacles to smartphone use was to create a lack of motivation to study from home.

Meanwhile, data shows that there are obstacles faced by students when using smartphones in learning English. One of them is that smartphones can damage focus during the study. Some students agree that social media notifications that come in during the learning process can interfere with student learning concentration. White and Mills (2012) found that smartphone use for some students is only focused on personal use rather than on learning needs. Therefore, the use of
smartphones in learning should get special attention from teachers. In the data, it was also found that the problems faced by students were data quotas and networks that sometimes worsened. Some students complain about the sometimes-getting poor internet connection. Several previous studies support this theory by asserting that the disadvantage of learning to use smartphones is the problem of data packets and internet connections (Klimova & Prazak, 2019; Maknuni, 2020; and Akmal, 2020).

In accordance with the discussion above, it was found that students experienced some obstacles during the use of smartphones in learning English. However, the use of smartphones also provides many benefits to learning. Therefore, students are expected to make good use of smartphones in learning English. Because students believe that smartphones can promise them ease in learning English. Students can still use smartphones in English language learning, but students should look for strategies to minimize problems that occur during smartphone use in classroom learning.

**Conclusion**

This study aims to determine the students' perceptions toward the use of smartphones in learning English. The researchers have conducted all series of research in accordance with the procedures that have been established at the beginning such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that students had a good attitude toward smartphone use in learning English. Based on the results of the study, the researchers found a positive perception of smartphone use and student feedback showed that smartphone use made the learning process fun and made it easier for students to access the learning materials. The use of applications and features contained in smartphones is very helpful for students in improving English skills such as speaking, listening, and vocabulary mastery. In addition, the use of smartphones in learning English makes students more motivated to learn because the students are easier to learn with the assistance of smartphones.

The students can take advantage of various features and applications such as Google Classroom to facilitate the process of submitting assignments, sending assignments from teachers through WhatsApp groups, using the internet, easy to translate, and utilizing the Quizizz application. Therefore, the existence of technological media such as smartphones in education is needed because it can improve the quality of students. The students also experience various obstacles during the use of smartphones in learning English, such as disturbed learning focus due to notifications from social media, poor network connection and internet data needed to use smartphones.

In line with the results of this study, the researchers also found the limitation of study. The limitation of study was the procedure of collecting data. The researchers limited the data collection on the students, they did not do interview to English teachers. The teachers were assumed could give contributive information to enrich the research results. The teachers could give information related to their ways in teaching English subject by asking the students to utilize their smartphone to help their English learning process.
For further researchers, the findings of this study are expected to be one of the sources of future researchers related to the use of smartphones in learning English. The findings of this study reveal students' perceptions regarding smartphone use in language learning. Based on the results of the study's findings, researchers suggest the use of smartphones in learning because it has many positive effects. Concerning the benefits and disadvantages of using smartphones as part of the learning process, it has been verified by students that smartphones have more benefits for the learning process than disadvantages.

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