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ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS THROUGH MOBILE-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING: THE USE OF CAKAP AND BUSUU APPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in enhancing students' writing skills through the use of the CAKAP and Busuu applications. The objectives of the study were to examine the effect of the CAKAP application on students' writing skills, to determine the effect of the Busuu application on students' writing skills, and to identify which application provides a more significant improvement in students' writing performance. The study employed a quantitative research design using a quasi-experimental method involving three classes: Experimental Class I (CAKAP), Experimental Class II (Busuu), and a control class receiving conventional instruction. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure students' writing ability before and after the treatment. The data were collected through writing tests and analyzed using a t-test. The findings revealed that students' writing ability before the treatment was relatively low in both experimental groups. After the implementation of the applications, students in both experimental classes showed significant improvement in their writing performance. The t-test results indicated that the t-value for the CAKAP group (11.611) was higher than the t-table value (1.68657) at the significance level of 0.05 with a degree of freedom of 35. Similarly, the Busuu group showed a t-value of 11.501, which was also higher than the t-table value. These results indicate that both applications significantly improved students' writing skills. However, the CAKAP application demonstrated a slightly higher effect compared to the Busuu application. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The study suggests that mobile-assisted language learning applications such as CAKAP and Busuu can serve as effective tools for improving students' writing skills in English language learning contexts.

Keywords: *Busuu application, CAKAP application, mobile-assisted language learning, writing skills*

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an essential role as a means of communication used by humans to express feelings, ideas, and thoughts. Through language, individuals can share information, build relationships, and interact effectively in social and academic contexts. In the era of globalization, English has become one of the most important international languages used in education, business, technology, and global communication. Therefore, mastering English skills is essential for students to participate successfully in academic and professional environments. Among the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing is often considered one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Writing involves the process of organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and constructing grammatically correct sentences to convey meaning in written form. According to Tampubolon et al. (2022), writing is an indirect form of expressing thoughts through written language. This means that students must be able to transform their ideas into well-structured sentences and coherent texts. However, many students struggle with writing because they are more accustomed to expressing their ideas in their first language rather than in English. Consequently, they often face difficulties in organizing ideas, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and applying correct grammatical structures when writing in English.

Writing skills play a significant role in students' academic success and real-life communication. In academic contexts, writing enables students to respond to essay questions,

complete assignments, and express their understanding of learning materials. In real-life situations, writing skills allow individuals to communicate effectively through letters, emails, reports, and social media platforms. Therefore, developing writing skills provides students with important advantages both in academic learning and in everyday communication.

Despite its importance, writing remains one of the most difficult skills for many senior high school students. Most students perceive writing in English as a complex task because it requires mastery of grammar, vocabulary, and text organization simultaneously. Jiang and Kalyuga (2022) state that writing in a foreign language requires learners to apply linguistic structures, lexical resources, and conventional representations appropriately. For this reason, students need continuous practice and effective learning strategies to improve their writing competence. In the Indonesian educational context, the English curriculum emphasizes the development of four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, in practice, many students still encounter difficulties in developing their writing skills in English. This condition is also found at SMA Negeri 8 Medan, where students are able to write essays in Indonesian but experience difficulties when writing in English. Students often struggle with arranging words into meaningful sentences, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and organizing ideas in a coherent text. In addition, classroom observations indicate that traditional teaching approaches such as guided writing tend to make teachers more active while students remain passive. As a result, students have limited opportunities to explore their ideas and develop their writing skills independently. According to Sinambela et al. (2023), effective writing instruction should involve constructive feedback from teachers on both the content and structure of students' writing to help them improve their performance.

In recent years, technological advancement has transformed the learning environment and created new opportunities for language learning. The integration of technology in education enables students to access information easily, interact with learning materials in more engaging ways, and develop digital literacy skills. Technology also supports more interactive learning experiences through the use of multimedia resources such as audio, images, videos, and interactive applications. Furthermore, digital learning platforms and mobile applications can increase student engagement by providing immediate feedback, challenges, and rewards that motivate students to participate actively in learning activities.

One promising approach that integrates technology into language learning is Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL utilizes mobile devices and applications to support language learning anytime and anywhere. Through mobile applications, students can practice language skills independently, receive instant feedback, and access diverse learning materials. Therefore, the use of mobile learning applications has the potential to enhance students' language learning experience, including the development of writing skills. Among the various language learning applications available today, CAKAP and Busuu have gained popularity as digital platforms that support language learning through interactive features. CAKAP is an online language learning platform that provides two-way interaction between learners and professional teachers. The application offers various language courses, including English, Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, and Indonesian for foreign learners. According to Suharmawan (2023), CAKAP utilizes artificial intelligence and natural language processing technologies to support interactive language learning, provide recommendations, and assist learners in improving their language skills. The application offers benefits such as personalized learning experiences, accessibility, and interactive learning resources that can support students' language development.

Similarly, Busuu is a widely used mobile language learning application that offers courses in twelve different languages and has more than 100 million users worldwide. The application provides structured lessons based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), ranging from beginner to intermediate levels. Busuu integrates various learning activities, including vocabulary exercises, grammar lessons, listening practices, and writing tasks. Additionally, the application allows learners to interact with native speakers and receive feedback on their written and spoken exercises. According to Syafrizal and Septiawati (2022), Busuu offers interactive features such as audio dialogues, quizzes, and instant feedback that help learners improve their language skills effectively.

Considering the potential benefits of mobile learning applications, integrating CAKAP and Busuu into writing instruction may help students improve their writing abilities. These applications provide interactive learning

environments, multimedia materials, and instant feedback that can support students in developing vocabulary, grammar, and text organization. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using CAKAP and Busuu applications in enhancing students' writing skills among eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Medan. Specifically, this study seeks to examine whether the implementation of the CAKAP application contributes to improving students' writing skills, whether the use of the Busuu application enhances students' writing performance, and which of the two applications provides a more significant impact on students' writing development.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a quasi-experimental design to examine the effect of the CAKAP and Busuu applications on students' writing ability. A quasi-experimental design was selected because the researcher used existing classroom groups without randomly assigning individual students. The research involved three groups: Experimental Group A, Experimental Group B, and a Control Group. Experimental Group A received instruction using the CAKAP application, while Experimental Group B was taught using the Busuu application. Meanwhile, the Control Group received conventional writing instruction without the use of mobile-assisted language learning applications. To measure students' improvement in writing ability, pre-tests and post-tests were administered to all groups.

The population of this study consisted of all eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Medan, totaling 155 students distributed across five classes. To select participants, the researcher applied cluster random sampling, in which intact classes were randomly selected from the population. Three classes were chosen as research samples with a total of 93 students, categorized as follows: 1. Experimental Group A (XI-A) – taught using the CAKAP application 2. Experimental Group B (XI-B) – taught using the Busuu application 3. Control Group (XI-C) – taught using conventional teaching methods The main research instrument was a writing test, administered in two stages:

1. Pre-test
   The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to measure students' initial writing ability in both experimental and control groups.
2. Post-test
   The post-test was administered after the treatment to determine whether there was improvement in students' writing ability after using the CAKAP and Busuu applications.

Students were required to produce a written text, and their writing performance was evaluated based on aspects such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The data were collected through several procedures:

1. Pre-test
   The researcher first administered a pre-test to measure students' initial writing ability before implementing the learning applications.
2. Treatment
   After the pre-test, the treatment was conducted in each group: a) Experimental Group A was taught using the CAKAP application. b) Experimental Group B was taught using the Busuu application. c) The Control Group received conventional writing instruction.
3. Post-test
   At the end of the treatment period, a post-test was administered to all groups to measure the improvement of students' writing ability.

In addition, classroom observation was conducted to support the data by documenting the teaching and learning process during the implementation of the applications. The collected data were analyzed using statistical analysis, particularly the t-test, to determine whether there was a significant difference between students' writing scores before and after the treatment.

The steps of analysis included:

1. Calculating the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test.
2. Comparing the improvement between the experimental and control groups.
3. Conducting a t-test to determine the significance of the treatment effect.

If the t-test value was higher than the t-table value at the significance level of 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, indicating that the use of the CAKAP and Busuu applications significantly affected students' writing ability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Improvement of Students' Writing Using the CAKAP Application

In this study, researchers used pre-experimental research to measure the improvement in students' writing skills through the use of proficient applications in eleventh-grade students at SMA N 8 Medan for the 2023/2024 academic year. The results of improving students' writing skills can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Mean Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

Kind of Test	Mean Score	Improvement
Pre-Test	63.70	40,14%
Post -Test	90.80	

The table above shows that the students' mean score on the pre-test was 63.70, while the students' mean score on the post-test was 90.80. It was analyzed that there was an improvement in students' writing after applying the CAKAP application in the class (40,14%).

Significant Testing

After getting the data, the researchers analyzed the data by using a t-test. The t-test value was 11.501, which was higher than the t-table value of 1.68957. It was revealed that using the CAKAP application improved students' writing in eleven Grades at SMA Negeri 8 Medan.

Table 2. T-Test analysis

T-test	t-table	Comparison	
11.501	1.68957	t-test >t-table	Significant

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test – Post-test	-11.52778	6.01420	1.00237	-13.56269	-9.49286	-11.501	35	000

The researcher compared the t-test score and t-table to determine whether the use of the CAKAP application in teaching writing was significant to find out the degrees of freedom (df). The researcher used the formula N-1=36-1=35, for the level Significant (p) =0,05 and df =35, the t-table got score 1.68957. After calculating, it was found that the score of the t-test was 11.501, so the score of the t-test and t-table was (11.501) 1.68957, which means that there was a different result of the score of the t-test and the t-table. As a result, since the t-test was higher than the t-table, the H_a was accepted, and H_0 was rejected, and the use of the CAKAP application influences students' writing skills.

Improvement of Students' Writing Skills Using the BUSUU Application

In this research, the researcher used pre-experimental research to measure the improvement in students' writing skills through the use of the Busuu application in eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Medan in the 2024/2025 academic year. The results of improving students' writing skills can be seen in the following:

Table 4. Mean Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

Kind of Test	Mean Score	Improvement
Pre-Test	64.83	42.19%
Post-Test	91.38	

The table above shows that the students' mean score on the pre-test was 64.83, while the students' mean score on the post-test was 91.38. It was analyzed that there was an improvement in students' writing after the BUSUU application in the class (42.19%).

Significant Testing

After getting the data, the researcher analyzed the data by using a t-test. The value was 11.611, which was higher than the t-table value of 1.68957. it was revealed that using the BUSUU application improved Students' writing in eleventh grade at SMA N 8 Medan.

Table 5. T-Test Analysis

t-test	t-table	Comparison	
11.611	1.689557	t-test>t-table	Significant

Table 6. Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences	T	df

	Mean		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test – Post-test	-11.52778	6.01420	1.00237	-13.56269	-9.49286	11.401	35	000

The researcher compared the t-test score and t-table to know whether the use of the CAKAP Application in teaching writing was significant, and to find out the degrees of freedom (df). The researcher used the formula N-1=36-1=35, for the level of significance (p)-0,05 and df=35, t-table got score 1.68957. After calculating, it was found that the score of the t-test was 11.401, so the score of the t-test and t-table was (11.401>1.68957), which means that there was a different result of the score of the t-test and t-table. As a result, since the t-test was higher than the t-table, the Ha was accepted, and H0 was rejected, and the use of the BUSUU influences students' writing skills.

Based on the findings, the student's scores in writing before using the CAKAP application showed that the students' writing in the eleven-grade student of SMA N 8 Medan especially class IXA was poor. It was because most of the students did not know how to write some words or sentences correctly. In treatments, at the first meeting, the researcher found that there were most of the students had problems with writing, because the most of students still had difficulty writing some words or sentences. From the second meeting until the last, they tried to write some sentences and paragraphs well and also they paid attention to the explanation that was given by the researcher to them at the end of each meeting.

When the researcher applied the CAKAP application in English teaching and learning until the last meeting for doing treatment, the researcher gave a post-test to measure the students' scores. After giving a post-test, the researcher tried to measure the improvement of the students' writing. In the pre-test, the students got 51,94% as the mean score, and in the post-test got 63.47% as the mean score. The researcher found that the improvement of the students' writing in pre-test to post-test was 40,14%. It means that after some treatments with the CAKAP application, the student's writing was improved.

Significant Testing of the Student's Writing Improvement Through the CAKAP Application

From the t-test, the researcher found that the value of the t-test (11.501) was greater than the value of the t-table (1.68957) on alpha level α or level of significance p=0.05 at the degree of freedom (df) of 35. It's the result of teaching the students to write CAKAP applications. Based on the result of the t-test, the researcher found that there was an improvement in the student's writing. It means that there was a significant difference in the results of the pre-test before and after the teaching and learning process through the CAKAP application in the classroom. It was because the students learned and practiced writing through the CAKAP Application in the classroom that their new experience and knowledge could be enlarged. Based on the data, it can be concluded that the students in IX A at SMA N 8 Medan have improved.

The Improvement of the Busuu Application

Based on the findings, the students' scores in writing before using the BUSUU application showed that the students' writing in the eleventh-grade student of SMA N 8 Medan especially class XI was poor. It was because most of the students did not know how to write some words correctly. In the first meeting, the researcher found that there were most of the students had problems in writing because the most of students still had difficulty writing some sounds. From the second meeting until the last, they tried to write some words well and also they paid attention to the explanation that was given by the researcher at the of each meeting.

When the researcher applied the BUSUU application in English teaching and learning until the last meeting for doing treatment, the researcher gave a post-test to measure the student's score after giving the post-test, the researcher tried to measure the improvement of the students' writing. In the pre-test, the students got 56.94% as the mean score, and in the post-test got 69.47% as the mean score. The researcher found that the improvement of the students' writing in the pre-test to post-test was 48.19%, which means that after giving some treatments by using the BUSUU application, the students' writing was improved.

Significant Testing of the Student's Writing Improvement of the BUSUU Application

From the t-test, the researcher found that the value of the t-test (11.501) was greater than

the value of the t-table (1.68657) on alpha level α or level of significance p=0.05 at the degree of freedom (df) of 35. It's the result of teaching the students writing through the BUSUU Application.

Based on the result of the t-test, the researcher found that there was an improvement in the students' writing. It means that there was a significant difference in the results of the pre-test before and after the teaching and learning process through the BUSUU application in the classroom. It was because the students learned and practiced writing some words through the BUSUU application in the classroom that they could expand their new experience and knowledge. Based on the data, it can be concluded that the students in SMA N 8 Medan were improving.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis of findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that using Cakap and Busuu applications is effective in improving the students' writing skills. The writing skills included in the research were content, organization/form, grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary style in the writing. From the t-test, the researcher found that the score of the t-test (11.501) was higher than the score of the t-table (1.68957) at the alpha level α or level of significance p=0.05 at the degree of freedom (df) of 35. It was the result of teaching the students to write the CAKAP application. From the t-test, the researcher found that the score of the t-test (11.611) was higher than the score of the t-table (1.68657) at the α level of significance p=0.05 at the degree of freedom (df) of 35. From the t-test, the researcher found that the value of the t-test (11.501) was greater than the value of the t-table (1.68657) on alpha level α or level of significance p=0.05 at the degree of freedom (df) of 35. It was the result of teaching the students writing skills through the Busuu application. It means that there were different results of the scores of the t-test and t-table. So, the result, since the t-test was higher than the t-table, the Ha was accepted, and H0 was rejected, the use of CAKAP and BUSUU applications influences students' writing skills. The research was conducted at SMA N 8 Medan. The improvement was proved by the students' mean scores on the pre-test and post-test from the writing test, where the mean score of the post-test was higher and had significant improvement over the mean score of the pre-test after conducting treatment. The improvement of the students' writing skills through the Cakap and Busuu application were caused by the activities that provided fun, interesting, and enjoyable ways of learning English writing, so that students were active and had high self-confidence to write words, sentences, and paragraphs.

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