STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SIRI IN EFL LEARNING AT ONE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: The skyrocketing demands of technology might not be denied at all levels of education in the 21st century. Integrating technology into teaching and learning process has created new trends and impact on students' learning atmosphere. One of the promising products of technology is artificial intelligence (AI). Artificial intelligence in education particularly in English Foreign Language (EFL) learning has introduced new models of pedagogy in English language learning. This paper attempts to examine the perceptions of students on the use of artificial intelligence *SIRI* in English language learning in the classroom in the tertiary level. This study investigated students' attitude and perceptions through questionnaire and focus group discussion. The data were collected through questionnaire from a total of 40 students of Bahasa Indonesia department and 7 students involved in FGD. The research findings revealed that the students were involved in the learning process enthusiastically and actively motivated but the problems encountered students had limited access to SIRI because most of them lack Apple phone application. Besides, the students had poor communication skill. The study recommended that university should equip integrated technology laboratory as called integrated artificial intelligence laboratory to facilitate students' need as citizens in a global village and digitalized world.
Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Siri, English as a Foreign Language, Technology*

Effective learning a foreign language particularly English has become a major debate for scholars around the globe. A number of methods, approaches, and techniques have been developed to offer the effective way of learning English, however, remain controversial issues among linguists and scholars. Indonesia has implemented English as a foreign language subject in school and higher education level. Nevertheless, it showed the unsatisfactory result in terms of four skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking. As an international language, graduates of the tertiary level at least are able to communicate with a simple expression of communication and write a simple paragraph. In fact, many research showed that most of Indonesia's tertiary level graduates had poor English competence.

According to Von Glaserfeld (1996) and Jonassen (1994), frequent communication is the best way of learning a foreign language. However, it is difficult to develop communication in classroom activities without interacting with a native speaker or competence teachers. Problems would occur anytime in classroom and shyness would frequent happen to students who would develop their skill such as communication. According to Fryer and Carpenter (2006), learner of foreign language faces a number of factors that might reduce their confidence such as shyness and lack of time particularly their communication skill in a target language. Therefore, technology is a better solution to offer more independent learner who lacks confidence, shyness, and limited opportunity one to one communication in learning a foreign language. Thus, a potential solution to this problem of learning English in tertiary level is to apply technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) in classroom activities.

Technology has become a major 21st -century keyword in teaching and learning in all level of education. With the booming demand for integrated technology into education has brought a new shifting paradigm to be more effective and efficient way of learning a foreign language particularly English. Learning English as a foreign language, students need a day-to-day exposure in order that learners may learn faster. Therefore, technology provides a way of becoming an independent learner to be more active outside the classroom to improve their skill in English. One

of the sophisticated technologies is Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI has been introduced as sophisticated tool in learning a foreign language (FL). According to Jia (2009), artificial intelligence is an intelligent computerized machine can create a dialogue between human and machine in a natural way situation. Furthermore, Dodigovic (2007) stated that artificial intelligence can diagnose some typical errors in foreign language learning such as writing. Referring to intelligent machine AI has developed an application into an Apple Smartphone application called Siri. Siri is developed to assist people to gain general knowledge or as a personal assistant, which can response people's questions act like a 'teacher'. Thus, Siri is an artificial intelligence in an Apple Smartphone application can create a dialogue between people and machine. This research aims at examining students' perception about the artificial intelligence used in EFL learning process; exploring their problems on EFL learning using artificial intelligence.

Method

This research administered quantitative and qualitative data analysis technique or mix method. Mix method is the class of research studies in which a researcher combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches and techniques into a single research study (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). To gather the data, the researchers used a questionnaire to determine students' attitude and perceptions on artificial intelligence in English learning whereas the qualitative data collected through focus group discussion.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of this study was the second semester students of Bahasa Indonesia department, faculty of teacher training and education, University of Jambi. It was 40 students enrolled in Bahasa Indonesia department. They were required to enroll English subject in the second semester of 2017-2018. The questionnaire distributed to all students as total sampling while only five students selected for the focus group discussion sampling technique used convenience sampling procedure.

Instruments and Data Collection
Questionnaire

To get the data, the researchers used questionnaire as the main instrument. As Johnson and Christensen (2008) stated that questionnaire is self-report data collection instrument that each research participants fills out as part of research study. The researchers used questionnaire so that they could obtain information about thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, and behavioral intention of research participants (Tuckman, 1999). To avoid the weakness of collection the data, researchers adapted the questionnaire and ideas based on Sherholt and Barendregt (2014), and Liton (2015).

Focus Group Discussion

The focus group discussion conducted to verify and validate the data gathered through the questionnaire (Haryanto and Mukminin, 2012). The FGD took place after class hours on campus. The FGD session lasted between 45 – 60 minutes.   The FGD's participant selected using convenience sampling. As a result, the FGD involved only 7 students from Bahasa Indonesia department.

Findings and Discussion

The questionnaire study showed some interesting results. The first question was to examine the students' perception about using Siri in the classroom.

### *Siri as a teaching-learning tool in the classroom*
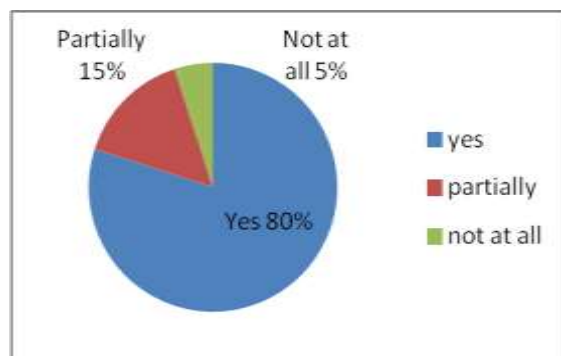
A total of 40 students of Bahasa Indonesia department students answered the questionnaire. It was found that majority (80%) of the students answered "yes" that Siri as a teaching-learning tool in classroom, while "partly" (15%) students answered that Siri as a teaching-learning tool in classroom. However, it was only 5% students' perceived "not at all" that Siri as a teaching-learning tool in the classroom. In this respect, Liton (2015) stated that technology offers positive attitude as learning tool in the classroom, particularly in foreign language learning. To support the underlying reasons as to why majority of students answered "yes" that Siri as a teaching-learning tool in the classroom, 7 students involved in the focus group discussion. In FGD when asked about "what did you know about Siri?", students answered that:

> *Siri as a tool might be used to help students in*
> *learning a foreign language, particularly speaking skill".*

It can be concluded that artificial intelligent such as Siri provides positive attitude towards students learning activities in classroom.

Second question of the questionnaire was about Siri as artificial intelligence motivates and make more independent learners toward learning English as a foreign language.

Siri as artificial intelligence motivates and make more independent learners towards EFL learning
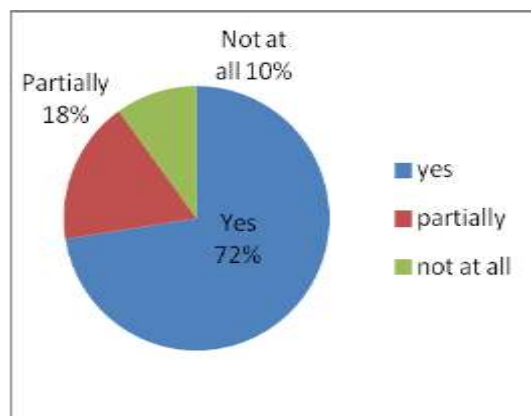

The finding also indicated that more than half (72%) participants answered "yes". Another 18% of the students answered that "partially" Siri as artificial intelligence motivates and make more confident towards EFL learning, whereas only 10% students stated "not at all" that Siri as artificial intelligence motivates and make more confident towards EFL learning. Most previous research (Warschauer and Healey, 1998) showed that computer or technology allow students to be more independent individual to work and learn their foreign language. It indicated that students are more motivated and confident to develop their individual knowledge through technology such as Siri. The survey result is in line with the FGD, students agreed that:

*"we are motivated and feel confident with Siri,
because when we make mistakes in pronouncing words or
grammatically incorrect we are not shy because we can
learn and correct them although sometimes Siri
misunderstand with our pronunciation"*

In terms of "Siri can improve students skills in English", half (57%) of the respondents answered "yes", 38% answered "partially" and only 5% participants said Siri can improve their skills in English.

Siri can improve students skills in English
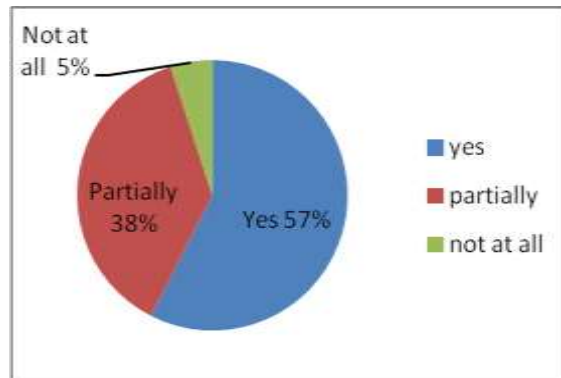
Molden (2015) suggested Siri provides beneficial technology for EFL learners' knowledge in particular can give feedback and correction when you have oral language. Furthermore, Molden stated that Siri can teach oral communication and students become more independent, however, it's limited to availability of languages in Apple application. Thus, it can be summarized that Siri can improve students skills in English in particular is communication skill. Further arguments provided from the FGD, students claimed:

*"Siri is very useful for our English skills, most of us
can communicate and listen to Siri when Siri is talking.
we think Siri is really good "teacher" for us because it
improves our skills although little improvement".*

Next question provided in the questionnaire was "what particular skills Siri can improve?". More than half (65%) of the students participant answered that Siri can improve students' communication skill.

Particular English skills improve

With regard to listening skill, about 20% participants answered that Siri can improve their listening. For writing skill there was only 10% participants claimed that Siri improved their writing, the least percentage stated by the respondents was only 5% for reading skill improvement.
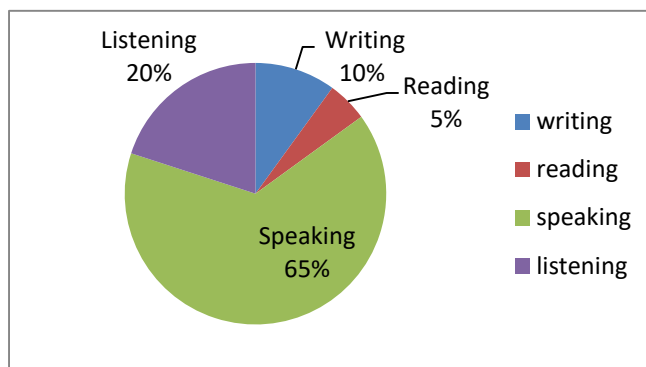
According to IELTS IDP program (2018), Siri is a great tool to improve learners experience in learning a foreign language such as English because learners can speak precisely and clearly in order that Siri can understand you. Furthermore, ILETS IDP Program claimed that learners can speak anytime. It is assumed by practicing communication or speaking skill anytime individually, learners can improve their language skill gradually. In the student FGD, the students said,

"Siri is really helpful tool to improve our communication skill, if we can practice our English using Siri every day, we believe we can speak and communicate faster without having any difficulties to express our ideas"

A number of important practical implications can be drawn from the findings in this study. The findings from the study revealed that the majority of the participants showed positive attitude towards the use of Siri in their classroom particularly in EFL learning. Most of the students were enthusiast to learn English. It is possible to provide modern sophisticated technology laboratory equipped with artificial intelligence machine which can help students and teachers start thinking about how technologies could potentially help more students in mastering English as they graduate from their university. The findings also indicated that poor communication, pronunciation and listening skill could be corrected and improved.
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Conclusion

The findings in this study showed that quantitatively and qualitatively the attitude and perceptions of the student participant were positive towards the use of Siri in EFL learning.
Technology allows students to be more independent individual to work and learn their foreign language. Siri is a great tool to improve learners experience in learning a foreign language such as English because learners can speak precisely and clearly in order that Siri can understand learners. It is possible to provide modern sophisticated technology laboratory equipped with artificial intelligence machine which can help students and teachers start thinking about how technologies could potentially help more students in mastering English as they graduate from their university.

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