

MoBL: A MOBILE BLENDED LEARNING APPLICATION

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ABSTRACT:

Mediamorphosis is a common concept in blended learning classes. Thus, it may create problems for students to change from one form of media to another in the stipulated two-hour class period. The reason behind the mobile learning platform is for the purpose of fulfilling the requirement of blended learning in universities. The objectives of this innovation are to reduce the overwhelming need for students to change from one platform to another and to put forth a new platform that is mobile yet formal for students. The method adopted was a triangulated method. First, an earlier observation students' in-class reactions to mediamorphosis and interview were analyzed. Secondly, based on these findings, a contrastive selection technique was adopted to decide on which existing application shall serve as the model of the present innovation. Lastly, the innovation is conceptualized visually. Findings suggest the need for a much less complex instrument for blended learning to ensure students' affective filter in learning is not increased by mediamorphosis thus, WhatsApp application is selected as a model for the present innovation.

Keywords: Mediamorphosis, Blended Learning, Mobile Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Mediamorphosis as a concept is common in blended learning classes. Mediamorphosis is “transformation of communication media, usually brought about by the complex interplay of perceived needs, competitive and political pressures, and social and technological innovations” (Fidler, 1997). The scope of the study covers blended learning for university students while converting the blended learning platform into a more accessible mobile learning. Mediamorphosis in the classroom creates a lot of problems for students to change from one form of media to another in the stipulated two-hour class period. Nik Mastura, Mohd Nor and Posiah (2012:393) defined mobile learning (m-learning) “as any form of teaching and learning that happens when the users are interacting through a mobile device such as PDA, palmtop, iPhone, handheld computers, smartphone or other gadgets.” Adopting several media platforms in blended learning hours can be overwhelming too. Aside from that, being stationary or shackled to desktops or notebooks robs mobile freedom. Based on Tengku Intan Suzila, Siti Rohana and Mohd Yusri (2018), where an earlier recorded observation and interviews were conducted, coded and transcribed, the present innovation suggests moving to a hassle-free media. Paechter, Maier, and Macher (2010) findings are congruent to this earlier study that such results of the work offer a better platform for the innovation of a much leisure mobile learning method.

METHODS

The conceptual framework of the present innovation focuses on triangulated method, firstly a preliminary study (see Tengku Intan Suzila, Siti Rohana and Mohd Yusri, 2018) sparked the present innovation based on recorded observations and interviews of university students' reactions towards mediamorphosis during blended hours. Items (1) students' negative reactions towards Mediamorphosis; (2) reasons for reactions; (3) solution to such reaction, led to the current innovation. Secondly, based on these findings, a contrastive selection technique was adopted to decide on which existing application shall serve as the model of the present innovation. Lastly, the innovation is conceptualized visually. Thus, the present research questions that guided this innovation are:

- 1- How can mediamorphosis exist as a less stressful environment for students?
- 2- How can blended learning be more convenient and more student-centered?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The initial findings lead to a contrastive selection technique to decide on the best media to serve as a guide to the present innovation. The media contrasted here are based on the results of the initial interview. The results suggest that WhatsApp is the best model to be adopted in the present innovation. It is light, mobile and does not demand high downloading capacity.

Media	Advantages	Disadvantages
Telegram	1.5Gb attachment 75K friends Message delete up to 48 hours	Huge size No video call
Padlets	Colorful Enable students to be punctual	Attachment passwords required On time Specific time Slow, jam
WhatsApp	Easier, simple interface Upload & download Real time communication Encrypted message	Informal Only 256 friends 100mb limit attachment size Message delete 7 minutes WA only call WA
WeChat	Up to 500 people per group	Moments – unnecessary
Line	Secure because nobody can befriend you without permission Encrypted message Can call	Ugly huge emoticons Cannot insert files
i-Learn	Tracking system Accessible only with password	Slow access, Inaccessible by some phones
Blendspace	Colorful	Huge size Cannot track users' time

The contrastive selection technique suggests that the criteria for a mobile learning application are:

(1) minimal attachment (2) formal (3) has UiTM tracking mechanism (4) attachment accessible without password (5) upload and download hassle-free. Figure 1 below shows a concept layout of MoBL.

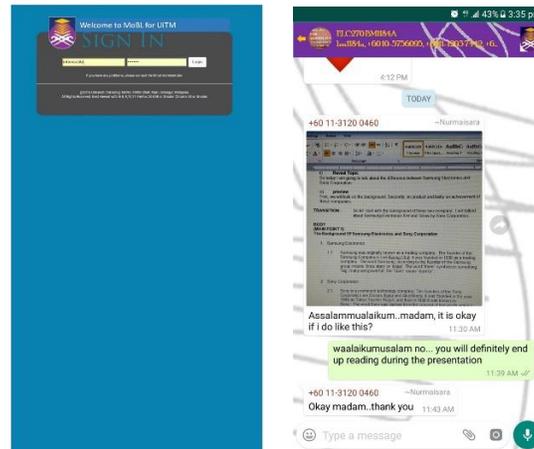


Figure 1: Log in and chat area

CONCLUSION

The present innovation is hoped to boost students' participation in blended learning. This innovation is projected to serve (1) the principles and generalizations as required in a mobile learning application, (2) with the exceptions of fulfilling some students' demands such as inability to follow the train of thoughts of their friends during online chats, (3) the practical implications of the work is the present innovation shall not only be applicable to UiTM system but also can be commercialized worldwide. Lastly, the present innovation is a future grant application idea for a potential invention.

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