CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

People of the 21st century are living in a digital world. Mobile technology plays a key role in this digital world. Mobile phone users in the world reach over four billion users; on the other hand, computer owners are mere approximately 800 million people (Cochrane & Bateman, 2010). This fact is not surprising due to mobile phone handy characteristics that make human's life easier by connecting two or more people in different places. The rapid development of mobile technology such as a smartphone allows people not only to communicate with each other but also in many cases serve as a tool for people's social and work life, and perhaps, an influential tool for academic life (Vazquez-Cano, 2014). A smartphone is best used for learning since it is much more mobile compared to a laptop. Smartphone mobility makes it indispensable in a certain situation yet an obligation for others (Franklin, 2011).

Most students are familiar with mobile technology. In schools, mobile technology plays a crucial part in college students' scholarly lives (Vazquez-Cano, 2014). Students wish they can have various handy learning tools which enable them to learn anywhere they wish to (Kim, Rueckert, Kim, & Seo, 2013). The utilization of mobile devices for educational purposes referred to as mobile learning or m-learning. The focus of m-learning is facilitating and

broadening teaching and learning sources, such as information collection and exchange, learning construction, and collaborative learning (Hine, Rentoul, & Specht, 2004 as cited in Yang, 2012).

The existence of mobile learning (m-learning) in the field of education is becoming more important. Currently, 90% of college students own a mobile phone and believe that the device is their most important communication tool as it connects them with other learners and information in modern ways (Franklin, 2011). M-learning is capable of providing numerous information and supporting ubiquitous as well as collaborative learning for students (Yang, 2012). Chang, Yan, & Tseng (2012) also stated that ubiquitous learning will be a trend in the coming years because students could learn anywhere and anytime without limited place and time.

Many scholars have conducted numerous studies on the impacts of mobile learning. A study conducted by Gikas & Grant (2013) stated that location cannot restrict the process of learning because potential learning could happen in spite of place. M-learning gives an opportunity for students to do independent learning, especially outside the classroom when their teachers are not around. This affirms that the students act as the main role, whereas the teachers become guides (Niño, 2015). Technology plays a fundamental role in the instruction of either second or foreign language that has become one of the main courses in the educational field over the past three decades (Oz, 2015).

Mobile technology gives new learning experiences and opportunities for language learning. Students of English as a foreign language ought to learn and practice the language continuously in order to improve their skills. Nonetheless, teaching and learning process in the classroom has a place and time restriction, thus it is necessary to develop devices which do not have a place and time restriction for learning English such as mobile devices (Chang, Yan, & Tseng, 2012). Eight areas and skills of language are grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, pronunciation, listening, speaking, and culture (Levy, 2009). Today, mobile phones are highly used for learning vocabulary (Wang & Smith, 2013) since mobile device could be an effective tool to improve vocabulary. For example, Suratno, Murniati, & Aydawati (2016) reported that students' vocabularies in their study were improving since they used mobile device. Furthermore, Wang & Smith (2013) also added that a mobile phone can be an effective tool to improve students' reading and grammar skill. It can be concluded that m-learning can be an efficient instrument for assisting English learning performance and motivation (Chang, Yan, & Tseng, 2012).

M-learning can be a helpful instrument for students to succeed in learning. In addition, it gives a feeling of personal control over a learning task that affects the success of academic achievement or self-efficacy (Hsieh & Kang, 2010). Self-efficacy is defined as someone's personal judgment of his/her capabilities to manage and perform particular activities to achieve goals that have been set (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy beliefs affect people

on goals they set, an effort that they will mobilize, and their tenacity in facing an obstacle or an unpleasant process (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). A positive correlation has been consistently discovered between self-efficacy and academic achievement (Hsieh & Kang, 2010). The main concern of previous studies on self-efficacy beliefs is mostly about students' assessment of their capability (Cubukcu, 2008). A great number of previous research findings indicate that self-efficacy takes part in predicting and mediating students' achievements, motivation, and learning (Dinther, Dochy, & Segers, 2011).

This study was conducted to discuss mobile technology development in academic life. The study aimed to discover and analyze students' attitudes and self-efficacy towards the use of mobile technology in language learning processes, the correlation between self-efficacy and gender, and the correlation between self-efficacy and level of technology comfort. The writer analyzed the use of m-learning specifically on learning English as a foreign language.

1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY

This study discussed students' attitudes and self-efficacy in using mobile technology for English learning as a foreign language; therefore, it related to the field of Linguistics especially Applied Linguistics.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focused on analyzing the use of mobile technology in the learning process. It is concerned with the use of m-learning in learning

language especially English as a foreign language. This study focused on students' language learning skills. The writer limited the study to the discussion of students' attitudes and self-efficacy towards the use of m-learning for language learning.

1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION

In this study, the writer discussed three problem formulations, as follows:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards the use of the mobile device for m-learning?
2. What is the students' self-efficacy towards the use of the mobile device for m-learning?
3. Is there a correlation between self-efficacy and the level of technology comfort?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In regard to research questions above, the writer aimed to resolve the following concerns:

1. the students' attitudes towards the use of the mobile device for m-learning;
2. the students' self-efficacy towards the use of the mobile device for m-learning;
3. the correlation between self-efficacy and the level of technology comfort.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The writer expected that this study would be able to contribute to a better understanding of the use of mobile technology in academic life. This study discussed students' attitudes and self-efficacy towards the use m-learning for language learning, so the writer hoped that it could help educational institutions to reflect on the use of m-learning on learning process especially for language learning. For those who were not familiar with m-learning, this study would show the functions of m-learning and how it is applied in the educational field.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Attitude

Attitude is defined as someone's positive or negative feelings about doing certain activities (Cheon, Lee, Crooks, & Song, 2012).

1.7.2 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to people's judgment of their personal capabilities to be successful in performing particular activities to meet the situational demands (McAuley & Blissmer, 2000).

1.7.3 Mobile Learning

Mobile learning refers to mobile devices as means of learning which enable the users to access anytime, anywhere information and resources: broad search capabilities, plenteous interaction, excellent support for effective learning, and performance-based assessment (Quinn, 2000 cited in Martin & Ertzberger, 2013).