

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF HOT POTATOES IN ENGLISH SUBJECT: A Descriptive Qualitative Research

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Received:</b> April 10, 2018 <b>Accepted:</b> May 23, 2018 <b>Online:</b> June 28, 2018</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> perception, hot potatoes, strategy, interactive, web exercise.</p>	<p>This research was aimed at revealing students' perceptions on the use of hot potatoes in English subject at the 5<sup>th</sup> semester students of English Education department at Makassar Muhammadiyah University. This research applied descriptive method that spending one month period of time for the data collection by using questionnaire as well as focus group discussion consisting 8 statements to be analyzed. The data was taken from 15 students by using purposive sampling technique of the 5<sup>th</sup> semester students of English Education department in order to find out students' perception on the use of hot potatoes in English subject.</p> <p>The result of data analysis revealed that all participants had positive perception toward hot potatoes. The first variable revealed students' perception on the use of hot potatoes where the average participants clarified that the program was suitable for language testing. The second variable revealed students' perception on the teacher strategy in teaching English by using hot potatoes. With the regard of this program, participants clarified that was an appropriate strategy for English evaluation. Based on the result above, it can be concluded that according to students' perception, hot potatoes was user friendly program and appropriate strategy for English subject.</p>

### INTRODUCTION

The invention of computer based learning has changed and facilitated teaching and learning process. It guides educators to the new innovations which can be used to develop their strategy in the classroom. Meanwhile, the computer based education plays a crucial role which enables students to feel the sense of development. Further, technology based education as well computer based-learning also enables students to expand their potential and create a better lives for themselves and societies.

Furthermore, the use of technology as a strategy to implement in teaching and learning process provides many advantages especially in foreign language teaching. In this regard, computer assisted learning (CALL) has also taken a part in the development of new programs and multimedia. With the very many multimedia which is available online, Hot Potatoes is the one who very useful and practical.

Hot Potatoes is educational program innovated by Half-Baked Software, Inc. It was designed for educators to allow them to create and develop interactive web-based exercise. Moreover, Hot Potatoes was designed by the team at TESL Department in the University of Victoria. In this department, the developers build the best ESL teaching techniques which enable to use to develop interactive learning programs. There are six different exercises

programs or quizzes provided by hot potatoes, such as multiple choices, short answer, jumbled sentence, crossword, matching exercise, and fill in the blank exercise. With the help of six major programs, educator has the chance to vary their exercises in order to be more interactive.

The use of hot potatoes in English subject is treated as a concern in common. Regarding to the fact that students are the object in teaching and learning process, the writer indicates to know the students' perception on the use of Hot Potatoes in English subject. This study will give contribution to for the better teaching and learning process in English subject and further information will be very helpful as the development of structure as a subject in English Education Department of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Hot potatoes will deliver students to learn independently while they are not in the classrooms in it can be used offline or online. Appropriate procedures in using this program in the classroom will help students to improve their grammar comprehension (Mulhuda, 2012). The result of study above provides the information of the advantages of implementation hot potatoes which relates to the research problem of this research which focusing on finding the student's perception on the use of this software.

Safer, Urai & Ikhsanuddin (2012) also stated that Hot potatoes-based materials are useable. Some suggestions and feedbacks on the hot potatoes based materials from the experts were accommodated for betterment of the product. As such, the current study sheds more light on the use of application of Hot Potatoes Software.

However, Sadeghi & Hassan (2015) revealed that although Hot Potatoes offers facility in creating different types of exercises together with teacher's feedback that can be posted online for the ease of access, it is limited in some important areas such as providing interactive activities and synchronous feedback for the learners. Moreover, it was found that the efficiency and usefulness of this program to a great extent depends on the creativity and skills of the teacher who uses the program to create tests.

In addition, Imananda (2014) stated that there are some advantages that both teacher and students get by using Hot Potatoes program in learning grammar. First, as a game, Hot Potatoes constructs fun atmosphere in the learning process. Second, grammar practice will be more becomes a challenging instead of daunting activity since it is designed like game which gives reward to its users. Third, it will lead to effective learning because the drills are always typical to grammar classes.

Moreover, Juan (2014) stated that the use of Hot Potatoes opens new doors to teachers as they empower themselves to create and design materials suited to their students' needs, thereby promoting learner and teacher autonomy. Furthermore, using Hot Potatoes in language courses increases students' motivation because different learning styles can be stimulated by it.

The result of previous researches above can contribute as prior information for the researcher to actually believe that there will be also possibility to find and to know the student's perception on the use of hot potatoes in structure subject to create interactive for fourth semester students for English Education Department at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar.

**a. The Nature of Perception**

According to Robbins in Muthiah (2016) perception is the process taken by individuals to govern and to interpret perception of sensory to give significance in their environment. Perception can be defined as people recognition and interpretation of sensory information. Perception also includes how people respond the information. People can think of perception as a process where they take in sensory information from environment and use the information in order to interact with the environment. Perception allows people to take the sensory information in and make it into something meaningful.

**b. The Concept of Hot Potatoes**

According to Erben (2008: 171) hot potatoes is exercise-building software that can be used to create interactive web-based quizzes quickly and easily. It creates an instrumental work environment for Windows users and it includes six major programs which meant to be used in creating interactive exercises.

Furthermore, Hot Potatoes importantly enables students to facilitate their own learning. It has singular advantage of providing students to facilitate their own learning and get immediate feedback without needing the physical proximity of a teacher (Erben, Ban, & Castaneda: 2009:74). Moreover, Myrick (2010: 266-267) states that Hot Potatoes offers different activity type to work with. They are JCloze, JMatch, JQuiz, Jcross, Jmix and The Masher where each name refers to the type of exercises.

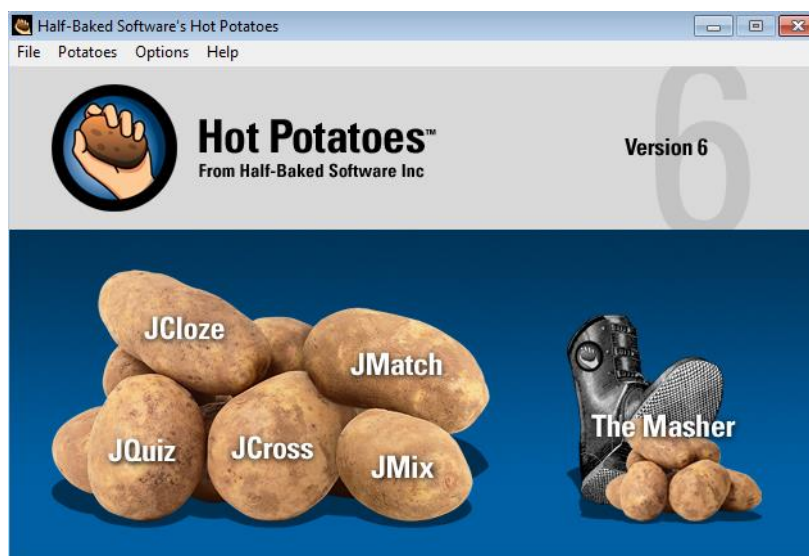


FIGURE 1 THE PROGRAMS OF HOT POTATOES

TABLE 1 THE SUMMARY OF THE TYPES OF EXERCISES

MODULE	EXERCISE TYPE	FUNCTION
JCloze	Fill-in-the-blank	Complete the missing words
JMatch	Pairing	Relate the items between two columns
JQuiz	Open-ended Questions	Direct answers
Jcross	Crossword	Fill in the blank to complete the crossword puzzle
Jmix	Jumble-word	Arrange the sentences
The Masher	Mix they type exercises	Link the modules

## METHODS

The method used in this research was qualitative method. It was used to examine questions that could be described verbally regarding how participants in a study perceive and interpret various aspects of the environment. Researcher adapted person-centered to understand the students' experience to obtain and generate their ideas. In this study, the researcher investigated students' responses on the use of Hot Potatoes, it is along with the objective of this study to identify students' perceptions.

### Instrument

The instruments used to collect the data in this study were questionnaires and focus group discussion. The questionnaire of this research was in open-ended question form. The questions allowed the participants to write either positive or negative responses based on the type of questions. Moreover, focus group discussion was to elicit more information. In a focus group, a researcher engaged a small group of participants in a conversation designed to generate data relevant to the research question.

### Data Analysis

The data gained through questionnaire and focus group discussion. The participants of this study were 15 English Education's students from year 2015 who were chosen by using purposive sampling. In analyzing the data, the researcher used three iterative or repeating steps: reading or memoing, describing and classifying. After making the transcript of questionnaire and focus group, the researcher observed and described by developing comprehensive descriptions of the participants. The next steps was to classify the data order the researcher enable to interpret the result of observation and data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results from both questionnaires and focus group showed that respondents had positive perception towards the use of hot potatoes in English subject. It can be seen from

the result of questionnaire. Below are the detail answers of the research question by answering the subsidiary research questions. The answer from subsidiary research questions lead to answer the research question.

The answer the first subsidiary research question; “What is the students’ perception as the user of hot potatoes?” is positive. The positive response came from the students’ perception about their feeling when doing the exercise, the content which was provided and the strategy used to monitor the students’ progress. Based on the questionnaire most of students is impressed and even grateful when using the program of hot potatoes.

The answer of second subsidiary research question “What is the students’ perception on **teachers’ strategy in using hot potatoes in English subject?** Is positive. The positive perception arose since by implementing an instructional strategy such as hot potatoes, lecturers can decrease the potentially overwhelming workload without jeopardizing students’ learning, while also increasing interaction for and among students. In other words, the using of program such as hot potatoes enabled instructors to share the responsibility for learning with their students. It is along with what Brown (2001:146) noted that currently, most widely standardized tests are computer-based. Sooner or later, most language students will need to perform such a test, designed to gauge the test-taker level’s as the respond are made. During the early time right or wrong answers are electronically analyzed in order to present later items, from a bank of possible items that will be neither too easy nor too difficult and present an optimal challenge. It means that with the progress of this era, the teacher should be smart and creative to adapt this era, because along with progress of this era there are many newest technologies. It also demands the teacher or test-taker don’t be blind with the progress of technology.

In addition, students stated their positive that hot potatoes can be an appropriate strategy that lecturers have implemented to improve students’ comprehension toward English. Through that way may increase the quality of students’ language ability and its development. Students tried to reflect on their workings by looking on the feedback they got by using hot potatoes.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. The respondents of this study gave their positive perception toward the use of hot potatoes as the users. The positive judgment from the respondents comes not only from the students’ statement agreement and the aspects in the subsidiary research questions but also from the advantages which they got while the implementation of hot potatoes.
2. As user, students gave their positive perception. They claimed that they have got feedback from many perspectives such as easily understand where they make or put the errors, get an opportunity to practice their knowledge and assess their own selves , and being more motivated to learn English more intensively.

3. Nevertheless, students' perception on teacher strategy on the use of hot potatoes, students place an emphasis on adequate requirement in applying hot potatoes, such as computer and internet access. Lecturer was needed by the students in order to give the more instruction before the implementation and to control the process of using the program as a whole.

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