

# The Students' Perception of Voice Chatting through WhatsApp in Speaking Class

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## ABSTRACT

The advance of internet has been expanding the possibilities for language learning, especially in teaching speaking. Online activities through internet, therefore, have been recently implemented in language learning in order to achieve higher amount of speaking practices. One of the online activities which can be conducted in speaking classes is voice chatting. This study was intended to investigate students' perception on the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp in speaking class. The aspects of perception covered in this study were confidence, difficulties, interest, stress, and motivation. Population in this study was 30 EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in grade 11 of senior high school level. The data of students' perception were collected through a close-ended questionnaire. However, students also stated the reasons of their response. The quantitative data were then analyzed through SPSS while the qualitative data were described to support the findings of students' perception toward the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. The finding showed that majority of students had positive perception toward the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp, especially in the aspect of interest and stress level.

## KEYWORDS

Perception, Voice Chatting, WhatsApp

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internet has shifted the way humans interact, perform research, and learn (Blair and Serafini, 2014). It means that internet has created life-changing impact in our today's world, as well as in teaching learning process. Technology may not replace the conventional teaching approaches. However, the access to internet can play role in giving great support for today's education (Y.T. Sung, et.al, 2015). Therefore, online learning through internet has been recently implemented for educational purpose, including in language class. Online learning refers to the utilization of Internet in order to access learning materials, to communicate with the other learners or language teacher, to get support during the learning process in order

to acquire knowledge, and to grow from the learning experience (Ally, 2008). One of the various online learning activities which can be conducted in English class, especially speaking, is voice chatting. Voice chatting is the activity to communicate in the realtime through mobile devices having communication in real-time by voicing message through mobile application so that it can immediately be heard by the receivers, even in another part of the world.

Through chatting, learners of a language can communicate efficiently with other learners or speakers of the target language all over the world. This communication can happen either synchronous by communicating in the real time or asynchronous with a delayed message system such as in email. Additionally, students can communicate orally with their friends or speaking partners efficiently in the sense that they can do the activities even though both of them are in different part of the world anytime without having to spend much expense on the internet load. Voice chatting can be accessed through mobile or computer-based applications which facilitates instant messaging for the users. One of the most popular mobile applications in the 21st century is WhatsApp (Mistar and Embi, 2016). WhatsApp is an online application which enables users to communicate and exchange instant messages through written chat, voice chat, voice call, or video call. Furthermore, Sukrillah et.al (2017) stated that WhatsApp is the most widely-used mobile application especially among Indonesian learners and teachers.

There are some studies investigating the use of voice chat in speaking class. Baradaran and Khalili (2009) implemented voice chatting activity in English speaking class of 52 EFL university learners. They were grouped into two: control and experimental group. After conducting the post-test, it was found out that there was a significant difference in terms of speaking achievement in which learners from the experimental group significantly had higher achievement than those from the control group. Another study was also conducted by Belinda et al. (2018) which employed voice chatting through WhatsApp in blended learning setting for their English speaking class. In their research, the significant improvement was achieved by the learners after the the implementation of voice chat through WhatsApp. Therefore this research focused on finding out how the learners perceived this online activity. In other words, the students' perception on the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp in speaking class was investigated.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking are supposed to improve students' communicative skill to express themselves orally in target language. According to

Harmer (2007: 123), there are three main reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom. First, speaking activities should give rehearsal chances to practice real-life speaking performance. Next, speaking tasks are required to provide feedbacks students so that everyone can see how good they are doing or in what things they need to work on. The last is that the more students have opportunities to activate the various elements of language they have stored in their brains, the more automatic they become in using those elements.

Then, the presage factors (e.g. perception of the learning environment) can also directly affect the learning outcomes of the students' perceptions. From previous definition and explanation above, it can be inferred that perception is a process by which people interpret information based on experience as the result of physical stimulation of human sense. It can include ideas, concept, and impression of something.

## 2.2. Teaching Speaking by Voice Chatting through WhatsApp

Teaching speaking is a process of making the language learners' willing to practice speaking the target language. There are various activities which can be conducted in order to promote the students' willingness and opportunities to practice their speaking. One of them is by voice chatting through WhatsApp. Voice chatting is an activity of communicating in real time through computer or mobile devices. Through this activity, students can practice their target language outside classroom by having interaction in real time as what they usually do on daily basis with their friends. They can be triggered to take their time for chatting, exchanging information, or sharing their thought with their groups in an online, semi-formal setting. Furthermore, this activity can be done outside the classroom, even when the learners are in different places. Therefore, this activity can also be implemented due to the condition that most EFL students in Indonesia do not practice their language for communicating outside the classroom or they do not have sufficient time to practice their speaking inside classroom (Belinda, 2018).

## 2.3. Students' Perception

According to Ward, et.al (2015), perception refers to the process of recognition (being aware of), organization (gathering and storing), and interpretation (binding to knowledge) of sensory information. This is in line with Catling & Ling (2011: 5) which states that perception is a complicated series of process through which we acquire and interpret sensory information. It means that perception deals with the human senses which form signals from the environment through sight, hearing touch, smell, and taste. In simple worlds, perception is a process by which we interpret the world around us, generating a mental representation of the environment.

According to Richards & Lockhart (1996), learners' belief systems cover a wide range of issues and can influence learners' motivation to learn, their expectations about language learning, their perceptions about what is easy or difficult about a language, as well as the kind of learning strategies they favor. According to Jacobs et al (2004), perception is one of the most essential thing for effective teaching and learning. Learning can only happen after exposure to stimuli, and each person is exposed daily to a variety of stimuli which affect their various huamn sense.

Research addressing the impact of students' perception can be framed within Biggs's (1989) 3P model, which conceptualizes the learning process as an interacting system of three sets of variables: the learning environment and characteristics of the learners (presage), the learners' approach toward learning (process) and the outcome of the learning. In basic terms, the model proposes that, firstly, personal and situational factors influence a student to adopt a particular learning approach which affects the types of outcomes.

## 2.4. Procedure of Teaching Speaking by Voice Chatting through WhatsApp

The procedure in teaching speaking through voice chatting is used to make sure that the implementation is systematically arranged and to avoid confusion. All of the activities in the procedure was done in online setting. These are the procedures of teaching speaking through voice chatting:

1. Students join in a group chat rooms in WhatsApp application.
2. Students started the online class by listening to a certain topic and watching a video.
3. Students were asked regarding their opinion about the video and whether there was any vocabulary that they were not familiar with.
4. Teacher asked students to voluntarily give short description of the video from the information which was gathered from his/her friends' opinion and displayed in the video. This activity was done by voice chatting through WhatsApp.
5. Teacher asked students to work pairs and practice a dialogue which is related to the topic of discussion.
6. During online group discussion, teacher supervised and helped students if it was necessary. At the end of the discussion, teacher gave feedback to the students' speaking performance. Other members of the groups who joined the discussion were also allowed to do so.
7. Teacher selected best-performing students among the members of the group in every online class.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This is a quantitive research which deals with the students' perception of voice chatting through WhatsApp. This research was conducted fully in online setting, including the implementation and questionnaire distribution. This research used random sampling technique in which the sample of this research was 30 randomly-chosen students who were in grade 11 from various senior high schools in Lampung Province. The instrument used in this research was close-ended questionnaire using Likert-Scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). There were five statements which covers five aspects of perception namely confidence, difficulties, stress, interest, and motivation which were adopted from questionnaire from Robinson (2001). In every statement, students were also required to write the reasons of their answers. The questionnaire was created by using Google Form. The quantitative data were then analyzed through SPSS while the students' reason regarding their answer were described to support the findings of students' perception toward the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. The Implementation

This research was conducted fully in an online setting through WhatsApp in May 7 2020 – June 9 2020. The sample was 30 students in grade XI of senior high level in Lampung which were chosen randomly. During the process of the implementation, there were three online meetings conducted by the researcher.

Before the teaching learning began, the researcher did a video call group with the students to introduce and get to know each other. This was done since the researcher and the students had never met and known each other before the research implementation, except very few students. Then, the researcher invited them to a large group chat room in WhatsApp. Later on, they were also divided into small groups and invited to the small group chat rooms. The large group chat room was made to gather all the students so that they could interact with all students in the group. Furthermore, it was a chat room in which the researcher would announce students with the best performance in every online meeting. Meanwhile, the small group chat rooms were the ones in which the teaching learning activity was done such as giving materials, exercising, and giving feedbacks to the small groups.

In the first meeting, the activity was divided into pre-activity, whilst-activity, and post-activity. In the beginning, the researcher stimulated students to speak up by giving some questions related to the topic "What Makes A Great Leader?". Then, a video regarding the topic was sent to the group. After watching the video, the researcher asked them to discuss the video and introduced some vocabularies to them. Next, the researcher gave material about expressions of asking and giving opinion. After that, they are asked to make a dialogue about the topic in pairs. After that, teacher gave feedback to their speaking performance in the small group chat rooms.

In the second meeting, researcher began the activity by reviewing what students' have learned from the previous meeting. Then, the researcher sent a video to be discussed about the coolest jobs in the world. After that, researcher gave additional material about "Agreement and Disagreement". They were asked to read and practice the pronunciation. Next, students performed a dialogue in pairs and used the expressions that they have learnt. The topic given was about "The Most Important Profession in The World" according to their personal views. After performing the dialogue, students were given feedback of their performance. In this meeting, the researcher shared some tips and tricks on how to minimize anxiety in speaking.

In the third meeting, researcher sent a video about "The Dream School". In this topic, students reacted more actively than the previous two topics. They even gave their opinion before being asked by the researcher. Then, the researcher asked them to take turn in discussing the video. After one student had given their opinion, the next student could take turn after giving response to the first student's opinion. Next, researcher asked them to make a dialogue of the topic given "Full-Day School" in pairs, but the partner should be different from the previous performance. Later on, researcher gave response and feedbacks to their speaking performance.

After that, the students were required were required to fill out the online questionnaire regarding their perception about the treatment which covered some aspects in perception: confidence, difficulties, interest, stress, and motivation.

### 4.2. Findings

The students' perception is investigated based on the five aspects of perception which are confidence, difficulties, stress, interest, and motivation. Since the research was conducted fully in online setting, the researcher distributed an online questionnaire by using Google Form.

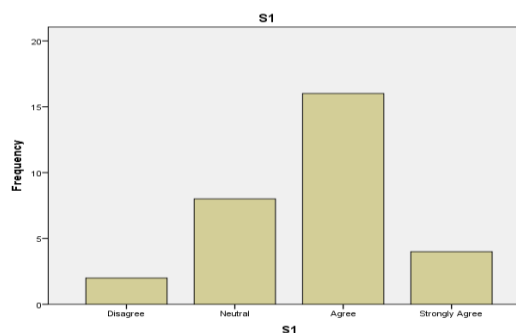
#### 4.2.1 Confidence.

This section presents specifically the result on statement 1 (Aspect of Confidence). The statement is "I feel confident to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp".

**Table 4.1. Table of Confidence**

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	2	6,7%
Neutral	8	26,7%
Agree	16	53,3%
Strongly Agree	4	13,3%
Total	30	100,0%

The table above presents the frequency and percentage from students' answer in aspect of confidence (Statement 1). It can be clearly seen that most of chose "agree" (16 students) with the percentage of 53,3%, followed by "neutral" (8 students) with the percentage of 26,7%, then chose "strongly agree" (4 students) and "disagree" (2 students) with the percentage of 13,3%, and 6,7% respectively. It is also shown that there was no student who chose "strongly disagree" on Statement 1. The diagram below pictures the students' answer in Statement 1:



**Figure 1: Aspect of Confidence**

From the diagram above, it can be seen that most of the students agreed on the statement 1 "I feel confident to speak English by using Voice Chatting through WhatsApp"

Here is one of the students' reasons on why they agreed on the statement number 1:

*"I agree with the statement. It's because I don't feel confident if I have to speak face-to-face to other people directly. If I look at their eyes, suddenly I don't know what to say and become really nervous." in the class. It's because the learning is fun. I didn't realize that I was learning.*

Here is one of the reasons on why students chose neutral:

*"I felt the same in speaking directly or through voice chatting in terms of self confidence. I can express my opinion in both setting."*

Here is one of the reasons on why the students chose agree:

*"I think it's not that easy to speak both in offline class or in online class by voice chatting, especially when I do not know what to say."*

On the other hand, one of the student who disagreed stated:

*"I did not feel quite confident to speak by voice chatting through WhatsApp. My English is not good enough to make me confident in performing speaking."*

#### 4.1.2. Difficulties.

The statement is "I feel difficult to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp". The frequency and percentage of students' answers are presented in the table below:

**Table 4.2. Table of Difficulties**

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	9	30,0%
Neutral	15	50,0%
Agree	5	16,7%
Strongly Disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100,0%

According to the table above, most of the students (15 students) were neutral (50%), followed by 9 students who disagreed (30%) with the statement. There was 1 student strongly disagreed (3.3%), while the rest (5 students) agreed on the second statement (16.7%). It is also shown that there is no student who strongly agreed on Statement 2. The diagram below displays the students' answer on Statement 2:

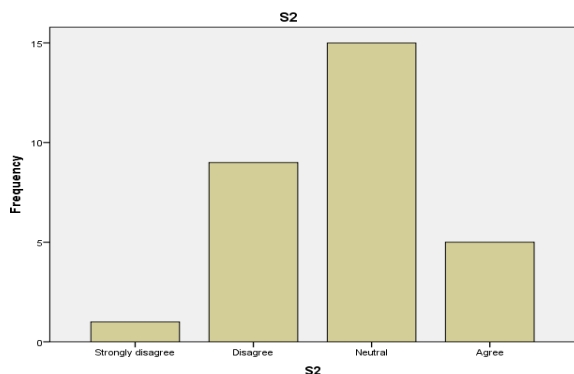


Figure 2: Aspect of Difficulties

From the chart above, it can be seen that majority of students were neutral toward statement 2 (*I feel difficult to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp*).

Here is one of the reasons on why the students chose "neutral":

*"I can't say that it's easy to speak English even though it is done through WhatsApp, but I it's not too difficult as well."*

Here are some personal reasons of students' answer on why they chose "disagree":

#### 4.1.3 Interest

The statement is "I feel interested to speak English by Voice Chatting through WhatsApp". The frequency and percentage of students' answers are presented below:

**Table 4.3 Table of Interest**

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	1	3,3%
Neutral	7	23,3%
Agree	20	66,7%
Strongly Agree	2	6,7%
Total	30	100%

From the table above, it can be seen that majority of students (20 students) agreed (66.7%), followed by 7 students who chose neutral (23%). Moreover, two students strongly agreed (6.7%) and one student disagreed (3.3%). Meanwhile, there was no student who strongly disagreed on Statement 3. The diagram below pictures the students' answer on Statement 3:

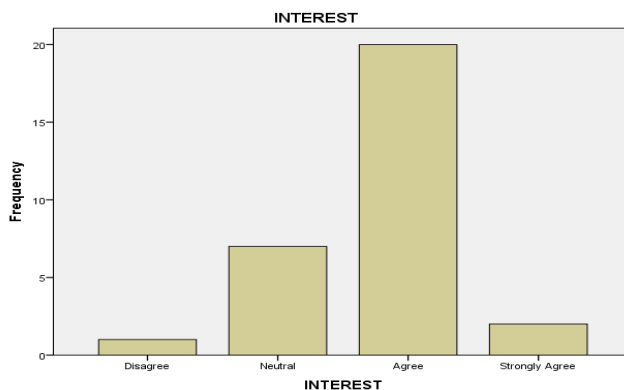


Figure 3: Aspect of Interest

From the chart above, it can be seen that majority of students agreed on statement 3. They gave the reasons on why they agreed on statement 3. Here are some of the reasons:

*"I agree. It's because I can learn and practice speaking English in different way from what I have experienced in the class. During this online learning, I can speak and express my opinion more freely because it was like communicating with my friends in social media."*

*" I like learning through voice chatting in WhatsApp. It's because I " I think both online and offline class still make me nervous and experience a new learning atmosphere and it makes me interested in stressed when I have to speak. It's because I know that my English learning. "*

However, there are also some students who were neutral. One of the reasons is as follows: *"I'm interested in learning English especially speaking by voice chatting through WhatsApp. But actually, I also want to try practice speaking English in real life. If I just practice my speaking in online platform, I'm afraid I am still shy to speak in real life."* Meanwhile, there was no student who chose "disagree" or "strongly disagree".

*"I don't really like speaking. I prefer writing to speaking since I'm not good enough in speaking."*

Meanwhile, the student who chose "disagree" stated:

*"I don't really like speaking. I prefer writing to speaking since I'm not good enough in speaking."*

**4.1.4 Stresses**

This section presents the result on statement 4 which is related to aspect of stress. The statement is "I feel relaxed to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp". The table of result in this aspect is presented below:

**Table 4.4 Table of Stress**

	Frequency	Percentage
Neutral	12	40,0%
Agree	16	53,3%
Strongly Agree	2	6,7%
Total	30	100,0%

According to table 4.4 above, it can be clearly seen that majority of students (16 students) agreed on Statement 4 with the total percentage of 53%. It is followed by 12 students who chose neutral and 2 students who strongly agreed on Statement 2, with the percentage 40% and 6.7% respectively. It can be seen that there was no student who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

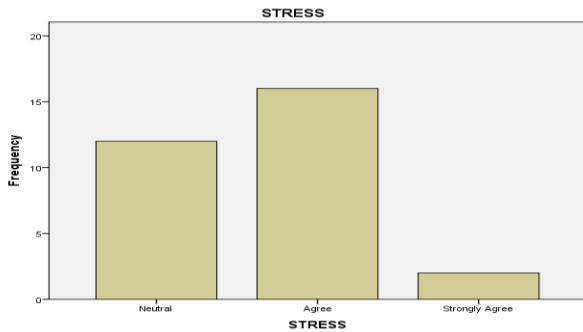


Figure 4: Aspect of Stress

Most of students who agreed on the statement 4 explained their reasons.

*"It is true that I feel relaxed when I have to speak by voice chatting. At least, it is less stressful than practicing in the offline class. Here, I classroom. I can speak English with no burden or worries of making mistakes. Maybe because I see this activity as not a really formal one, so I'm not afraid if I get bad score when I make mistakes in speaking"*

Some students were also neutral. One of the reasons is as follows:

**4.1.5 Motivation**

This section provides the result of students' answers regarding Statement 5 "I feel motivated to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp". Table below presents the frequency and percentage of the aspect of motivation.

**Table 4.5. Table of Motivation**

	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree	4	13,3%
Neutral	7	23,3%
Agree	18	60,0%
Strongly Agree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100,0

From the table above, it is apparent that there were 18 students who agreed on statement 5 (50%) and 1 student (3.3%) strongly agreed. It is followed by 7 students who chose neutral (23.3%). Meanwhile, there are 4 students who disagreed (13.3%). It also indicates that there is no student who strongly disagreed. The diagram below displays the students' answer on Statement 5:

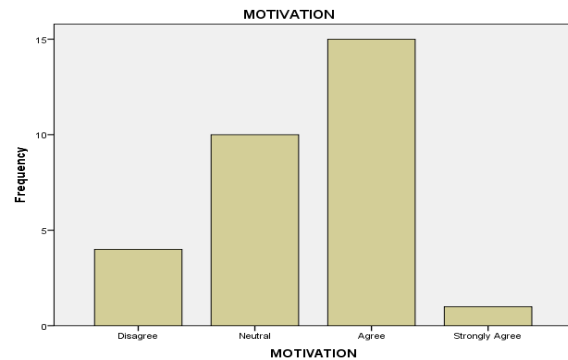


Figure 5: Aspect of Motivation

Most of students who agreed on the statement 5 explained their reasons.

*"Speaking English through voice chatting has motivated me to practice speaking English more. From this activity, I realize that speaking English is not that easy. It can be fun, too. I can practice speaking English by voice chatting to my friends and relatives."*

One of the students who chose "neutral" stated:

*"I like speaking whether it is through voice chatting or in"*

On the other hand, one of the students who chose "disagree" stated:

*"Actually I like to speak by voice chatting through WhatsApp. However, I like speaking directly to my partner more. If I talk directly with my partner, I will be more challenged and triggered to give my opinion."*

## 4.2. Discussion

The statements related to perception in the questionnaire concerns with five aspects of perception from Robinson (2001) which were confidence, difficulties, interest, stress, and motivation. Furthermore, students were required to write their reasons about their answer of the questionnaire.

In this research, it is found out that majority of students have positive responses on the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. Among the five aspects of perception, stress is one of the aspect which has the most positive response and got no negative one from the students. Most of students agreed with statement 4 which says "I feel relaxed to speak English by voice chatting through WhatsApp". Based on the reasons of the students' answers, they said that online learning by voice chatting through WhatsApp, with the support of other media such as videos created a less stressful learning setting to the students compared to the offline class.

One of the students' reason is :

*"I agree that I enjoyed and felt more relaxed to speak through voice chatting. I did not feel too nervous to speak or worry too much about my score as what I have experienced when speaking in classroom. I just focused on giving my opinion and responding to my friends".*

Moreover, when the students studied in the classroom, they sometimes got worried and became anxious when they had to speak up in front of many people. They were afraid of making mistakes, overwhelmed by the formal rules, and worried too much about getting bad score from the teacher. One of the students stated :

*"It is true that I feel relaxed when I have to speak by voice chatting. At least, it is less stressful than practicing in the offline class. Here, I can speak English with no burden or worries of making mistakes. Maybe because I see this activity as not a really formal one, so I'm not too afraid if I get bad score when I make mistakes in speaking".*

On the other hand, students viewed voice chatting activity as a less formal learning without too strict rules. They also did not have to face their friends and teacher directly. Therefore, they did not feel worried too much about dealing with the formal, strict rules, getting bad score, or having to see others students directly. It is supported by Shahi (2016) who found out that e-learning with multimedia teaching methods can reduce students' anxiety and stress level. It enables students to enjoy and interactions during the learning.

One of the speaking aspect which is influenced by anxiety or stress is fluency. According to Wang (2014), affective factors such as anxiety and emotions contribute to the fluency in speaking. When someone is in an anxiety-provoking condition, he or she can become tongue-tied and lost for words which often leads to discouragement and general sense of failure. When students can minimize their anxiety or stress level, they can focus on the idea of what they want to say and give their best in speaking performance.

Another aspect of perception which received most positive response is aspect of interest. According to the reasons of students' answer, most of students said that they found voice chatting through Whatsapp interesting since it was the first time they experienced online learning by voice chatting through WhatsApp. As what they know that WhatsApp was usually used only for instant messaging, they found it fun that it could also be utilized as learning medium.

Some of the students also added that the online learning atmosphere was quite different from what they experienced in the classroom. They assumed that during the treatment (learning English by voice chatting through WhatsApp), they did not feel as if they were learning. Instead, they perceived it as fun discussion activities they usually did with their friends so that it could engage students' participation during the teaching learning activity. This is in line with Tahir (2015) who stated that voice chatting activity provides students with an interesting and fun social learning which created pleasures to the students.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1. Conclusion

Majority of students have positive perception on the implementation of online voice chatting, especially in aspect of stress and interest. The implementation of voice chatting can help to minimize students' level of stress and anxiety as they did not have to face their speaking partner directly. It also provides different learning atmosphere which makes students more interested in practicing speaking.

### 5.2. Recommendations

In light of the study results, there are some recommendations proposed. Teachers and language practitioners are encouraged to implement voice chatting through WhatsApp in speaking class. For further researchers who want to conduct quite similar research, it is may use only 4 scale in the questionnaire by removing the "neutral" option in order to avoid ambiguity in interpreting the research findings. The further researcher mar also try to conduct a qualitative study to find out a more-detailed information regarding the students' perception with few students.

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