

**The implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp in improving students' speaking achievement**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research was aimed at investigating whether there was any significant improvement of students' speaking achievement after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. The sample of this research was 30 students in grade XI of senior high school level in Lampung Province. The data were collected by using speaking test. Then, the data were analyzed by using Paired Sample T-Test in SPSS version 20. The result showed that there was statistically significant improvement of students' speaking achievement after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. It was suggested that further researchers investigate the process of speaking activity through voice chatting and analyze the students' negotiation of meaning.

*Keywords: Speaking, Voice Chatting, WhatsApp*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Speaking is needed in our daily life. It is used to communicate with others (Fulcher, 2003). According to Richards (2008: 19), speaking skills in English becomes a priority for many second language or foreign language learners. The success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of a language course are measured based on their ability to speak or carry out conversation fluently and accurately in the target language.

However, the condition happening is somewhat contradictory. Some students' speaking achievement is rather unsatisfactory (Hadijah, 2014:240). They struggle and encounter some problems in improving all aspects in speaking. According to Hadijah (2014:245), there are some reasons why the students face the problems on speaking skills. They are limited knowledge on the components of speaking skills, limited time given for preparation when speaking practice takes place, the difficulties at using and understanding the speaking material found in the English textbook, and the environment which does not support students to acquire and speak English.

The finding is in line with Ivone (2005) who stated that it is quite difficult to use and practice English outside school in Indonesia since English is a foreign language there. It happens due to the belief of many Indonesians that English is only a set of grammar rules and a pile of vocabulary items to be memorized. It is not used by the students as a tool to communicate and build interaction. Therefore, it is required for English teachers to creatively provide activities which can extend students' opportunity in having extensive speaking practice outside the class in order to obtain more language exposure.

Online learning through internet is one of the activities which can be implemented in language learning in order to achieve higher amount of speaking practices outside the

classroom (Gokturk, 2016:72). The ability to connect with other students and effectiveness in time and place is seen as the benefit of the implementation of online activities in teaching and learning. One of the potentially useful online activities which can be implemented in language classes is voice chatting, that is, communicating in real time by voicing message through an application in smartphones or computers so that it can immediately be heard or received by other users/receivers, even in another part of the world (Baradaran and Khalili, 2009). Online voice chatting can be accessed in some social media application. In this research, WhatsApp was chosen as the mobile application used to implement voice chatting due to the familiarity of this social medium which students use for online messaging. WhatsApp has currently become one of the most popular mobile applications which is used for providing instant messaging service in smartphones. In Indonesia, WhatsApp is the most widely used mobile application of Indonesian people especially in academic environment (schools and universities) such as students, teachers, and lecturers (Sukrillah, et.al, 2017). Therefore, the researcher employed voice chatting activities through WhatsApp application.

Some studies regarding the use of online voice chatting have been conducted. Baradaran and Khalili (2009) conducted online voice chatting activity in speaking class which consisted of 52 EFL university students. They divided the learners into two groups which were control and experimental group. They found out that students from the experimental group significantly outperformed those from the control group. Tahir (2015) also carried out a study on the use of voice chat medium in improving students' speaking achievement. It was found out that there was significant improvement on students' speaking in terms of accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. Belinda et al. (2018) also implemented online voice chatting in blended learning class for university students majoring English Education. In her research, it was found out that after the implementation of online voice chatting, students had significant improvement on their speaking achievement, especially those who chose their own topic in speaking during their online chatting activity. Therefore, this research was conducted to find out whether voice chatting could also significantly improve speaking achievement of senior high school students in Lampung Province.

## **II. METHODS**

This was a quantitative research which aimed to find out whether there was any significant improvement of students' speaking achievement after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. The population of the research was students in grade XI of senior high school level in Lampung Province. The sample was 30 students in grade XI in Lampung Province. This study used random sampling technique. The data were collected from the speaking tests (pre-test and post-test). The data of the tests were then analyzed by using Paired Samples T-Test in SPSS version 20.

## **II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Results**

This section presents the result of data analysis. For the test result, the improvement in each aspect can be seen from the following table:

**Table 4.1. The improvement of students' speaking achievement**

Aspects of Speaking	Mean score of		Gain score	Maximum Score	Percentage
	Pre-test	Post-test			
Vocabulary	12.1	14.4	2.3	20	11.5 %
Grammar	12.5	14.1	1.6	20	8%
Pronunciation	12.4	14.1	1.7	20	8.5 %
Fluency	12.76	15.9	3.14	20	15.7%
Comprehension	13.9	16.2	2.3	20	11,5 %

Table 4.1. above provides the data of students' speaking score in pre-test, score in post-test, gain score, and maximum score of each aspect of speaking. According to the table, there is improvement on students' speaking achievement in every aspect of speaking. The highest gain score is aspect of fluency (3.14) with the percentage of 15.7%, followed by the comprehension and vocabulary which are shown to be equal in gain score (2.3) with 11.5 % in the percentage. Then, the mean score of grammar and pronunciation also improved 1.6 and 1.7 with the percentage of 8% and 8.5 % respectively.

To find out whether the improvement was significant or not, Paired Sample T-Test in SPSS version 20 was used in this research. The following table shows the result of Paired Samples T-Test.

Paired Samples T-Test									
		Paired Differences				t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	PRE TEST - POST TEST	-10,950	1,572	,287	-11,537	-10,362	-38,15	29	,000

Table 4. 2 presents the result of the speaking test. According to the table, the gain score of the pre-test and post-test is 10.95. The standard deviation of the difference score is 1.572. Then, standard error mean is 0.287. The degree of freedom for this test is 29. It is also seen that the computation result of the two tailed significance value is (0.00<0,05). It means that the hypothesis is accepted since the improvement is significant. It proves that there is significant improvement on students' speaking achievement after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp.

### Discussions

The research finding indicates that the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp had led to significant improvement of students' speaking achievement. The students' mean score in the pre-test was 63.78. In the post-test, students got 74.73 on their speaking performance. Then, it was found out that the significance level of students' improvement was 0.000. Therefore, it indicates that the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp can significantly improve students' speaking achievement. In the

previous studies conducted by Khalili and Baradaran (2009) and Tahir (2015), it was found out that the implementation of voice chatting led to the significant improvement on students' speaking performance in level of university. Therefore, the result of this research supports the finding of the previous studies that the implementation of voice chatting can significantly improved students' speaking performance in senior high level.

Additionally, the improvement was shown in all aspects of speaking which were vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. From the result, it was found out that fluency got the highest improvement compared to the other aspects. The mean score of the pre-test in aspect of fluency was 12.76 while the mean score of the post-test in the same aspect was 15.90. The researcher then tried to analyze on why fluency became the most improved aspect compared to the others.

According to the researcher's observation, the students were hesitant to speak up and do the speaking tasks in the beginning of the treatment. They seemed to be afraid and worried too much about their speaking performance, whether or not they made mistakes or errors which led to their friends' judgments on them. It turned out to affect students' speaking performance in which they produced a lot of "a" or "ums" and frequent unnecessary pauses. After doing several speaking tasks with their peers and groups, they started to enjoy the activities and speak up any thoughts and opinions they had in their mind. They took turn asking and giving their opinions and arguments in various topics with their friends which were discussed during the treatment. They did not see other member of the groups as their rivals or judges. Instead, they considered them as speaking partners. Therefore, the students focused more on what they were going to say and stop overthinking about what their friends were going to think about them. This led to the improvement of their fluency in speaking. The students became more confident and had more courage in exchanging their thoughts and arguments with their friends in groups. This finding is supported by Belinda et al. (2018) which found out that fluency was the aspect which predominantly improved after the implementation of group chat discussion through WhatsApp. It was because participating in conversational interactions in both pair and group tasks led to increased fluency. Students can also be able to manage the conversations in a more effective way especially in second language.

Comprehensibility aspect was also shown to be improved. Comprehensibility in speaking refers to the ability to understand what the speaker says and to be understood by the listeners. According to Harmer (1991), a good communication happens if the speaker's talk can be understood clearly and not lead to confusion. Therefore, the speaker needs to consider the process of constructing meaning which requires producing, receiving, and processing information. Its meaning and form are based on the context of speaking including the collective experience of both speakers and listeners, physical environment, acceptable level of language, and objective of speaking. In the test conducted in this research, the context of speaking tests were relevant and familiar to the students. They already had experience regarding the topic given in the tests. Therefore, they could understand the words. Even if they forgot the meaning, they would recall the meaning based on the context. Next, voice chatting through WhatsApp provided students with supporting environment which gave students' opportunity to express their opinion and

respond to their friends'. Moreover, the conversation done by the students was in form of daily conversation that they still found it not quite difficult to understand.

Vocabulary aspect also improved after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. In every meeting during the treatment, the students were provided with materials, pictures, and videos regarding the learning topic. They were also asked to discuss the topic and to tell the meaning of some words regarding the topic. If they did not know the meaning, they would look it up on an online dictionary in their smartphone. The researcher would also explain the meaning and the use of those words to them. All of this activity could be done efficiently through their smartphone. This is in line with Sharples et al. (2005) who stated that mobile devices can help to enhance the teaching learning in which students could show their responsibility and initiation for their own learning.

Aspect of pronunciation in the students' speaking achievement also improved after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. During the treatment, the students were required to speak by recording their voice and send it to the chat rooms in WhatsApp application. When they wanted to say some words but they did not know how to pronounce it, they would find the models of pronunciation on the English dictionary provided on their smartphone and practice those words. After students had found the pronunciation, they sent the voice messages to the chat room. Later on, the researcher would send personal feedbacks on their speaking performance to everyone of them. Therefore, they would know the progress of their performance and in which part that they still needed to work on. Those activities could help students improve their pronunciation as stated by Yoshida (2016) that pedagogical task which can be done in the teaching of pronunciation are providing students with pronunciation model, recording students' pronunciation practice, collecting their recording, and also giving response to students' recorded practice.

Grammar aspect also improved after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp. During the treatment, the teaching of grammar was not done separately from the students' speaking tasks as the language and grammar in particular should be studied concurrently with its social context rather than autonomously as an abstract system (Khuong, 2015). In the beginning of the class, the researcher introduced students the form and meaning as well as the appropriate use, such as expression of asking and giving opinion. Then, they were asked to practice what they had learned from the previous activities. They practiced oral interaction with their friends and with the researcher as the controlled practice to absorb the form and use of the structure of words. Then, they were asked to perform meaningfully communicative tasks such as dialogue through voice chat with their friends in pairs or in groups in which they could perform speaking more freely and engage in varied use of language. This activities included model for presentation, practice, and production which should exist in communicative grammar teaching as stated by Khuong (2015) that teachers should provide grammar teaching with activities of introducing accurate form and meaning of words, facilitating controlled practice, and giving production task.

The chapter has explained the results of the research conducted by the researcher. There are the result of the students' pre-test and post-test, the improvement of students' speaking score, and the result of the hypothesis test. It also provides discussion of the findings of students' speaking achievement after the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp.

### **III. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

#### **Conclusions**

Online voice chatting through WhatsApp provides students with opportunities for extensive speaking practices. This activity can be done efficiently due to its flexibility in terms of time and place. It also enables students to practice their speaking by interacting communicatively with their friends and the teacher. According to the findings of this research, it is found out that WhatsApp can significantly improve students' speaking achievement. Moreover, the improvement was shown in all aspects of speaking, especially in the aspect of fluency.

#### **Suggestions**

There are some recommendations with regards to the implementation of voice chatting through WhatsApp in speaking class. First, the teachers are required to give extra efforts in online controls since it should be done virtually. They have to make sure that all of the students actively participate and engage well in this online learning. Then, the teacher can also try to mix this online class with the offline one (blended learning) in order to optimize the results of the learning. Next, for the further researchers, it is also recommended to try to find out the process of voice chatting activity through WhatsApp related to the linguistics study such as students interactions or negotiation of meaning during this activity.

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