STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE USE OF WHATSAPP IN ENGLISH SPEAKING ACTIVITIES: A CASE STUDY AT SMP NEGERI 04 TELUK GELAM

Rifda Saugina[1]*
[1]SDIT Robbani Ogan Ilir, Indonesia
***Corresponding Email: rifdagina@gmail.com**

Abstract:
This research was intended to find out the students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in English speaking activities at SMP Negeri 04 Teluk Gelam. This study used a qualitative research with a case study research design. The participants of study were six students of 8th grade taken by using purposeful sampling through maximum variation sampling. Open-ended interview questions were utilized by the researcher to gather data, and the data were then analyzed using a theme analysis technique. The study's findings, which were drawn from interviews with students, indicated that they had opinions on how they used WhatsApp in English speaking activities, which included benefits: (a) promoting students' self confidence (b) promoting students' independent learning (c) promoting students' enthusiasm, and challenges: (a) time consuming (b) lack of attention to the lesson (c) lack of face to face interaction.

INTRODUCTION

Internet users could interact with teachers, students, parents, or could interact with their friends even though they were in different places at an affordable cost. In this era, there were many applications that can be used, such as WhatsApp as one of the famous applications. Some people used WhatsApp for education because the features provided by WhatsApp are quite supportive. WhatsApp enables teachers and students to send text messages, images, video, audio, links, documents, and even location. Furthermore, Sukrillah et.al (2017) stated that WhatsApp was the most widely-used mobile application especially among Indonesian learners and teachers. Furthermore, utilizing WhatsApp to teach and learn English was considered the most recent innovation in English language teaching approach.

Speaking is one that must be mastered in learning English, to improve students' ability to communicate orally, either to share information or build social relations. So the essence of language learning is speaking. Based on Oxford Dictionary (2017), speaking is the action of conveying information or expressing someone's feelings in speech. Speaking is a two-way exchange between the speaker and the audience that creates interaction and can establish good social relations between them. To support the ability students in speaking, the teacher uses online learning strategies. 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). So in the world of education, speaking was very important to support good English language education.

Additionally, there had been some previous studies on this topic, one of them was the previous study conducted Nuraeni and Nurmalia (2020) which focused on how utilizing WhatsApp Application in English language learning classroom. The findings noticed, in terms of technical advantages, WhatsApp is easy to use, and it can help students learn outside of the classroom. It can be argued that incorporating WhatsApp into school will be simple, enjoyable, and beneficial.

In relation to this, a preliminary study was conducted to obtain the data about the students' perceptions of SMP Negeri 04 Teluk Gelam on the use of WhatsApp in English speaking activities. A prelimininary study was conducted by informal interview with the English teacher and one of student. This school implements an online teaching and learning system and most teachers of SMP Negeri 04 Teluk Gelam used WhatsApp because the signal they got is good enough to support the learning process. According to the English teacher, WhatsApp is used for learning English especially in speaking for example students used voice note (one feature of WhatsApp to send

messege voice) to describe things, student commented on the WhatsApp group and so on. Consequently, students' perception on the use of WhatsApp in English speaking activities becomes the main concern of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students must acquire more than simply words, sentences, and grammatical rules in order to produce a discourse that can be understood in communication. They must practice speaking in order to clarify their meaning in everyday communication. On the other hand, Hughes (2003) gives a wide explanation in English speaking activities, those are: (1) accent, (2) grammar, (3) vocabulary, (4) fluency, (5) comprehension.

The smartphone app WhatsApp is compatible with almost all of the current generation's hardware and software. Users can communicate with other WhatsApp users through the free, downloadable program WhatsApp. Text messages, phone and video conversations, attached photos, audio files, video files, and connections to website URLs are just a few of the crucial features that WhatsApp offers. According to Dunlap (2006), students can express their responses freely and the teacher responds to students questions and comments, starts new problems, or sends questions. According to the service description and the features of WhatsApp, it is clear that the service application offers an instant messaging service that works on multiple platforms, including Android, iOS, and Windows, and that enables users to send messages, pictures, videos, and documents to one another with free international coverage in lieu of using an internet connection.

The Use of WhatsApp for English Speaking Activities

WhatsApp provides features that are easy and polite to use so that students can learn well through interactions with peers and teachers. According to Trevor (2013) among all online tools, WhatsApp is considered as the easiest, most popular and effective tool that can be used by educators. WhatsApp is one of the e-learning that has an impact on the progress of education. In addition, Turino, et.al (2009) stated that e-learning has benefits that can reach a wider range of learning activities because with learning through e-learning time and place are no longer an obstacle to learning English. According to Kheryadi (2017), there are 3 benefits of using the WhatsApp, namely:

Confidence

Confidence is a good attitude in the learning process, through the WhatsApp, students are more confident to speak because they are not face to

face. Additionally, using this material might boost students' confidence in their academic abilities.

Autonomous

Due to the freedom of learning on WhatsApp, pupils can become independent learners. On their own time and away from the classroom, kids can practice speaking their language to express whatever ideas they may have, whether in an independent or dependent dialogue. It is something that can make easier for students to get an idea and inspiration. It is related to Ta'amneh (2020) discovered that using a technical application like WhatsApp to learn English is more independently to access anything knowledge by internet. In conclussin,WhatsApp makes students more independently to learn English.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is a vital attribute that can hinder students' engagement in class activities and impact the results of their English-language acquisition. If they lack learning motivation, it will be challenging to inspire them to complete any assignments. WhatsApp, on the other hand, can increase their motivation to learn. However, WhatsApp use can increase their enthusiasm in learning. After the many benefits that WhatsApp has, there are some challenges in using it. According to Nuraeni and Nurmalia (2020), there are 3 challenges using the WhatsApp , namely :

1) Need extra time

    The students need an extra time to learn speaking by using WhatsApp. According to Church and de Oliveira (2013) showed that the teachers and students used WhatsApp as a communication platform takes a lot of time when active discussions are interrupted or slow down due to communication delays. In addition, using WhatsApp as a medium for English speaking activities need extra time.

2) Lack of attention to the lesson

    When the teacher initiates discussion of the subject in the group, the students or participants function as silent readers. The teacher has to be very gentle with them as a result. Hamad (2017) stated that discussion using WhatsApp makes some students not participate in discussion, the students attention cannot be assured, so that not all students learn from the material. Additionally, Helena (2013), showed that it is like typical learning style of Chinese students studying English has been seen as rote, silent, and passive. In short, makes some students as a Silent Reader in learning English by using WhatsApp and makes they lacks focus on learning.

3) Less face-to-face interaction

Less of face-to-face interaction on the subject of student learning and learning styles, so students and teachers cannot provide instant feedback on questions and opinions in discussions held in groups. This also results in a lack of emotional feelings between teachers and students. According to Hamad (2017) the use of WhatsApp to enhance of students' in learning English based on disadvantage of experience that some students do not focus to interact in discussion. In brief, the use of WhatsApp in English speaking activities has several disadvantages to enhance the students' learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 04 Teluk Gelam. Using a purposeful sampling technique, the research's participants were eighth-graders at SMP Negeri 04 Teluk Gelam. Creswell (2016) stated a researcher was choose the sites and participants to uncover much deep information about a major problem in research. The researcher chose 6 students based on their score as the sample in this study through maximal variation sampling. Two students were the characteristic of the highest score in their class, two students were the characteristic of the middle score in their class, and two students were the characteristic of the lowest score in their class. Open-ended interview questions were utilized by the researcher to gather data, and the data were then analyzed using a theme analysis technique.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

FINDING

In this study, the researcher found some benefits and challenges from students by using WhatsApp in English speaking activities. The statements benefits and challenges of the students' perceptions on the use of WhatsApp in English speaking activities can be seen in the table 1 below:

Table 1
Themes and Codes for Students' Perceptions on the Use of Whatsapp in English Speaking Activities

Themes	Codes
Promoting the students' self-confidence	• The students stated that using WhatsApp in English speaking activities made them more confident in answering the teacher's questions.

Themes	Codes
Promoting the students' independent	• Some students stated that they have practiced speaking assignment before they conveyed it to the WhatsApp group. • The students said that they would be more independent during English speaking activities because they could add knowledge browsed from the internet. • The students could record their voice notes before sharing them to WhatsApp group.
Promoting the students' enthusiasm	• Some students stated that they were enthusiastic in using WhatsApp during English speaking activities because they could repeat the explanation shared using voice notes given by the teacher. • Some students stated that WhatsApp's features made them easier to submit their assignments.
Time consuming	• The students stated that using WhatsApp in English speaking activities took them a lot of time because they needed to take turn to deliver their opinions during active discussions. • The students said that they needed a lot of time to understand what the teacher already explained.
Lack of attention to the lesson	• Some students claimed that they had lack of attention during English speaking activities by using WhatsApp because they could open other apps on their phones, that mades them lose focus on learning process. • Some students stated they became passive when the teacher started the discussion in the WhatsApp group.

Themes	Codes
Lack of face-to-face interaction	• The students stated that using WhatsApp in English speaking activities was difficult in terms of having interaction with the teacher because the features of WhatsApp for video call it is not supported.

DISCUSSION

The researcher discovered the students' perceptions about the use of WhatsApp in English-speaking activities by doing a thematic analysis of the data. The first perception perceived by the students was WhatsApp promoted their self confidence. The students stated that WhatsApp makes more confidence in WhasApp group because if there is an error, they can retract what was conveyed and they have practiced before they conveyed it to the WhatsApp group. The second perception perceived that was promoted the students' independence. WhatsApp makes students can independently in English speaking activities because there is an opportunity to add knowledge through the internet and students can record their voice before share to WhatsApp group. The third perception perceived was that WhatsApp promoted the students' enthusiasm. The emergence of perception is students state that WhatsApp makes students enthusiastic because they can repeat the explanation by voice recordings given the teacher. Next, time consuming was considered as one of drawbacks perceived by the students. The students stated that using WhatsApp in English speaking activities need extra time because the response or feedback given is not direct and sometimes signal interference slows down the massage and and takes turns in interacting. Next, lack of attention to the lesson also was considered as one of drawbacks perceived by the students. The students stated that using WhatsApp makes some students less active in English speaking activities by using WhatsApp because they don't understand the material and WhatsApp also affected to open another application on the cellphones and makes they lacks focus on learning. The last, lack of face to face interaction was considered as one of drawbacks perceived by the students. The students stated that using WhatsApp in English speaking activities more difficult to interaction with the teacher.

CONCLUSION

The researcher discovered some of the perceptions covered in the previous chapter based on the findings of this study. Following were some perceptions regarding the usage of WhatsApp discussion in teaching English,

which were based on the findings and discussions in the previous chapter: a) promoting students' self-confidence. The students stated that WhatsApp makes more confidence in WhatsApp group because if there is an error, they can retract what was conveyed and they have practiced before they conveyed it to the WhatsApp group. b) promoting students' independent. This perception was generated because WhatsApp makes students can independently in English speaking activities, there is an opportunity to add knowledge through the internet connection and students can record their voice before share to WhatsApp group. c) promoting students' enthusiasm. This perception was because WhatsApp makes students enthusiastic, they can repeat the explanation by voice recordings given the teacher. d) time consuming. The students stated using WhatsApp as a medium for English speaking activities takes a lot of time. e) lack of attention to the lesson. The students perception was that using WhatsApp makes some students less active in English speaking activities by using WhatsApp because they don't understand the material and WhatsApp also affected to open another application on the cellphones and makes they lacks focus on learning. f) lack of face to face interaction. The students stated that WhatsApp in English speaking activities more difficult to interaction with the teacher.

REFERENCES

Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed). Sage Publication,Inc.

Church, K., & De Oliveira, R. (2013). What's up with Whatsapp?: Comparing mobile instant messaging behaviors with traditional SMS. *Proceedings of The 15th International Conference on Human - Computer Interaction with Mobile Devices and Services.* 352-361. https://doi.org/10.1145/2493190.24932

Dunlap, J. C. (2006). Using guided reflective journaling activities to capture students' changing perception. *Tech Trends, 50*(6), 20-26. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-006-7614-x

Göktürk, N. (2016). Examining the effectiveness of digital video recordings on oral performance of EFL learners. *Teaching English with Technology,16*(2), 71-96. https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=408431

Helena, H. (2013). *Characteristics of Chinese students' learning styles*. Macquarie University

Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers* (2nd ed). Cambridge University Press.

Hamad, M., M. (2017). Using WhatsApp to enhance students' learning of English language experience to share. *Higher Education Studies, 7*(4),74-87. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1161157

Jasrial, D. (2017). Utilizing Whatsapp application for teaching english language: Why and how?. *Graduate Program English Languange Education, 1*(1), 151 157. http://conference.unsri.ac.id/index.php/semirata/article/view/1098

Kheryadi, K. (2017). The implementation of WhatsApp as a media of English language teaching. *Loquen: English Studies Journal, 10*(2), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.32678/loquen.v10i2.685

Nuraeni, C., & Nurmalia, L. (2020). Utilizing WhatsApp application in English language learning classroom. *Journal of English Language Literature and Teaching, 4*(1), 89-94. https://doi.org/10.31002/metathesis.v4i1.2289

Oxford Dictionary (2017). *Speaking Definition*. https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

Rambe, P., & Chipunza C. (2013). Using mobile devices to leverage student access to collaboratively-generated resources: A case of WhatsApp instant messaging. *South African University International Conference on Advanced Information and Technology for Education,* 331-337. *https://doi.org/10.2991/icaicte.2013.66*

Sukrillah, A., Ratnamulyani, I. A., & Kusumadinata, A. A. (2017). Pemanfaatan media sosial WhatsApp group FEI sebagai sarana komunikasi: Utilization of social media WhatsApp group FEI as a means of communication. *Jurnal Komuniko, 3*(2), 95-104. https://doi.org/10.30997/jk.v3i2.919

Ta'amneh, M., A., A. (2017). The effect of using WhatsApp messenger in learning English language among university students. *International Research in Education, 5*(1), 143-151. https://doi.org/10.5296/ire.v5i1.10801

Trevor, M. (2013). *WhatsApp-hits-250 million-active user*. http://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile

Turino, T., Purwanto, Y., & Soeleman, A. (2009). E-Learning bahasa Inggris berbasis web. *Jurnal Teknologi Informasi, 5*(2),728-741.