

The Use of Chatting in Social Media Using English in Improving the Students' English Speaking Skill in the Context of English as a Foreign Language

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat peningkatan pada kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah mengikuti model pembelajaran kombinasi (*blended learning*). Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah dua puluh lima pelajar tingkat universitas yang berumur sekitar 19-20 tahun. Penelitian ini merupakan eksperimen semu yang di dalamnya hanya menggunakan satu kelas sebagai subjek. Data diambil melalui pre tes dan pos tes yang dilakukan siswa dalam bentuk menyampaikan pidato. Nilai berbicara siswa dibandingkan antara pre tes dan pos tes dengan level signifikansi 0,05. Tiga topik yang berbeda juga dianalisis untuk mengetahui topik mana yang paling baik untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa di kelas kombinasi. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa secara statistik terdapat peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah diajar menggunakan model pembelajaran kombinasi. Ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran kombinasi membantu siswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa.

Abstract. The objective of this research is to find out whether there is any improvement of the students' speaking skills after they were taught through blended learning. The subjects of the research were twenty five university students aged around 19-20 years old. This research is a quasi experiment in which one class was used as the subjects. The data were elicited through the pre and the post test taking by the students in forms of delivering speeches. Their speaking performance scores were compared between the pre and the post test with the significant level 0.05. The different topics were also analyzed to find out the best topic in improving students' speaking skills for this blended model. The result showed that there was a statistically significant improvement of the students' speaking skills after they were taught by using blended learning. This suggests that blended learning facilitates the students to improve the capability of their speaking skills.

Keyword: speaking, blended learning, group chat discussion, speech topic, WhatsApp

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INTRODUCTION

The best way to be able to speak English is by learning it meaningfully; in the other words, students need real interaction in their real life. This comes from the theory that says language is acquired by nature and should be meaningful. One of the way people can acquire their second language is by observing and using it in their natural environment. They also need maximum exposure and an authentic linguistic form of English (Sivertzen, 2013). It can be said that acquiring English is mastering English without any intention to learn it. We just use it as the media of communication, and we acquire it subconsciously. This is different with language learning. While language acquisition happens subconsciously, language learning happens consciously. The main different is language learning takes place in the classroom, while language acquisition can occur everywhere in our daily environment. There is nothing wrong with learning English in a formal situation like in a classroom; however, it can be better if the situation in the classroom is mold into something more natural. Otherwise, we can mix the classroom activity which seems so formal with informal activity outside the classroom which can be said the natural situation. So, the students do not only obtain the materials in the classroom, but they also can acquire something natural outside the classroom which profoundly gives them maximum exposures.

Second-language students acquire language competence by exposure to language that is both understandable and meaningful to them (Krashen in Tricomi, 1986: 60). That is what we actually call a comprehensible input. It means that the students internalize the input first before producing the output. It seems like what happens to the infants who learn their first language. Furthermore, Nunan (2003: 50) states that several studies led to the conclusion that we had gotten the basic idea backwards: people do not learn the pieces of the language and then put them together to make conversations. Instead, infants acquiring their first language and people acquiring second languages learn the pieces by interacting with other people. It is possible that this is the key why many students in Indonesia fail to speak in English even though they have learned it since elementary school to high school which approximately spends twelve years of learning time. That is a really long time that actually one can use it to acquire some new languages. However, it does not happen to the majority of Indonesian students. They do not learn English by interacting. They just learn the pattern or grammar and do not practice it in their school life nor in their daily life outside school.

We have known that the best way to acquire English as a second language is by interaction which is meaningful, and also students can be able to speak after they obtain maximum exposure from the natural environment. We can manipulate this by using chatting application in smartphone. As we know that people having chit chat happens naturally and meaningfully. They focus on the content and not

on the form. This is based on the theory of the input hypothesis which says that language acquisition can only take place when a message which is being transmitted is understood, when the focus is on what is being said rather than on the form of the message (Krashen, 1982: 55). This is one of the ways to help the students be able to speak English.

Furthermore, we also need to decide which application that might be suitable for the online chatting used by the students. We can choose the easiest and the simplest application to use. One of the very familiar applications for everyone in this world is WhatsApp. Based on the statistic website about mobile internet and apps survey, www.statista.com, WhatsApp took the first place of the most used instant messaging along 2017 with 900 million monthly active users. It was followed in the second place by LINE messenger with 217 million active users who access it on a monthly basis. WhatsApp can be suitable to be applied as the media to help the student to acquire English and improve their speaking skill. Not only does this app become the most popular and used messenger worldwide, WhatsApp also contains features that can ease the students during the online instructional process. It is a free and simple accessible chatting group of which feature allows the users to share and receive picture, audio, and video. So, it has complete feature that can be utilized in the process of acquiring English.

This thing can make the instructional process more interesting. The students do not only follow the teaching and learning activity inside the classroom, but they also join the informal chatting group outside the classroom. This also can give them more exposure and more intensity of language practice. This kind of model which combines both face-to-face classroom activity and online class learning is called blended learning. Actually, there are some previous research with respect to this kind of teaching and learning style. Those research prove that blended learning is effective to improve English vocabulary level (Djiwandono, 2013), and it also suitable to improve listening skill (Sofiana, 2015). There are also some evidences that it is suitable for writing and reading skills.

Therefore, in order to solve the problem above, this research is conducted to find out (1) whether there is an improvement of students' speaking skill when being taught by using blended learning, and (2) whether there is significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different topics of the speech after being taught in blended class.

METHODS

This quantitative research is used one group time series design of which aim is to measure the improvement of students' speaking ability through blended learning and also find the best topic in this blended model. *One Way Anova*

formula was used to analyze the data since there were more than two data that should be measured. Furthermore, in order to find out the difference between the three topics, *Scheffe* test was used. Since it was a *quasi experiment*, there was only one class in which consists of twenty five advance level university students aged between 19-20 years old. There were four test which are pretest (T1), guided speech test (T2), controlled speech test (T3), and free speech tests (T4). Furthermore, the treatments were applied in between each two tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

After analyzing the data, the author presents the table of each test based on the hypotheses. The first hypothesis which is tested in this result is:

- H_0 : There is no improvement of students' speaking skill for being taught by using blended learning.
- H_1 : There is an improvement of students' speaking skill for being taught by using blended learning.

The working hypothesis is accepted if the significant value is lower than α , where α is 0.05. Thus, the following table is the result of the hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Anova Test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8388.680	3	2796.227	192.379	.000
Within Groups	1395.360	96	14.535		
Total	9784.040	99			

The not working hypothesis (H_0) is rejected if the significant level is higher than 0.05. On the other hand, the working hypothesis (H_1) is accepted if the significant level is lower than 0.05. According to the table above, the significant level value is 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. It means that the working hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. Likewise, it can be said that there is an improvement of students' speaking skill for being taught by using blended learning. Furthermore, in order to know whether each of the topics gives statistically significant difference towards another topic in the students' speaking skill, *Scheffe* test was used. The next hypothesis is:

- H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different topics of the speech after being taught in blended learning class.
- H_1 : There is a statistically significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different topics of the speech after being taught in blended learning class.

The working hypothesis is accepted if the significant value is lower than α , where α is 0.05. The following table is the result of the computation of *Scheffe* test:

Table 2. Post Hoc Scheffe Test

(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Guided Topic	Controlled Topic	.000	-9.9482	-4.8518
	Free Topic	.000	-19.9082	-14.8118
Controlled Topic	Guided Topic	.000	4.8518	9.9482
	Free Topic	.000	-12.5082	-7.4118
Free Topic	Guided Topic	.000	14.8118	19.9082
	Controlled Topic	.000	7.4118	12.5082

The not working hypothesis (H_0) is rejected if the significant level is higher than 0.05. On the other hand, the working hypothesis (H_1) is accepted if the significant level is lower than 0.05. Based on the table above, each comparison has lower significant value than 0.05, meaning that there is statistically significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different topics of the speech after being taught in blended learning class. Furthermore, it is needed to discover which topic is good for this blended model.

Correspondingly, in order to investigate which topic is appropriate for teaching speaking in blended learning, the gains of all the tests are compared.

Table 3. Score Gain

Topics	Pre-test	Test after treatment	Gain	Percentage
Guided Topic	55.4	62.8	7.4	13.4%
Controlled Topic	62.8	70.2	7.4	11.8%
Free Topic	70.2	80.16	9.96	14.2%

It can be seen from table above that speech with free topic (free speech) was in the place with the highest gain (14.2%). Interestingly, guided speech has only 0.8% difference compared to free speech. Furthermore, the lowest is placed by controlled speech of which percentage different is double (1.6%). Even though the difference is not too far, it gives effect on the students' speech performance during the treatment. In addition, the differences still need to be considered in order to decide the best topic to improve students' speaking skill in blended learning class.

Discussion

From the data analysis, it can be said that group chat discussion in blended learning class can improve students' speaking skill predominantly in their fluency. It is because engaging in conversational interactions in group and paired activities can lead to increased fluency and the ability to manage conversations more effectively in a second language (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 104). Furthermore, Krashen (1982: 58) proposed that the classroom is of benefit when it is the major source of comprehensible input. When acquirers have rich sources of input outside the class, and when they are proficient enough to take advantage of it. This is what the students get from joining both online and offline class.

Surprisingly, when the students are allowed to choose their own topic, their speaking performance is better than when the topic is limited by the teacher. It can be seen from the gain table in the result. It is easier for them to speak up when it came to free speech where they could choose whatever they want to talk about and share it to the world. It is in line with the theory from Kohn (1993) that getting our ideas to come out of the students' mouths is a ventriloquist's trick, not a sign of successful participation and student autonomy. Making the students pop something we wish to say out is not good for their language practice. On the other hand, letting them to say what they want to say is better so that they do not feel pressured or forced to do it where can lead them to avoid speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

According to the data that had been collected and analyzed, it is proved that (1) blended learning can improve students speaking skill profoundly in every aspect of speaking, and (2) it is better to use free topic in this blended class to improve the students' speaking skill. The more the students like and enjoy the material, the better their speaking performance is. The topic that is freely chosen by the students gives more positive aspect to help the students get a natural environment to speak up. The more natural the chat is, the better the chat is going on. On the other hand, the more the teacher limits or prevents them to speak, the less the students are willing to speak up. Letting the students to speak without bothering them is good for their speaking practice.

Suggestions

After doing this research, the author found some things that need to be considered, (1) In the process of online class, make sure the students have a good internet connection to support the process of online class. If the internet connection is bad, we need to provide more days so that those who have not joined the online class before can join it another day when their internet

connection is good. (2) Some vocabulary can also be added during the instructional process, so that the students can also get new words everyday of their online chat discussion.

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