

WHATSAPP: THE CONTRIBUTION OF A SMARTPHONE-BASED APPLICATION AS MEDIA DURING ONLINE LEARNING

Umi Rahmawati
(umirahmawati1997@gmail.com)

SMK Nusantara, Blora

E-learning is based on computer learning that is connected to the internet where the users have an opportunity to learn anywhere and anytime. This type of learning become very popular recently, during Covid19. One of the most popular media to use is WhatsApp, the most popular Smartphone-based application. This study aims to describe students' perception regarding the use of WhatsApp as a Learning Media in SMK Nusantara Blora, Central Java. The questionnaire was used as a method for collecting students' data. This research uses descriptive qualitative in elaborating the result and discussion. In this article, the result draws how students interest in having e-learning as a medium of teaching especially in English class.

Keywords: *Smartphone-based Application, WhatsApp, English Language Teaching, Students' Perception*

E-learning atau elektronik learning adalah proses pembelajaran yang memanfaatkan media elektronik sebagai media untuk dapat diakses kapanpun dan dimanapun. Jenis pembelajaran ini sangat populer digunakan seiring berkembangnya teknologi dan tuntutan untuk menjaga jarak dimasa pandemi. Salah satu media yang paling populer adalah WhatsApp, sebuah aplikasi berbasis smartphone. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memaparkan sudut pandang siswa terhadap penggunaan WhatsApp sebagai media pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMK Nusantara, Blora, Jawa Tengah. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah kuisioner/ angket menggunakan skala Likert. Penulis menguraikan hasil data secara kualitatif deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini membuktikan sudut pandang ketertarikan siswa dalam penggunaan WhatsApp sebagai media pembelajaran di kelas.

Kata Kunci: *Aplikasi berbasis Smartphone, WhatsApp, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Persepsi Siswa*

INTRODUCTION

In this globalization era, technology has already invaded many sectors of life. This condition makes people named the era as a technical world (Fouts, 2000). It is obvious that most society segments have changed to the development of technology rapidly (Fouts, 2002). School is one of the aspects which affected these changes. Teachers change the habit of telling stories and explanations to students in front of the class to interact more and engage in more active communication. Utilizing more technology such as a computer, mobile phone smartphone, and the internet in learning embarked since it is considered as effective tools to support the teaching and learning process (Ta'amneh, 2017). This new method of online teaching by utilizing a computer-based educational tool or mobile application to engage the learning process called E-learning (Li, F W., Law, R.W., & Dharmendran, P., 2009) According to Marshal (2002), as cited in Gon and Rawekar (2017), people can remember what they read only 10%, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, and 50% of what they hear and see. Thus to enhance their understanding and participation in class, a combination of those aspects is needed. Those aspects mentioned in Gon and Rawekar (2017) are the answer to why media is important to be

applied in the learning process, especially English. As a subject that has four skills of learning, such as listening, writing, reading, and speaking, the media that will be used should emphasize how to improve these skills. The use of media and technology in English class has been started in early 2010, yet this method of teaching still considered an option. This depends on the teacher and school readiness in facilitating students, both mentally and technically. Lailiyah and Cahyono (2016) claim that some EFL teachers are reluctant to take the opportunity to integrate technology into their classrooms. They would prefer to use traditional ways of teaching which they already familiar with. However, in 2020, the implementation of technology in teaching becomes a must since people need to keep their distance and stay at home. Thus every school started to implement e-learning, whether in downtown or rural area. Bensalem (2018) claims that many foreign language teachers have been interested in using WhatsApp to teach certain aspects of foreign language learning. Hamad (2017) states that "using WhatsApp to facilitate and create an avenue for learning and communication as well, as it is the most common App to the students, and they always have their mobile phones and smartphones in their hands, besides it is cheap to activate the App. Hamad's statement (2017) becomes the key to choose what media to be utilized for the e-learning process in a rural area since the media should be helping and maximize the outcomes not to raise new problems and errors. Moreover, since the target students mostly located in a rural area that might be having problem with the signal, an application which doesn't take high-speed internet connection. Thus, WhatsApp would be the perfect choice due to its easiness and popularity.

WhatsApp application provides users with useful features that support teaching and learning process. This application allows a teacher to take a greater role in their teaching (Alshammari, 2017). Furthermore, it enables students to have better participation in class. Those features are as follows:

1. Personal Chats / Message

The message feature in WhatsApp is the basic feature known by every user. This is very reliable and simple. Users can send messages to their friends or family for free. WhatsApp only used an internet connection, so it will manage the users not to pay the cost for SMS. The message is facilitated with emoji as well, which enables users to give better reactions.

2. Chat Group

Users can connect to their important relationships in contacts better, such as family, teammates, and others. Organizing group in group chats enable users to share messages, photos, videos to up to 256 other members. Users can also name the group, mute, getting push notifications, and more. Using these groups, teachers can drop their students in some class categories to manage the learning process.

Chat groups are also able to be used in delivering material when the connection is not stable to do document sharing or more.

3. Voice notes/messages

WhatsApp facilitates users to record their voice to respond to the chats by voice mail in the chat room. Since voice and intonation affect how they comprehend the meaning.

With this feature, teachers are able to conduct expression or speaking class better by giving students a chance to follow an example sentence, giving responses, or practicing.

4. Voice and video call

Not only messages, but users are also able to talk freely with their connections in time. In a video call, users are able to have a face-to-face live conversation when voice notes and

chats are not enough. The newest version of WhatsApp 2.20.133 facilitates them to talk freely with 8 members.

With these features, teachers can conduct a small group discussion, live group presentation, live scoring for students' speaking fluency even making story rallies.

5. Document sharing

The user can share the documents in form of word, spreadsheets, slideshows, PDFs, and more without the hassle of using email or file-sharing apps. The maximum size of the document is up to 100 MB. This feature will ease the teacher in delivering the material or sharing projects the students need to be done.

6. Photos and Videos

WhatsApp eases users to share their photos and videos immediately. They can capture an important moment and delivered it as soon as possible to their connections. Through this, a teacher may manage students to submit or compile their work in the easiest way.

7. WhatsApp Web

When users are having difficulties managing the class on small screen, run to a bigger one. WhatsApp can smoothly be sync to computers or laptops when smartphones are not convenient for them. They can download desktop apps or access web.whatsapp.com to get started. This feature is useful in managing class and delivering material to students.

8. End-to-end encryption

End-to-end encryption is security by default. Personal chat mind personal matter, a user may have privacy. By typing this, users can manage their privacy all secured. Only sender and receiver have access to this, no one in between, even WhatsApp.

Considering the setting of the research located in a rural area, it is important to acknowledge the popularity and accessibility of the media. WhatsApp is popular with students in SMK Nusantara and they are familiar with the features in it. Moreover, WhatsApp is accessible in their area. The application could run at low internet speed which reduces the risk in conducting the class.

Moreover, using WhatsApp is considered an innovation in teaching and learning English. By this, Teachers and students can interact online one to another through the features of WhatsApp. WhatsApp can present multimodal media through its features for learning the English language. The features facilitate by WhatsApp such as chats, audio records, video, document sharing, and more.

A previous study entitled "Utilizing Whatsapp Application For Teaching English Language: Why And How?" by Jasrial from Bengkulu in 2019 discussed WhatsApp features that could potentially use in teaching and learning English includes its benefits as a Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. The second research was entitled "Utilizing Whatsapp Application For Teaching Integrated English (A Case Study At the University Of Technology Yogyakarta by Septi Riana Dewi in 2019. The research focussing how to use the WhatsApp application to enhance students' writing skills.

Furthermore, based on the idea mentioned above, The researcher focussing on students' perspectives towards WhatsApp contribution as Smartphone-based apps utilized in teaching and learning in English class for this study, with the research question: how students of SMK Nusantara perception

In this research, the researcher aims to investigate students' perspectives towards WhatsApp contribution as Smartphone-based apps utilized in teaching and learning in English class. Thus,

the answer to the question of how effective was WhatsApp as the media of English online learning was elaborated by the researcher from students' point of view. Furthermore, the researcher sum up the research findings of the research and suggested another researcher in conducting further study and teacher in applying WhatsApp to their class.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The researcher tried to analyze students' perspectives regarding WhatsApp contribution in the teaching and learning process in English class, therefore qualitative descriptive was designed as a method to help the researcher elaborate the result of the research. A study of social phenomena from the perspective of humans in a natural place would need to be analyzed by using descriptive qualitative (Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C. Sorenson., & Razafieh A., 2010).

Subjects and Settings

The subjects of the research were 22 students of SMK Nusantara Blora from Grade X, XI, and XII grades. It consists of 7 males and 15 females. This subject was used chosen by random sampling method, a method that took a sample from the population randomly without concerning their levels (Sugiyono, 2017).

Data Collection

The researcher collected the data of students' perception through 11 points of questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by using the theory from Kosnodihardjo (1993) about 13 steps in listing a questionnaire; such as planning, gaining information, focussing on the topics, reviewing, delivering, etc. Since the respondents were Senior High School students, multiple-choice questions with five Likert scale (1932) were chosen, thus respondents could give quick responses. Furthermore, a close-ended questionnaire enabled students to understand easily and give a straightforward response without hesitation.

Likert Scale (1932) was used by the researcher in collecting the data. It is requiring the students' perceptions in the form of five statements; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The researcher uses google form in making the questionnaire. Then it was distributed to students through their WhatsApp account at the end of a learning session.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The results of this study after looking at several studies related to the use of WhatsApp application as a media for teaching and learning in English class bring up some advantages. Based on the questionnaire, the result showed that students' perceptions of WhatsApp contribution as media in online learning. Most students chose strongly agree (SA) and Agree (A) and none chose Strongly disagree (SD). The detail of the result can be seen in Table 1. It shows students' point of view towards WhatsApp contribution as media in the online learning process.

Table 1.

Students' perceptions towards WhatsApp contribution as media in online learning process

No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
----	-----------	----	---	---	---	----	-------

1	WhatsApp allows me to send and receive text, images, audio, video, and documents for Learning	91%	9%	0%	0%	0%	100%
2	WhatsApp enables me to communicate with the teacher everytime and everywhere	91%	9%	0%	0%	0%	100%
3	WhatsApp allows me to react and contribute better in learning process	82%	9%	9%	0%	0%	100%
4	WhatsApp group enables me to connect to English learning material (discussed in class) directly.	77%	23%	0%	0%	0%	100%
5	WhatsApp group enables me to access preview materials whenever I need	86%	9%	5%	0%	0%	100%
6	WhatsApp facilitate me better to connect with teacher and classmates in learning process anytime and anyplace	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	100%
7	WhatsApp helps me to get immediate feedback from teacher and classmates	86%	5%	9%	0%	0%	100%
8	WhatsApp enhance my motivation to be more interactive in class	45%	9%	23%	23%	0%	100%
9	WhatsApp is very suitable as MALL in English class	45%	36%	18%	0%	0%	100%
10	WhatsApp is good learning platform, especially for English	95%	0%	5%	0%	0%	100%
11	WhatsApp is accessible in our Area (doesn't need high speed internet)	82%	14%	5%	0%	0%	100%

Note: Grey shades = highest percentage

From table 1, it can be seen that all statements in the questionnaire were dominated by strongly agree by most of the students. Although in some statements (8,9), the percentage of strongly agree was no more than 50%, but it still dominated. Statement 6 and 10, "WhatsApp facilitate me better to connect with teacher and classmates in learning process anytime and anyplace" and "WhatsApp is a good learning platform, especially for English" reached the highest percentage of Strongly Agree (SA) among all. They reached 95% from 22 students, which means that 21 students strongly agreed and 1 other student agreed. Statement number 1 and 2, "WhatsApp allows me to send and receive text, images, audio, video, and documents for Learning" and "WhatsApp enables me to communicate with the teacher every time and everywhere" positioned second place as the questionnaire showed 91% of Strongly Agree (SA) and 9% of Agree (A)

In addition, the next statements in number 5 and 7, "WhatsApp group enables me to access preview materials" "WhatsApp helps me to get immediate feedback from teacher and classmates" was responded with strongly agree, agree, and neutral, they were both 86% for SA, 9% A and 5%N for statement 5, followed 5% A and 9% N for statement 7. The next statements were 3 and 11 about giving reaction and WhatsApp accessibility that showed 82% of strongly agree and the rest was Agree and Neutral. Furthermore, it was followed by number 4 about WhatsApp ability in facilitating discussion with 77% of SA and 23% A. Meanwhile, there were two statements with the lowest percentage of SA, which are number 8 and 9, "WhatsApp enhance my motivation to be more interactive in class" and "WhatsApp is very suitable as

MALL in English class", with 45% of strongly agree for both. In statement 8, there were 23% of participants responded disagree.

From the table above, it could be sum up in some points:

1. The highest percentage of SA are 95% for number 6 and 10, followed by 91% in number 1 and 2.
2. The highest percentage of A 9, was 36%
3. The highest percentage of N 8, was 23%
4. The highest percentage of D was a point no 8, it was 23%

CONCLUSIONS

Utilizing WhatsApp (A smartphone-based Application as a media in teaching English in SMK Nusantara is a new thing as it tried to apply e-learning. However, this media is the potential to support the learning process. WhatsApp application has various features that can be developed to help the process of learning and improve students' skills, especially four English skills; Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. The features can be used for teaching are messages/chats, voice notes, group chats, photo/video sharing, document sharing, video call, and more. In this research, SMK Nusantara students mostly agreed that WhatsApp is helpful to be utilized in class.

In this case, the teacher as a facilitator or guide must be able to use WhatsApp features according to its needs, because every feature might bring its benefits for some activities in class. Thus, the teacher needs to able to manage it to run the class well. In special cases, a teacher also needs to consider some problems going to be faced by students, such as lack of signal, deadlines of the projects, students' understanding, and more.

Furthermore, this study is expected to give other researchers and teacher new insight to encourage them in using WhatsApp as a medium of teaching for English class.

REFERENCES

- Afsyah, S. (2019). WhatsApp Application in English Language Teaching (ELT) Context: Media to Describe People. *Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education II*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1-6.
- Alshammari, R. P. (2017). Using WhatsApp in EFL Instruction with Saudi Arabian University Students. *Arab World English Journal*, Arab World English Journal.
- Amalia, D. F. (2020). Quizizz Website as an Online Assessment For English. *Jo-ELT (Journal of English Language Teaching)*, pp.1-8.
- Anggraini, R. A. (2019). Pemanfaatan Media Sosial (Group Whatsapp) dalam Menunjang Aktivitas Belajar Siswa di Luar Jam Sekolah di SMK N 2 Tulungagung. *Media Penelitian Pendidikan: Jurnal Penelitian dalam Bidang Pendidikan dan Pengajaran* , Vol. 13, No. 1, Juni 2019, pp. 1-7.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C. Sorenson., & Razafieh A. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education*. United States of America: Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.
- Gon, S. & Rawekar, A. (2017). Effectivity of E-learning through WhatsApp as a teaching tool. *MVP Journal of Medical Sciences*, 19-25.
- Jasrial, D. (2019). Utilizing WhatsApp Application for Teaching English Language: Why and How? pp. 151-157.
- Kasnodihardjo. (1993). Langkah-langkah Menyusun Kuesioner. *Media Litbangkes* Vol. III No. 02:, : 21-26.
- Lee T; Lee J. (2006). Qualitative assurance of web based e-learning for statistical education. *COMPSTAT: Proceeding in Computational Statistics: 17th Symposium, Rome*.

- Lestari, T. W. (2020). Kahoot! And Quizizz: A Comparative Study on the Implementation Of E-learning Application toward Students' Motivation. *JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING LEARNING AND LITERATURE*, 13-22.
- Li, F W., Law, R.W., & Dharmendran, P. (2009). A three tier profiling framework for adaptive e learning. *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Advances in Web Based Learning, Aachen*.
- Likert, R. (1932). A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*.
- LLC, E. (2014). *E-learning*. 5, San Francisco.
- Muhammad Wildan Sahidillah, Prarasto Miftahurrisqi. (2019). WhatsApp Sebagai Media Literasi Digital Siswa. *Varia Pendidikan* , 52-57.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta CV.