

ENHANCING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL THROUGH MALL: WHATSAPP MESSAGES IN TEACHING WRITING

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Abstract: Mobile technologies offer numerous practical uses in language learning. The objective of this study to investigate whether or not the application of whatsapp group could improve students' English writing achievement. The participant of this study were the second semester of English study program that consisted of 40 students. Quasi – Experimental design was applied in this study. In collecting the data, written test is given to sample. The result of data analysis showed that the students got better improvement in English writing ability after being treated by using Whatsapp Group Discussion. It based on the result of independent t-test whereas the t obtain was 5.298 and the significant level 0.00. Futhermore, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the student who were taught by using whatsapp group discussion and those who were not. In other words, Whatsapp group is a good teaching media and strategy in increasing students' writing achievement. Therefore, it can be said that MALL is an appropriate teaching strategy in teaching writing for EFL students.

Key words : *MALL,Whatsapps Group Discussion, Writing Achievement*

Introduction

The impact of advanced technology has passed through all aspect in our lives include in education system. This led teachers to create new learning method and technique in order to build students' motivation and refresh the atmosphere of teaching and learning process. The impact of ICT in education has been proven in various studies as it is able to make teaching and learning more interesting, motivating as well as meaningful (Chapelle, 2001). Nowday , MALL or mobile-assisted language learning

commonly used in teaching and learning process. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an approach to technology integration in language learning using "personal, portable devices that facilitate learning, emphasizing continuity or spontaneity of access across different contexts of use" (Kukulka-Hulme & Shield, 2008: 273). By applying MALL , teaching and learning process can be done anytime and anywhere. With MALL, the advantage is that students are able to access language learning materials and to communicate with

their teachers and peers at anytime, anywhere (Harwati Hashim et al,2017)

There are many various social media used in communication. Facebook messenger, webchat, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, twitter are social media application mostly used in sending messages. The application of WhatsApp can be used in teaching EFL learner. Riyanto (2013) explain some benefits of applying WhatsApp, it can be used to socialize with friends, to study and learn a new language through membership in a WhatsApp group with teachers and fellow-students through which teachers post assignments for students to either do individually or in groups, as they take part in a discussion, respond to teacher prompts or queries, share images and other illustrations, or seek corrective feedback. In teaching English as foreign language, language skills are important part to be considered.

For EFL learner, Jaya (2018) writing skill seems to be one of skill that quite difficult to be mastered because in this skill learners' not only to have an ability to share they idea into written form but also they have aware with some writing element such as grammatical function, vocabulary, spelling and other elements. Sturm & Koppenhaver

(2000), Writing involves complex thinking that must integrate with multiple component including the topic or theme, word choice, organization, purpose, sequence and transcription. Jaya (2017) Writing can be extremely demanding for students cognitive, linguistic, affective, and psychomotor memories and abilities. Therefore this skill sometimes to be the most difficult one. Therefore the aimed of this study is to experimentally investigate the application of WhatsApp in improving students' writing achievement.

The concept of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning)

In revolution industry 4.0 era internet is becoming important part of our life. MALL or mobile assisted language learning becoming one of teaching technique and media commonly used in online teaching and learning process. MALL deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. Jaya et al (2020) Students do not always have to study a second language in a classroom. They may have the opportunity to learn it using mobile devices when they desire and where they are. (Miangah and Nezarat, 2012). Furthermore Miangah and

Nezarat, 2012 explain two main characteristics of mobile devices are portability and connectivity. As for connectivity, designing the mobile system must have capability of being connected and communicated with the learning website using the wireless network of the device to access learning material ubiquitously including short message service (SMS) and mobile e-mail. Portability enables learners to move mobile devices and bring learning materials

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Kloper et al. (2002) claimed 5 properties of mobile devices which can produce unique educational affordances:

- Portability-the small size and weight of mobile devices means they can be taken to different sites or moved around within a site.
- Social interactivity-data exchange and collaboration with other learners can happen face-to-face.
- Context sensitivity-mobile devices can both gather and respond to real or

simulated data unique to the current location, environment and time.

- Connectivity-a shared network can be created by connecting mobile devices to data collection devices, other devices or to a common network.
- Individuality- scaffolding for difficult activities can be customized for individual learners.

The Concept of Writing

Graham and Perin (2007) explain writing as a skill that use to express opinion with support evidence and depending the students' knowledge. Therefore in writing skill, EFL students have to share their ideas and opinion in written form with detailed information. In addition, According to Celce-Murcia (2001, p. 305) writing skill is the ability to express one's idea in written form in a language with reasonable accuracy and coherence. Meanwhile According to Ur (1999, p. 70), "The purpose of writing, in principle, is the expression of ideas, the conveying of a message to the reader; so the ideas themselves should arguably be seen as the most important aspect of the writing". So that the content of writing is as important as the aspect of writing such as vocabulary choice, cohesive, coherence, punctuation and also grammar.

Zemach and Rumisek (2005) explain that there are six steps in writing process. They are pre writing, gather ideas, organizing, drafting, reviewing and revising and rrewriting. In addition, Linse (2005, p.102) states there are five steps of the writing process include prewriting, writing, revising and editing. In order to produce a good writing, students have to follows those steps.

Boardman (2008) explain that there are three characteristics in writing a good text or paragraph, namely; coherence, cohesion and unity. 1. Coherence: a paragraph has coherence when the supporting sentence are ordered according to principles. The sentences are put in order so that the reader can understand the ideas easily. 2. Cohesion: when a paragraph [h has cohesion, all the supporting sentences connect to each support of the topic 3. Unity: the final characteristic of well- written paragraph is unity. All the supporting sentences should relate to the topic sentence. Order in text or paragraph is like organization easy, but is smaller in space so it may be simpler to consider order as direction.

The Use of WhatsApp Group Discussion

Launched in 2009, WhatsApp is one of the most popular text and voice messaging apps. It's free to use, and you can send messages, make voice calls, and host video chats on both desktop and mobile devices. WhatsApp is platform agnostic. You do not need to own the same brand of phone as your call recipient or be on a specific platform — the app works with iPhone and Android phones and Mac or Windows desktop or laptop computers, which you can use to send and receive messages, but not make calls.(Dove and Beaton, 2021)

In Whatsapp , we can find many features that are available. One of them is group chat. In the features provided, members of group can interact with each other have and have online discussion. Groups discussion allow them to communicate, have the discussion, and send pictures, recordings and more. All activities can be arranged by teachers therefore students can enhance their writing skill during the classroom activities and outside of the class practicing their writing in online class.

Alshammari, Parkes, and Adlington (2017) states, WhatsApp allows teachers to take on a greater facilitation role in their

teaching. The teachers can facilitate all features to support their English teaching. The features of WhatsApp are as follows: 1. Message; Users can send messages to their friends and their family for free. 2. Voice call and video WhatsApp, the users are free to talk with their friends and family, even if they are in another country. And with free video calls, the users can have face-to-face conversations when voice or text is not enough. WhatsApp voice and video calls use phone's Internet connection instead of cellular calling minutes, so the users do not have to worry about expensive call charges. 3. Photos and Videos, the users can share their important moments by sending photos and videos on WhatsApp immediately. 4. Document, they can send PDFs, documents, spreadsheets, slideshows and more, without the hassle of using email or file sharing apps. In addition, they can send documents up to 100 MB in size that will make it easier for them to share what they need to share with the people they want. 5. Chat Group 153 Users can connect with Groups via group chat, users can share messages, photos, and videos of up to 256 people at once. Users can also name groups, mute, or customize notifications, and more. 6. WhatsApp on Web and Desktop WhatsApp

can make Conversations Run with WhatsApp on the web and on desktops. Users can smoothly sync all chat to their computers so they can chat on whatever device is most convenient for them. They can download the desktop app or visit web.whatsapp.com to get started. 7. End-to-end encryption End-to-end encryption is security by default. 8. Voice Message WhatsApp users can use this feature to say what's in their mind by tapping a tap on a voicemail item in a chat room. They can greet his friend or his family and telling long stories.

Klopper, Squire, and Jenkins (2002:199) cited in Indah and Ri'aeni (2018) list the following advantages of using mobile devices in education, such as portability, social interactivity, connectivity, and individuality. In general, WhatsApp has become a shared platform that enhances accessibility, encourages cooperation, and intensifies motivation to take an active part in academic assignments (Bere & Chipunza, 2013:219) in Indah and Ri'aeni (2018)

Method

Participants of this study was students of English education program that consist 40 students that divided into two groups. The

experimental group and control group. Both of group are taken from second semester of English study program STKIP Muhammadiyah Pagaram. A quasi-experimental design was applied in this study, Fraenkel and Wallen (2009, p. 271) propose “quasi-experimental designs do not include the use of random assignment”. In collecting the data, written test was given to participants. pre test was given before treatment and posttest after getting the treatment by applying WhatsApp group discussion. . In scoring system, rubric developed by Anderson as cited in Hughes (2003) was used. This instrument consists of knowledge of the text structure, vocabulary, mechanic, fluency, and organization. Each point has its own level, that is, from level one below to level six which show the development and improvement of students’ writing skill.

In analyzing the data the paired sample t-test was used in order to find out whether there was significant progress of students’ writing skill after being taught by applying whatsapp group discussion.

Findings and Discussion

After applying whatsapp in teaching writing, students were given post test in order to

know whether there was significant improvement on their writing skill. The result of the analysis of pre test and post test score showed that there were significant improvement of students’ writing skill. In pretest, only 1 students or 5% who got score in good category. While in the post test, 10 students or 50% got score in good category. It can be seen in the table below.

Table 1
The Result of Writing Achievement of Experimental Group in Pre-test and Post-test

Score range	category	Pre-test		Post-test	
		F	%	F	%
86-100	Excellent	-	-	-	-
71-85	Good	1	5%	10	50%
56-70	Average	14	70%	10	50%
41-55	Poor	5	25%	-	-
<41	Very poor	-	-	-	-

The significant progress of students; writing skill can be seen from the result of analysis paired sample t-test. Based on the result of

analysis, it can be seen that the mean difference in writing achievement within the experimental group was 13.00, $t\text{-value}=9.820$, $p<0.00$ ($N=20$) which indicated that there was significant progress between the students' pre-post test within group. In statistical analyses, the writer also found the mean difference between posttest in experimental and control group for writing achievement was 9.900 $t\text{-value}=5.298$, $p < 0.00$. Based on the result found, it showed that there was significant difference between the students' posttest score in experimental and control group.

The result of the study showed that there were significant difference for students' writing achievement after got a treatment by using whatsapp group discussion. This teaching media motivated students to be active in group discussion. This is valuable tools for teaching EFL students. This teaching media provides students with a) opportunities for practicing English language skills and components for free, b) more personal and comprehensive relationship between students and teachers, c) students will be more sociable person and also to be better, and d) staying connected to the learners and making the students available for help and support in their quest

to learning English. The application of this tools also help students still keep in touch even they were in online class. Therefore they can access it every time and anywhere. Even the class is over they still can learn the material uploaded by the teacher and reread the comment from the others.

Conclusions

From the finding and discussion of this study, it can be seen after getting treatment by applying whatsapp group discussion, students in experimental group got higher score and could improve their writing achievement. Beside that they also got a better achievement than the control group from all aspects of writing skill.

In addition, from the result of this study, it was found that there was possible reason that influenced the students' writing achievement. Based on the experience during the treatment, It was seen that the used of whatsapp group have potentials purpose not only in improving students' writing achievement but also to provide cooperation, increase social interaction, interest and motivation, sense of belonging, academic success, student-student and student-teacher interaction, support learning anytime and anywhere, provide peer

support, feedback, and allow for sharing of information in education. With MALL, the advantage is that students are able to access language learning materials and to

communicate with their teachers and peers at anytime, anywhere (Harwati Hashim et al,2017)

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