

## Online Teaching of English for Librarians: Students' Perception of the Use of Voice Note and Its Contribution to Their English Speaking

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective.** This study deals with the use of online teaching of English for librarians using WhatsApp voice notes. This study aimed at figuring out the students' perspectives regarding the implementation of WhatsApp voice notes in teaching English for Librarian courses and investigating to what extent WhatsApp voice is contributing to their speaking skills.

**Material and Method.** Four examples of dialogue in a library context were used in practice involving 68 students taking English as a Librarian subject. The instrument used to collect data for the study was a questionnaire survey and coding and summarizing were used to analyze the data.

**Results.** The result of the study showed that the highest percentage (84%) of the participants perceived speaking interchange via voice note as a more helpful way of making and reinforcing their speaking fluency. Independent practice and replayed recordings make their speaking fluency reinforced. The result also showed that the voice notes recordings of their speaking become valuable self-assets for their speaking practice in the library context (76%) and help them recognize new vocabulary and pronunciation in library science (67%).

**Conclusion.** Based on the findings, it can be concluded that WhatsApp voice note is a useful tool to provide students with opportunities to speak using voice note as an alternative media, to trigger and train student' self- speaking skill.

**Keywords:**

*perception, English for Librarian, speaking, voice recording*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Technologically-supported medium has been an important part of online learning, including language learning. Online learning using a technological tool such as a mobile phone is a kind of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). MALL was initiated in the 1980s by which a telephone was used to provide distant learners with assistance and feedback on learning (Hashim dkk., 2017). In a situation in which offline learning is impossible to be realized, distant learning or online learning can be carried as the substituted learning mode. The technology support today makes online learning possible to be implemented in such an optimal way. At present time, a technological product such as a cellular phone is essential for helping distant learners enhance their achievement, engagement, and participation in language learning (Cobb dkk., 2010). In this case, technology utility in the online language classroom has been assumed to provide online learners with the wide opportunity to improve their language skills as to English speaking skills. In the context of MALL, the learners have unlimited access to different resources and tools that facilitate their learning. Mobile technology is changing the approach to language learning. Learning language using a mobile handphone gives opportunity to students to explore their potential in practicing language communication optimally.

Language learning is closely related to communication, both in written and spoken forms. One purpose of learning a language, particularly in English learning is to be able to communicate or to speak in the target language. Learning to speak in English and making an effort to improve English speaking skills require a particular technique. A technique is implementational. It is a trick, a stratagem, or a contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective (Smolinski, 1993). A technique of language learning can take place in a classroom. It also can be implemented outside of the classroom. In the context of online learning, a technique of English-speaking learning can be implemented by the support of technology as its media of learning.

A mobile cellular phone is now not only used as the medium for mediating communication between people, but for students nowadays this communication technology is considerably helpful in supporting their learning interaction and instruction in an online way. MALL in the setting of English language speaking using mobile devices has contributed to the students' speaking performance, in particular the use of handphone voice note recording (henceforth VNR) facility.

In their experimental study, Kim and Chang (2010) reported that online voice recording and peer feedback on speaking help improve English speaking skill, but it was also able to enhance their autonomous learning. The students in the experimental group improved their speaking in holistic scores significantly, compared to those in the control group. With regard to pronunciation, it has positive effects on pronunciation accuracy through replays many times (Tuan & Mai, 2015). The specific way of using the voice note facility in the cellular phone was perceived as very positive and having high effective to help foreign language learners to improve oral fluency (Ju dkk., 2017). The study by Oksuz-Zereyi showed the perceived benefits of VNR for students' English speaking as providing an opportunity for language practice, speaking development, pronunciation development, reviewing previous learning, overcoming shyness, awareness, and correction of errors (Oksuz-Zereyi, 2021). These forementioned studies shed light on the

contributions of handphone VNR when it is used as the learning media to upgrade students' English-speaking ability and promote their English-speaking skill, in the long run, using cellular phone technology

The engagement of technology in the foreign language classroom, especially in online learning environments can't be avoided (Pop et.al., 2011). Schools, universities, and other educational institutions use technology facility to support learning processes between teachers and students in this disruption era. Activity of recording voices in English communication, for example, employ a variety of media, including voice note recording available in a smart handphone.

Modern technology in the form of digital audio recording offers unprecedented ease in student-produced voice recordings in both classroom and online learning settings (Ju et.al, 2017). Digital audio recording is a useful tool in foreign language classrooms where a primary goal is for students to practice speaking the target language, hear how they sound, and improve their speaking proficiency. This kind of self-monitoring is an important part of language production for all levels of foreign language learners.

Nowadays, free and easy-to-use smartphone application such as voice recorder is a tool that facilitates and documents students' speaking practice of the target language. By recording themselves speaking with the application, students' original language production is recorded and students have the opportunity to go back and hear their own speaking before they send it to their language instructors. Students are able to reflect on their accent, grammar, fluency, intonation, etc (Ju et.al., 2017). The power of audio recordings is that the student can build up a whole collection of recordings that show their development over a period of time. These can easily be shared with their peers and instructors. Voice recording application is to be one of the easiest tools that language learners used for making simple audio recordings. Learners just need to click one button, record their voice and then choose from a variety of ways of saving the recording. They can send their audio file to their class w

WhatsApp group for their language instructors and their peers to view and get feedback. The language learning using a mobile application brings about positive effect to promote students' own learning (Salamat and Pourgharib, 2017). In other words, learning a language, especially learning to speak in an independent way using voice note recording facility in the cellular phone provides wide opportunity for non-native English students to improve or develop their speaking skill.

This study examined the contribution of using voice note recording application to the students' English speaking, especially the students of Library Science Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Raden Fatah State Islamic University. It focused on discovering information about the use of voice note facility on cellular phone in relation to its benefits for promoting the students' speaking skill. Therefore, the objectives of this study are two folds: 1) to find out whether English speaking practice using handphone VNR can assist the students to increase their speaking performance in online situation and 2) to find out in what ways the speaking practices through handphone VNR can help the students learn English speaking.

## 1. MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach. In this case, this study focused on describing online learners' perception on using cell-phone voice note in helping their

English-speaking performance, in particular their use of English in library environment. The participants of this study consisted of 68 students from two classes of Library Science Study Program at Faculty of Adab and Humanity, State Islamic University of Raden Fatah Palembang. The students enrolled for *English for Librarian* as their compulsory subject in the second semester in 2022, in which the researcher was as their lecturer. The participants have practiced some dialogues concerning with everyday English for librarians in the semester. The themes of the dialogues consisted of (1) *Introducing yourself* (student and librarian), (2) *Helping library users* (librarian and student), (3) *Overdue books* (librarian and student), (4) *I am a librarian* (interviewer and librarian), and (5) *Library regulations* (student and librarian). The whole topics were taken from Nurani's *Everyday English for Librarians* (Nurani, 2019).

In collecting data of the study, questionnaire survey and interview were used. The simple survey consisted of two questions. The questions were written in Bahasa Indonesia. This research instrument was sent to the online learners via WhatsApp group of each class. The learners' responses were sent back via the WhatsApp facility.

In analyzing data from the questionnaire survey, simple percentage formula was used to find the end result of the learners' answers for survey question 1. The formula is as follows:

$$\text{The learners' responses (\%)} = \frac{\text{Amount of the responses}}{\text{Total learners}} \times 100$$

Thematic analysis was used in analyzing data obtained from survey question 2. These qualitative data were coded and summarized thematically.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Helpfulness of handphone voice note in English speaking

This study aimed at finding online learners' perception on the use of voice note as a media to stimulate their speaking using English through dialogues and its contribution to their English-speaking learning. The first question of the research 1 dealt with eliciting learners' responses to the helpfulness of handphone voice note in their English-speaking initiatives in online learning situation. Table 1 presents the online students' responses of the helpfulness of using VC in practicing English speaking obtained from the first research question.

Table 1. The number and percentage of the online learners' responses of the helpfulness of using VC in speaking English

Research Question 1: <i>Dalam situasi belajar online matakuliah English for librarian saat ini, apakah praktek speaking lewat rekaman dialog menggunakan voice di HP anda membantu belajar speaking anda?</i>	The number of the students who answered	Percentage
Helpful enough	37	55%
Very helpful	31	45%

Using simple percentage formula to analyze the data obtained from the first research question, the result demonstrated that 37 students (55%) responded *cukup membantu* (helpful enough) and 31 students (45%) responded *sangat membantu* (very helpful). Meanwhile, data from interview of 6 students reveal similar answers to the question. Four students responded *sangat membantu* and two students gave responses *cukup membantu*.

The findings above provide indication that voice note as a tool to learn to speak English assist in their speaking of the language. All participants thought the usefulness of the media and it gave them opportunity to practice English speaking in online way. In this context, the voice note facility in cellular handphone is necessarily contributed to encourage the distant learners to practice English speaking through a role play in dialogues.

## 2. Contributions of the use of voice note in speaking English for the students of library science study program

The second objective of this study was to find out the perceptions of online students of the Library Science Study Program on the contributions of voice note-mediated learning of English speaking, particularly speaking English in library dialogue setting. Table 2 presents the students' responses regarding the contributions and their percentages.

Table 2. The number and percentage of the online learners' answers of VNR contributions in their English speaking

Research question 2: <i>Dalam situasi belajar online matakuliah English for librarian saat ini, Dalam hal apa praktek speaking lewat rekaman dialog menggunakan voice di HP anda membantu belajar speaking anda?</i>	The number of the students who answered	Percentage
Making and reinforce speaking fluency	5 7	84%

checking erroneously word pronunciation and practice correct and accurate pronunciation through self-correction	4 2	62%
Strengthening self-confidence, self courage, self bravery in practicing English	3 3	48%
Exercising speaking independently	4 0	59%
Recognizing new vocabulary, especially those related to library service together with their correct pronunciation	4 6	67%
Helping in promoting freedom and discretion in practicing English speaking	4 5	66%
Reducing tense	2 6	38%
Helping in memorizing words	4 5	66%
Recognizing correct grammar in English speaking	3 6	53%
Self-assets to have speaking skill in library context, particularly in future workplace	5 2	76%

The findings indicated that helping English speaking fluency was the dominant answer given by the learners. The students (84%) answered that speaking practice in English aided by the voice recording can make and reinforce their speaking fluency. Their responses were in the form of these similar statements: *melatih kelancaran berbicara, memperlancar pengucapan per kata, melatih kefasihan spelling, membantu ketrampilan dalam pronunciation kata per kata, membuat dan memperkuat kefasihan berbahasa Inggris*. These findings confirm that of Kim and Chang's study (2010) that speaking practice through voice recording enhance students' speaking ability in English. This highest percentage of the answer correlate with their mentioning that repeating the recording many times help them improve their speaking fluency.

In relation to word pronunciation, the data obtained from the research demonstrated that the recordings help them check the accuracy of word pronunciation (62%) as shown by the following similar statements: *memperbaiki kesalahan pengucapan kata, mengetahui benar salah pengucapan kata, melatih ketepatan mengucapkan kata, mengoreksi kesalahan membaca dan pengucapan kata, kehati-hatian dalam pengucapan kata secara benar membantu mengulangi pronunciation kata dengan tepat, mengidentifikasi kesalahan dalam pengucapan kata, membantu pengucapan kata yang lebih baik, membantu ketelitian pengucapan kata, membantu memantapkan pronunciation kata*. Improving word pronunciation is an important goal when learning English (Ju et.al., 2017). To improve word pronunciation is concerned with correcting erroneous pronunciation of the word. Voice notes facility assists the

students to make word pronunciation more accurately. The result of Oksuz-Zereyi's study (2021) supported this finding in which he founded that correction of errors in pronouncing English words is one of the advantages of using voice recording. Self-correction of English word pronunciation is the important benefits of voice tool because of its ability to play and replay the recordings (Ikramah, 2017; Wilches, 2014).

According to the learners' responses (67%), practicing the dialogues using VNR on handphone help them correct word pronunciation, especially those vocabulary related to library services. Their similar answers cover: *mengenal kosa kata baru di bidang jasa layanan perpustakaan sekaligus mengoreksi pengucapan kata yang benar*. In the same time, the learners also recognized new vocabulary in the field of library in the dialogues.

The online learners (48%) felt that practicing English conversation through the use of VNR on handphone in the situation of online learning grew and strengthened self-confidence, self-courage, and self-bravery as shown by their similar responses such *menjadi percaya diri dan berani berbicara dalam Bahasa Inggris*. Xu (2011) pointed out that there is the dynamic process of confidence construction within the self of a learner when using English without or with a medium (Xu, 2011). Learning to speak mediated by a medium, for example VNR, can reduce students' fear and timidity. The non-existent of the teacher and self-recording of the conversation can be among the causes of their self confidence in using spoken English. Besides, independence learning to speak in English motivated the students to practice English dialogue as demonstrated by their response (59%). The online learners of Library Science Study Program also felt free and found out their discretion when given the opportunity to practice the English dialogue (Harmer, 2007). Feeling free when practicing the dialogues through the use of VNR can be the cause of reducing tense. 38% of the students mentioned that using this facility can *mengurangi ketegangan* throughout the dialogues they practiced and also reducing anxiety (Oksuz-Zereyi, 2021).

The dialogues that have been recorded on voice note on students' smart phone can be played repeatedly at anytime and anywhere. This helps them memorize words as well as the way they are pronounced. Nurazizah, Frihatin, and Sugiarto (2019) stated that one of the advantages of using VNR in language learning, particularly in speaking that it is helpful in terms of memorizing words and also new word of English easily. In this case, 66% of the distant learners answered in similar way: *membantu mengingat kata dalam Bahasa Inggris*.

The data collected from the distant learners (53%) demonstrated that the recording using cell-phone voice not only helped them in the correction of sentences expressions as reported from the following statements: *membantu pengucapan setiap kalimat, membantu ketelitian mengenai susunan kalimat, dan melatih kelancaran pengucapan kalimat*. In case of grammatical accuracy in oral output, learners generally performed better after self-reflection. Self-reflection through the repeated listening to the recording is significantly effective in introducing grammatical construction of sentences to students (Cooke, 2013; Huang, 2008).

The important contribution of recording dialogues in English by using VNR has a long term benefits for the students of Library Science Study Program under the investigation. The learners (76%) gave responses such as *sebagai aset pribadi untuk memiliki ketrampilan speaking di lingkungan perpustakaan, khusus nanti ketika sudah di dunia kerja*. It is reasonable to say that the students will work as librarians in the

future. They will have a career in the library workplace. Communication and information literacy are two fundamental aspects needed in this workplace. English is commonly used in the communication and information network. The ability to speak this global language is very crucial in an effort to provide library services, either written or spoken exchange.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

English speaking practices through voice recording activities contributes a lot to improve speaking performance of the students of Library Science Study Program. This study has examined those students' perception on the contribution of cellular phone voice note as a tool to support them in speaking exchange. The inclusion of voice note recording instrument on cell-phone in learners' own speaking practices in online setting of classroom interaction could be helpful. The results of the study demonstrated that this activity impacts much on the reinforcement of students' speaking fluency, realizing more accurate pronunciation through self-correction, and helping memorize words easier. Voice recording activities were helpful enough to strengthen students' self-confidence and self-courage to practice English orally in an independent way. The students under investigation viewed this kind of English speaking ability promotes their freedom and discretion in practicing English speaking interchange involving a real speaking in library contexts. It was also very helpful in introducing and recognizing new vocabulary related to library services. The saved recordings of English-speaking activity through voice note on their cellular phones were perceived very helpful by the learners in terms of functioning them as self-assets for the improvement of their speaking skills in various library contexts, more particularly in their future workplace as librarians.

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