

WHATSAPP AND ITS USE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION ABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Studying Pronunciation was boring with similar ways given to students. Whatsapp as a kind of technology well-known by students are believed to gain the creative and interesting learning process in pronunciation class. This research method is a CAR, conducted in two cycles. Cycle one was fail because of the large group design was not effective to gain students' enthusiasm and improve their ability. Cycle two was successful because the students could reach the criteria of success, and gained the students' enthusiasm. In short, Whatsapp features can improve students' ability in pronunciation class and gain their enthusiasm in studying pronunciation.

Keywords : Whatsapp, Improve, Pronunciation

ABSTRAK

Belajar Pronunciation memang membosankan jika diberikan dengan cara yang sama. Whatsapp sebagai salah satu macam teknologi yang banyak diketahui oleh siswa dipercaya dapat meningkatkan proses belajar yang kreatif dan menarik. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian bentuk Penelitian Tindakan Kelas yang dilaksanakan pada 2 siklus. Siklus pertama gagal karena grup yang didesain terlalu besar dan tidak efektif untuk meningkatkan antusiasme siswa dan kemampuan mereka. Siklus 2 berhasil karena siswa dapat mencapai kriteria suksse dan meningkatkan antusiasme siswa. Singkatnya, fitur dalam aplikasi Whatsapp dapat meningkatkan kemampuan pronunciation siswa dan antusiasme mereka dalam blajar di kelas pronunciation.

Kata Kunci : Whatsapp, meningkatkan, Pronunciation

INTRODUCTION

Technology gives its big role in learning and studying process nowadays. Teachers and students are able to gain their knowledge by using kinds of technology. One of the most used technology is a cellphone which is developed into a smartphone. Smartphones can download useful applications and use it easily. Some application provides facilities and advantages themselves. We have known game applications, education applications and social media applications. One of the popular social media application is Whatsapp.

Whatsapp has spread over like flowers in the spring. All people know and use Whatsapp. We can use it to send text messages, record and send voice notes, attach pictures and videos and share emoticons (Hamidin, 2016). Mistar &

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Embi (2016) stated that it is an easy and fast text messaging application. It has been used by one billion people around the world as presented by Whatsapp Statistics Usage in 2016. Because of its famous, it is sure that our students also use Whatsapp as their tool of chatting.

Our students are “Z” generation who were born in 2000s and know technology well. We often find them busy with their smartphones rather than doing their class assignments. They are downloading and uploading videos, pictures or songs while the teachers explaining the lessons. They are chatting and sending every moment they have while teachers give the tasks. We cannot forbid them to save their smartphone or turn it off, because they will feel forced and unhappy to study, but we cannot let them to do some other things while the class is running.

As teachers, we have to think about their needs and our goals of learning process. Students are often interested with the usage of a media or learning tools. They have fun and become enthusiastic in doing the learning process. They like to work in relax and fun atmosphere without being forced to stay away from their smartphones. That is why, Whatsapp can be one of the solution used to have a creative learning tool in language learning especially in English classes.

Pronunciation is one of the English components which is important to be mastered. In STKIP PGRI Pasuruan, pronunciation is integrated in one lecture named Intensive Course lecture. Here, students are able to study the pronunciation in 3 sks per week. The teacher uses video and other sound players to teach pronunciation. Sometimes, students are get bored with the video and the way teacher teach. The teacher needs to have a creative learning tool. Whatsapp and its functions are believed to give an interesting and creative learning tool in this era.

Whatsapp and its Usage

Whatsapp has been popular among the users, but do we know what Whatsapp is and how it works?. Whatsapp has been introduced to the customers since 2010, and still has renewal version every year. This application is used to send text messages, voice notes, attach documents, photos, and videos (Eric, 2012). Yuvaraj (2014) presented that, computer and laptop can also use Whatsapp, by having a special program and connecting to internet access. An article entitled “Indian Youth Prefers Whatsapp, Facebook over SMS” which is published on June 2013 showed that more than 70% young generation use social media as their virtual communication.

Students are interested in Whatsapp too. The facility of direct-saved contacts provides by Whatsapp ease the usage of this application. This ease make communication run well. Students can have direct communication, students to teachers, teachers to students, students to students and teachers to teachers. We can provides not only better communication to students by using

Whatsapp but also give them some information they need from us as their teacher.

Why Use Whatsapp in Our English Classes

As stated before, Whatsapp is a famous application, and it is used by a billion people around the world, including our students. Teachers have to be creative in giving the materials to gain students' interest. Beside that, I am sure that this application has installed already in their smartphones. It is easy to manage them before starting the class using this application. Other study stated that using Whatsapp in English classes give good impacts for students. Whatsapp can make students easier to share some documents they need.

This easy application is chosen because its suitable features, like :

- a. The application allows users to create group chats
- b. The application allows users to record voice messages
- c. The application allows users to send/receive photos, videos, audiofiles among other things
- d. While the application requires the use of the Internet, nothing is posted online thus all messages remain private, visible only to the members of the group (which will include only the students from a class). (Kulkuska-Hulme, Norris, Donohue, 2015)

Our students are EFL (English Foreign Learners), they have to learn four English skills and some other English components. We also have heterogenous students, some of them like speaking very much, but some other like writing. Some of our students like to analyze grammatical order in sentences, but some other students like to practice their pronunciation. We can facilitate this phenomenon by using Whatsapp. The four English skills and English components can be taught by using Whatsapp.

Some Ways to Use Whatsapp in English Classes

Globally, Whatsapp can send text messages, emoticons/emoji, pictures, voice notes and attach documents and videos. We can make it special in our English classes. Here are some ways to use Whatsapp in our English classes :

1. Text by Text Way

In this way, students can learn about reading and writing even grammar or vocabulary automatically, without feeling boring and stuck. Students can type a sentence from reading text in their book, leave oneword and give underscore (_), then send it to their friend, that student has to answer it and send it back. The other idea to use this way is students look through their book and find a sentence, they have to choose the sentence and type it, but make a mistake from spelling, grammatical order or vocabulary, after that they can send it to their friend, the receiver must answer and send it back.

2. Voice to Text Way

It is used to gain students to practice their pronunciation. First, they can send their voice by dictating some words to their friends. The other students who receive the voice notes have to answer by typing the words their friends have dictated.

The second way, Students can send some words by text messaging and ask their friends "how do you pronounce ...", the friends have to answer it by sending their voice notes, it must be interested to practice the pronunciation by Whatsapp.

3. Video Way

Students can record their presentation of a chosen topic, and send the videos to their friends. After that, they can discuss it in the real class. It reduce students' shyness in presenting and having class discussion. Because every students have already downloaded their friends presentation and knowing each other weakness. Beside that it can minimize the presentation duration, and can directly have effective class discussion.

4. Text to Picture to Video Way

Students can type a feeling (example : angry, sad, happy) to their friend, then must be answered by photos where the friend comprehend the feeling illustration, after that ask "How is your feeling?", the friend must answer it by recording a video and tell about the feeling they feel. It is fun to share our feeling by using pictures and videos. Teachers can get involved in this learning way. Students will be more confident to speak and enrich their vocabulary of some adjectives related to feelings.

5. Text to Emoji Way

We can have games from this way. We can have Emoji Race, where students work in pairs, one student send the emoji name and another student send the emoji picture, it has done as race. It can be added by having Emoji Stories where students can type and send their stories using emoji. So, beside their type the whole story using text, they can attach and add emoji in the story.

Based on those five ways, we can know how effective the learning process will be. This is due to students are active and happy to do all assignments given by the teachers. The teachers role here is to control and evaluate what students have done with their nice tasks. Teachers can also get involve in the activity to gain students enthusiasm and build a direct communication with them.

How to Manage English Class with Whatsapp

Before we start to use Whatsapp, we have to have a good class management to make our class efficient and effective. Here are some suggestion to manage the class while using Whatsapp in English classes :

Step 1. Create a WhatsApp group

This step requires phone numbers of the participants. All class member has to submit their phone number to the teacher.

Step 2. Set the rules

Rules are important to make the use of Whatsapp efficient. Usually, there are two main rules in English classes, *Use English Only* and *No Bad Words*. But we can add some other rules in it before we start using Whatsapp in our English class. For example, we make this group to learn and study English, so *Use Formal English* or we use this group to share knowledge and information so, we can add *Knowledge and Info Only*, so when students want to share some other things they can make their own friendship group than to use this class group.

Step 3. Set up for class use

If you are using WhatsApp for listening in class, the students will need earphones or headphones. Most students must have earphones and remind them to bring the earphones to class the day before class. If you use WhatsApp for writing descriptive class, you can attach the pictures that must be described by students a minute before they write their description.

Step 4. Assign the tasks

An important stipulation is that WhatsApp is not a teaching tool as such – it is a means of providing input to students and a way for them to share their output. Both can be done in class to alleviate classroom management issues (e.g. large classrooms where students don't get enough speaking time) and to help learners improve their speaking performance and outside of the class, to provide an additional opportunity for listening and speaking or to assign and collect homework.

By having those four steps of class management, Whatsapp can be a good learning tool for our students. It helps to develop students' enthusiasm and interest in language learning especially English classes.

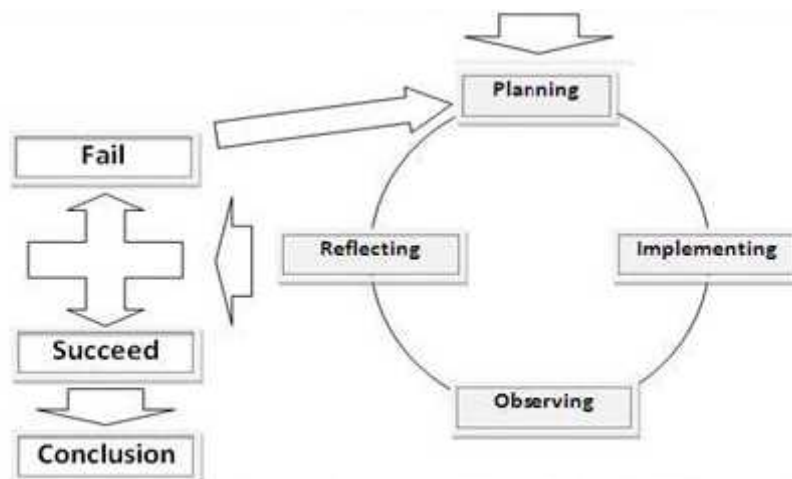
Factors Affecting Pronunciation Learning

Since our students are EFL (English Foreign Learners) there are some factors that affect their pronunciation learning, they are as follows :

1. Native language, means, pronunciation ability is affected by their native language. The way, the sounds they produce may vary but, their native language cannot cover it. It will be affected much for the pronunciation ability.
2. Age factors, Sometimes we assume when people pronounce the words like a native, they probably started from their early childhood. But other studies have different results. It shows that the oldest group of learners (17-25 years old) gives highest score in studying pronunciation.
3. Amount of Exposure, another factor is, when people are surrounded by the English speakers, it may affect their pronunciation ability.
(Kenworthy : 1988)

METHOD

This research is a Classroom Action Research which as stated in Latief (2011) Classroom Action Research is an effective media in improving the quality of English teachers' performance in instruction as well as students' achievement.. Here is the steps of doing Classroom Action Research :



Adapted from Kemmis & McTaggart (1992)

This study was conducted in the Intensive Course class which was studying about pronunciation in the first semester. There are 26 students in this class. The researcher used Whatsapp to improve their pronunciation by using Whatsapp.

To identify the classroom problems, the writer held the preliminary study. By having close interview to the teacher, the writer formulate the data to know what makes students feel boring in the pronunciation class. The teacher and the writer decided to use Whatsapp as a well known application and use the functions of Whatsapp to improve students' pronunciation ability. In this study, students studied how to pronounce voiced consonant sounds.

After forming the media for the class, the writer and the teacher decided the criteria of success. This reasearch was successful if 100% students can pronounce the voiced consonant sounds correctly or reach 80 for the score. in addition, it was successful when the students felt interesting and enthusiaistics in joining the pronunciation class.

To gain the data, this research used some instruments. First, It is observation to have fieldnotes of the process of learning. Second, it is interview, to know the classroom problems. The teacher and the students were interviewed to get good data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

This research was conducted in two cycles. It was because cycle one couldnot reach the criteria of success. The failure of cycle one is because some students couldnot reach 80, although the class has been enthusiaistics and

students were interested to study using Whatsapp. But, some students still got confused and havenot ready to implement this new thing.

In cycle one, the writer made a Whatsapp group consisted of 26 students. Students were ready with their smartphones, headset and have been connected in Whatsapp group. The writer gave them an audio message about the example how to pronounce the voiced consonant sounds. Then, they studied it in 10 minutes, practiced it with their deskmates. After that, students were given a voice notes by the writer about some sentences with the cvoiced consonant sounds. Students were answering the voice notes by typing the sentences and sent it to the Whatsapp group. The writer gave 5 voice notes and students were competing to answer it. The correct answer got stars from the writer.

The next learning program is, the writer sent 5 sentences in the Whatsapp group and asked students to answer it by sounding it and sent it in group. So, in short, the audio and voice notes were used in this process. The failure of this cycle is because of the large Whatsapp group which was consisted of 27 members. When the writer sent the sounds, some students did not answer it because other students have answered it correctly. So the others who were still typing or still thinking for the answers felt they were late to answer or to send the answer.

Cycle two was conducted with some revision. The writer revised the Whatsapp group got by students. In cycle two, students were divided into 5 small groups, and made their own Whatsapp group. Students were connected with each members of the group in one Whatsapp group, so it means, there were 5 Whatsapp groups. The writer was connected to the groups by making a Whatsapp group consisting of six persons who were the captains of the groups and the writer itself.

Then the process run similar with the cycle one, but now the writer sent the sounds to the captains, and the captains share it to their groups. They worked in small groups. They worked together to answer the quiz of sounds. The writer now divided the questions into individual practice and group practice. When the writer sent the individual practice, it means that students have to answer it individually. But, when the writer sent the group practice, so the students have to work in group.

This process gained successful result. It was because, students were enthusiastic and well prepared to implement the new learning tool. Students also eased by the use of small groups, which was more effective than wide group implemented in cycle one. The students ability of pronouncing voiced consonant sounds was also improved because of the use of individual practice and group practice.

Discussion

This research was successful in the cycle two implementation. Some reasons and analysis come for this result. First, as we know Whatsapp has some

functions or features which were sending texts, voice notes, audios, videos or event documents. By using one of the features here, the writer tried to make students become more enthusiastic. The writer used audio/voice note to text. It means that the writer and the students sent or resents voice note and answered it by text or do it oppositely.

According to Kulkuska-Hulme, Norris, Donohue (2015), Whatsapp has interesting features, it can improve students enthusiasm as new learning tool, like the application allows users to create group chats, the application allows users to record voice messages, the application allows users to send/receive photos, videos, audiofiles among other things. While the application requires the use of the Internet, nothing is posted online thus all messages remain private, visible only to the members of the group (which will include only the students from a class).

The use of small groups is also help the successfulness. It is because, students become more ready and well prepared with their group of Whatsapp and ready to answer it both individually or group. Moreover according to Kenworthy (1988) the highest level of learning pronunciation and ability improving is in the age of 17-25 years old. The students of Intensive course in pronunciation is in that level. They are around 18-20 years old and in the first semester. So, age factor also give good rule in learning pronunciation.

Conclusion

Whatsapp has spread to be an easy platform of communication. It is used by one billion people in the world. It cannot be denied that our students must have Whatsapp in their smartpone. Whatsapp can be used in language learning, especially in our English classes. Some way to use Whatsapp in class are to explore the function of Whatsapp itself. Like sending and typing messages, recording and sending voice notes and videos. Teachers can get involve in some activities set to students, and gain good communication and rules to make the class effective in using Whatsapp as a creative learning tool.

This research conducted in two cycles, because cycle one didnot reach the criteria of succes. Cycle two was successful because studying pronunciation especially studying pronouncing voiced consonant sounds was interesting by using the features of Whatsapp and having small groups work. The features of Whatsapp can improve students' ability in pronunciation.

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