

## BOOSTING THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILL THROUGH SMARTPHONES

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### Abstract

Digitalization era could not be separated from using smartphones in people's life activities. Everybody has got smartphones as they handy to carry, not only easy to operate and to connect but also be connected. Therefore, most students use their smartphones during teaching learning process in the classroom. So, why do not we maximize their functions in the teaching learning process rather than keep asking students not to use their smartphones by updating status on their social media, browsing or playing games secretly. This paper is talking about how teachers use the social media to be intercted and be very useful during teaching learning process. The connectivity of internet provide by the campus is free, so the teachers could make a group of WhatsApp or Line used as a media of giving and doing tasks. The paper talks about what application and activities used to be intergrated and interesting process in teaching and learning English.

**Keywords:** digitalization, English language skill, smartphones

### Introduction

As it is known that communication strategy in learning process becomes a very interesting and important way for all foreign language learners and teachers. Currently, an integrated learning and teaching model are used in digitalization era to support their learning process by using smartphones, as people are good at operating their smartphones.

Using Smartphones in digitalization era can not be stopped at all, as most people could operate their smartphones well for browsing the internet, playing games, talking to their friends, go through their emails and much more. As stated by Wlingua (2014) that: "You can use your smartphone to improve your English language. With the help of an app, you can easily improve your English whenever, wherever."

Therefore, using smartphones is not only killing your sparetime by playing games that sometimes we forget to do other important things cause of concentrating on the games and trying to be a winner, but smartphones could also be used for gaining useful knowledge, new information, getting worlwide concept, and learning any subjects included English communication. So, the

most important thing is how useful and efficient we use our smartphones. The more usable smartphones is the worthier we could deserve.

In other words, English teachers should let their students use their smartphones efficiently in English learning process, instead of asking them not to use their smartphones in the class.

The English learners prefer to use modern technology in English teaching learning process, so the availability of smartphone which is handy to carry and most people are good at operating them , could be used for an interactive teaching method.

The availability of variety media technologies are able users to recod their files in a reasonably short amount of time leading to the increased use of video cameras in lecture hall and other learning environments (Odhabi & Nickss-McCaled, 2009).

So, English lecturers should find the appropriate way of using the modern technology in English teaching learning process in order to motivate the learners activity in learning English communication both speaking and writing skills. Therefore, the utilization of recording the process of

learning would use a group of Whats App or Line. As stated by Wlingua (2014) that: “What makes this software/smartphone special, here are some of its best features: The App works on Multiple Devices, offers a Wide Range of courses, the lessons are easily explained, this is a multi-level (more than one level) App, provides easy guidance, learns new words, learns better with Spaced Repetitions, introduces you to Phonetics, and learns two variations of English.”

It could be said that if you have more than one device that Wlingua App will allow the users to access a lot of courses that help the learners learn some important parts of the language, such as vocabularies with their meanings and phrasal verbs. Then, the learners could download its file to their device and start learning. In other words, the learners could learn through their smartphone wherever and whenever, even while they are travelling. Therefore, the app provides many kinds of subjects to help the learners start speaking and writing skills like a native English speaker, and creates a very simple course that the learners are able to understand what they are learning.

The App provides some levels of studying, so the learners are sure that the money spent on their app is worth every cent. Therefore, the learners could choose any levels of studying from the easiest level to the advance or top level. However, learners are worried of using apps to study cause of their way of studying without a teacher or alone. Consequently, the apps are designed to help the learners study on their own to improve their English communication by providing spaced repetitions. So, there are some ways the Wlingua app could help the English learners use their smartphones to improve their speaking, writing and reading skills.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Investigating the effects of using a smartphone application in a communicative language teaching context to facilitate the English teaching learning process in a

classroom is really crucial. Therefore, combining learning and teaching theories and approaches with technology supports have been used currently to get maximum result. English for Specific Purposes courses could be supported by implementing a mixed learning approach with educational technology. So, English teachers who teach for ESP courses should be able to maximize the modern technology by using the social media to be interacted and be very useful during teaching learning process, as the learners could enjoy the learning process by boosting the students' English language skill through smartphone.

Bandung Institute of Tourism students' English competence in communication as a means of International communication is a must. As hoteliers must have high communicative competence in communicating with anyone in their jobs. In other words, they have to be skillful in handling guests as the front liners in hospitality industry. So, students must have more opportunities to practice their English competence to have more confidence in English communication.

Maximizing the social media in teaching learning process for both learners and teachers is using smartphone in giving and doing some English tasks or assignments through a group of Whats App or Line. As the connectivity of internet provided by the campus is free, so teachers and learners could implement the teaching learning process through media social not only efficiently and effectively but also more interesting and motivating the learners to speak English confidently. While limited opportunities for English learners to speak English out of classes. So, most of English learners do not have good self-confidence in their speaking skill and are also worried of making mistakes and being criticized not only by teachers but also by their friends. Accordingly, the English teachers find the appropriate way of having interesting and motivating way of the learners practice their English speaking competent by asking Food and Beverage Management students in a

group of four to create a dialogue about Welcoming, Seating Guests and Taking Order. After recording their dialogues in their smartphones then in the class during the teaching learning process, each group has to show us their recorded dialogue, then their friends comment on their friends' English speaking skill included their pronunciation, English grammar, vocabularies, intonation, facial expressions, body gestures and etcetra, and the teacher complete the comments. Through all these activities, the students could have better self-confident in speaking, improve their unforgettable mistakes, so not only their speaking skill is improving but their writing skill is also progressing a lot. The students could also get fun learning process through this activity and motivating them to speak fluently and effectively.

### 1. Determining the tasks

Target tasks were determined in accordance with the findings of need assessment. The guiding principles in determining the themes and content for tasks included the students' needs in the real industry later. Thus, tasks focusing on a variety of actual topics which are related to their major. In this observation, the topics are taken based on their job description in a restaurant for craft level, as a waiter or waitress. As a waiter, they must be able to welcome guests, take guests seat, take an order and present guest's bill.

### 2. The Procedure

Based on their syllabus mentioned that their ability is to communicate with the guest politely and correctly. So one of the instructional objectives in the second semester is their ability in communicating with the guests using polite and correct English in any situation through a role-play after having explanation from the teacher of the expressions used in handling guest in a recorded video. So it was decided to try this method. Firstly, the students were explained about the instructional objectives. And there was a lecturing of the expressions used in

Handling Guests. They were given a drill and practiced the conversation with their partners. After that the students were asked to make a scenario of Handling Guests.

#### Example of the scenario

One day, Annisa and Anita come to a wonderful restaurant. Andreas as the waiter is ready to greet them in front of the entrance. After greeting the guest, the waiter asks Annisa and Anita about the reservation. They have made the reservation. Then, the waiter escorts the guests to their table.

It is the first time they come to the restaurant, they don't know anything about the restaurant. So when the waiter asks them whether they are ready to take order, they ask about the specialty of the food in the restaurant. When Annisa takes order, she teases the waiter because he is handsome. He also asks Anderas's phone number but the waiter can't do that while he is serving. Annisa and Anita are confused to choose the food and the waiter recommends some food. The waiter mentions some specialty of the restaurant. They are Lamb of Steak Mixed with Fried Fish and Spaghetti Bolognese. Anita and Annisa agree. The waiter also suggests about the wine so they order red wine as it is suitable with the steak.

After that, the waiter serves the food ordered one by one. After they finish the food, the waiter clear up the table. The waiter asks about the meal to the guest and they say the food is very good. Finally they ask for the bill. Then they pay for the bill. The waiter says thank you and hopes they will come back.

The teacher then proofread their scenarios. After they had finished their scenario, they had to record their conversation by using any technology media. They might use their smartphones in recording their activities. The next meeting, they watched their recordings together. While they were watching the videos, the students must pay attention to their friends' conversation and also theirs, especially their English expressions used and also their performance. The general outcomes the students' need are skill and attitude. They assessed each other by giving their comments for their friends and their video. They wrote the comments. The teacher gave feedbacks to their video.

### Example of video



### 3. The Result of Their Self-evaluation

#### a. Students' opinion on their video

- i. There are 37.5% (6 students) of 16 students in that class stated that they felt excited, happy and motivated of being recorded their speaking ability due to their awareness of their mistakes, their spontaneous responses, their face expression, their gestures or body movements. In general they could see or they were aware of their attitude politeness and their communication skill.
- ii. There are 18.75% (3 students) explained this speaking activity is their new experience that could make them realize how good/bad their speaking ability and that information is kept remaining in their mind which motivated them to improve their speaking skill consciously.
- iii. It was found that 18.75% (3 students) told that this activity is good for them for self-learning so they could focus on their own weaknesses not only on their English communication skill but also on their behavior or attitude in providing good services and how good they could work in a team.
- iv. It was found that 25% (4 students) said that even they felt nervous doing that activity, they felt happy evaluating what they have done due to their mistakes and their weaknesses can be improved consciously.

#### b. About the Method

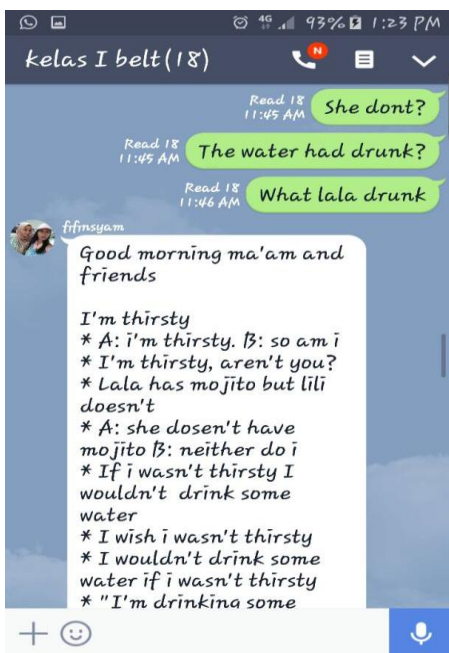
- i. There were 75% (12 students) said that this method of videoing their speaking activities is very effective. Students could see and compare their communication skill with their friends' ability.
- ii. There were 25% (4 students) stated that they felt fun learning and practicing their speaking ability through this activity. This method is enjoyable. It motivated them to practice their speaking better.

c. About the Encouragement

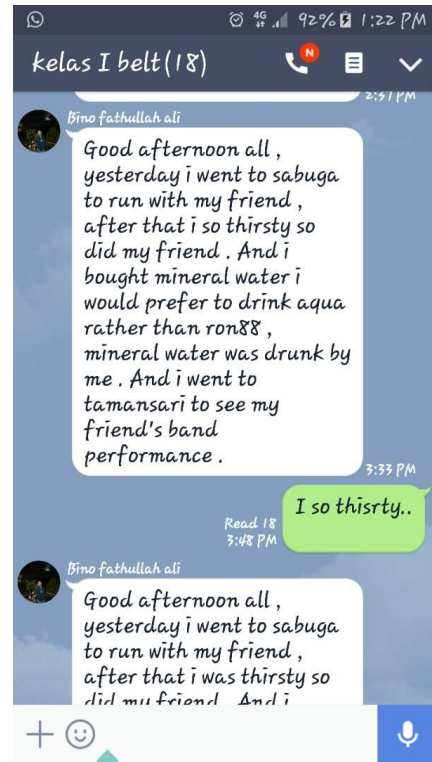
- i. It was found that 81.25% (13 students) stated that the activity is encouraging them to speak up even they felt nervous for the first few minutes but they didn't want to have their bad performance in their recording finally they felt that they could show their speaking ability better and more confident in serving their guests or in responding their guests due to their responsibility in providing guests' need.
- ii. It was found that 18.75% (3 students) stated that this activity is advantageous due to the self- evaluation so that they could remember the mistakes and avoid making the same mistakes. They felt really proud of good comments they got from both teachers and friends.

The comments from the students  
In this session, we learned much about English because in taking video, if we did something wrong, we could start again and try to fix the mistakes that we saw in the video.

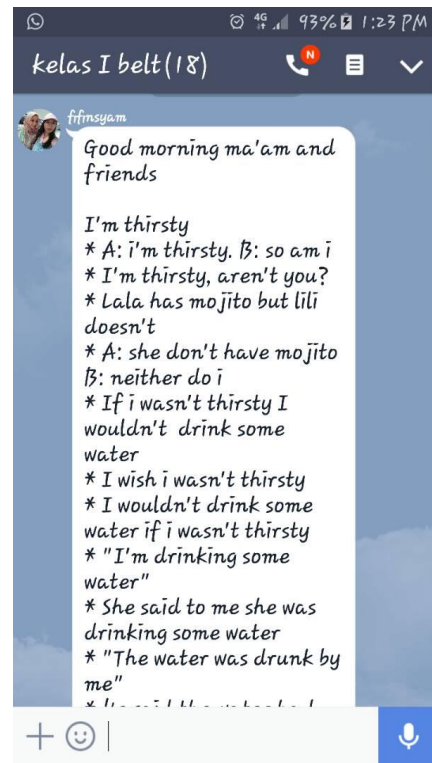
My comment about this activity is although we still do many mistakes I am so proud with my task. I am so excited with this task. It makes us learn more about the English language but also the gesture about how we face the guests when we were in charge as a waitress.



Picture 1. Grammar Excercise 1



Picture 2. Grammar Exercise 2



Picture 2. Grammar Excercise 2

**Conclusion**

Nowadays, people learn English communication could use their smartphone by recording their activities in a group. The teacher should set up appropriate tasks with

the sub topics that the learners will get and also should be matched with the objective or goals of the lessons that could be supported by modern technology which is handy to carry and easy to operate. The English teachers at Bandung Institute of Bandung do not ask the students to keep their smartphones in their teaching learning process, however, the students are allowed to use their smartphone not to play games or up date their status, use their smartphones for recording their tasks of creating a dialogue based on the situations given. The students could use their smartphones to learn any English skills they want to study or to improve by choosing the right level of learning process needed.

As the students could see and realize their weaknesses not only their English but also their performance in serving their guests, so they could improve the inappropriate things. In other words, the utilization of support media in a classroom was very useful for the learners that could create their self-learning and make them have a good or better confidence in English communication.

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