

**THE EFFECT OF BLENDED LEARNING ACTIVITY IN IMPROVING  
THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL IN THE CONTEXT OF  
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

**(A Script)**

By  
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**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION  
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF LAMPUNG  
BANDAR LAMPUNG  
2018**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE EFFECT OF BLENDED LEARNING ACTIVITY IN IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL IN THE CONTEXT OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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The objectives of this research are to find out whether there is any improvement of the students' speaking skill after being taught through blended learning, and whether there is a significant difference of the students' speaking skill among three different degrees of topic choice freedom in delivering speeches in a blended class. This research is a quasi experiment in which the design is one group time series.

The subjects of the research were twenty five university students aged around 19-20 years old, and they can also be categorized as advance level students. The data were elicited through the pre and the post tests taking by the students in forms of delivering speeches. Their speaking performance scores were compared between the pre and the post tests with the significant level 0.05. The different degrees of freedom in choosing the topics were also analyzed to find out the best way in improving the students' speaking skill for this blended model.

The result showed that there was a statistically significant improvement of the students' speaking skills after they were taught through blended learning; moreover, there is a significant difference of the students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing speech topics in blended class. It can be seen from the *Anova* test result where all of the significant values are lower than (0.05). This suggests that blended learning facilitates the students to improve the capability of their speaking skill; and, the topic choice freedom in making a speech gives different results of the students' speaking performance depends on the degree of freedom in choosing the topic.

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Rachma Vivien Belinda**

**A Script**

**Submitted in a Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirements for S-1 Degree**

**In**

**The Language and Arts Education Department of  
The Faculty of Teacher and Education**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF LAMPUNG  
BANDAR LAMPUNG  
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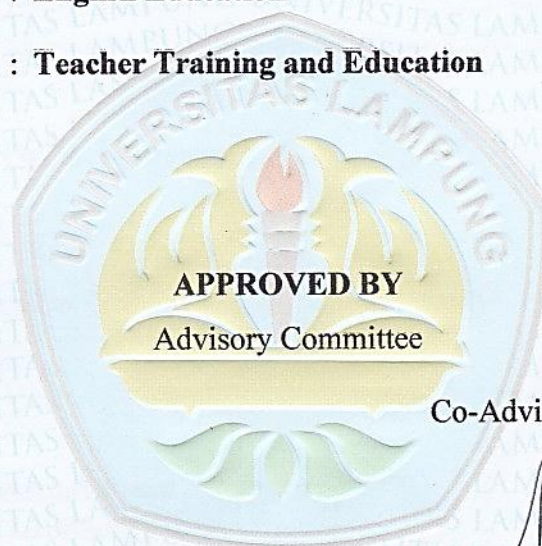
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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Rachma Vivien Belinda is the first child of Erik Ivana and Neng Afrida. She was born in Bandarlampung, on September 21, 1996. She has only one sibling alive. It is her younger sister, Khairunnisa Baby Ivana.

Having done her education at TK Al-Azhar II Bandarlampung in 2001, she continued it at SDS Al-Azhar I Bandarlampung in 2002 until 2008. After that, she was accepted in SMPN 22 Bandarlampung and graduated in 2011. She then continued her education at SMAN 9 Bandarlampung and finished in 2014.

Even though she was a science student before, it did not make her give up enrolling in social studies program. She followed SBMPTN and was accepted in English Education Study Program of Teacher Training and Education Faculty in University of Lampung in 2014. She had to say goodbye to her old dream to be an architect; however, she never regrets that she is going to be a teacher. She was so glad that from July to September 2017, she was teaching at SMPN 1 Belalau as an English teacher to fulfill her duty in pre-service teacher program of her college. Furthermore, from January to February 2018, she was also teaching in Pak Khlong Song Elementary School, Thailand, as her obligation in an exchange program in which she joined.

She has been teaching English since 2015, beginning by sharing her knowledge to her friends. Accordingly, she also teaches in English online course to help those who want to learn English with low cost. Even, some of them take the course for free. While teaching English, she also acquires some other foreign languages to achieve her dream to be a polyglot.

## **DEDICATION**

*Devoted to all great teachers who instilled in me the delight of learning and teaching,  
the students who encourage me to change the world, my parents, sisters, and you.*



## **MOTTO**

“Do not acquire knowledge in order to vie with the scholars, and to wrangle with the foolish, and to sit in the best seats: whoever does that his abode will be the fire, the fire.”

-Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from shahih Al-Hibban

“No need to please human, please Allah only. Even so, help human so Allah shall help you”

-Rachma Vivien Belinda

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Having done this work, the author realized that there are many individuals who gave a generous suggestion for finishing this script; therefore, the author would like to express her sincere gratitude and respect to:

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Finally, the author believes that her writing is still distant from perfection. There might be flaws in this research. Thus, comments, criticism, and suggestions are always acceptable for better research. Somehow, the author hopes this research would give a positive contribution to the educational development, to the readers, and to those who want to conduct further research.

Bandar Lampung, July 2018

The author,

Rachma Vivien Belinda

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter narrows down some points. Those are research background, research question, objective of the research, uses of the research, scope, and definition of terms.

### **1.1. Background**

One of the goals with respect to learning a new language is to be able to speak and produce many utterances in the target language fluently and correctly. That is what exactly every language learner has to achieve. When someone can speak a language it means that he can carry on a conversation reasonably competently (Brown, 2001: 267). Brown also states that the benchmark of successful acquisition of language is almost always the demonstration of an ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through an interactive discourse with other language speakers. It means that a person can be considered as a master of a language when he could communicate meaningfully with the other people using the same language and counter the conversation well by producing utterances or showing actions as a feedback. At the end, that person is concerned with having a good speaking skill.

As we know speaking is one of the skills in English besides the other three: listening, reading, and writing. This skill is actually the ultimate skill to master besides writing because in order to master speaking skill, one needs to be able to listen meaningfully. Many people feel that speaking in a new language is harder than



reading, writing, or listening for two reasons (Nunan, 2003: 48). First, unlike reading and writing, speaking happens in real time: usually the person we are talking to is waiting for us to speak right then. Second, when we speak, we cannot edit and revise what we wish to say, as we can if we are writing. So, speaking happens with real people in an actual time which requires fast respond and real action. Speaking is based on context, should be meaningful, and also depends on the participants or the one to whom we speak. The form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, the participants, and the purposes of speaking (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Accordingly, the best way to be able to speak English is by learning it meaningfully; in the other words, students need real interaction in their real life. This comes from the theory that says language is acquired by nature and should be meaningful. One of the way people can acquire their second language is by observing and using it in their natural environment. They also need maximum exposure and an authentic linguistic form of English (Sivertzen, 2013). It can be said that acquiring English is mastering English without any intention to learn it. We just use it as the media of communication, and we acquire it subconsciously. This is different with language learning. While language acquisition happens subconsciously, language learning happens consciously. The main different is language learning takes place in the classroom, while language acquisition can occur everywhere in our daily environment. There is nothing wrong with learning English in a formal situation like in a classroom; however, it can be better if the situation in the classroom is mold into something more natural. Otherwise, we can mix the classroom activity which seems so formal with informal activity outside the classroom which can be said the natural situation. So, the students do not only obtain the materials in the classroom, but they

also can acquire something natural outside the classroom which profoundly gives them maximum exposures.

Second-language students acquire language competence by exposure to language that is both understandable and meaningful to them (Krashen in Tricomi, 1986: 60). That is what we actually call a comprehensible input. It means that the students internalize the input first before producing the output. It seems like what happens to the infants who learn their first language. Furthermore, Nunan (2003: 50) states that several studies led to the conclusion that we had gotten the basic idea backwards: people do not learn the pieces of the language and then put them together to make conversations. Instead, infants acquiring their first language and people acquiring second languages learn the pieces by interacting with other people. It is possible that this is the key why many students in Indonesia fail to speak in English even though they have learned it since elementary school to high school which approximately spends twelve years of learning time. That is a really long time that actually one can use it to acquire some new languages. However, it does not happen to the majority of Indonesian students. They do not learn English by interacting. They just learn the pattern or grammar and do not practice it in their school life nor in their daily life outside school.

It is mostly hard to use English outside school in Indonesia because English is a foreign language there. This difficulty happens for some people who want to acquire this language in Indonesia. This happened because in Indonesia, English is no more than a set of grammar rules and a pile of vocabulary items to be memorized (Ivone, 2005). So, many Indonesians tend to learn English without any intention to acquire it. Their intention is just to be able to solve grammar problem. English is just used in a formal context for example school or course place. It is not usually used by

the students outside the classroom. However, is it really important to make the students speak English outside the formal activity in the classroom?

In the theory of the potential of the second language classroom, Krashen (1982: 58) proposed that the classroom is of benefit when it is the major source of comprehensible input. When acquirers have rich sources of input outside the class, and when they are proficient enough to take advantage of it (i.e. understand at least some of it), the classroom does not make an important contribution. Thus, the real advantage of the informal environment is that it supplies comprehensible input. Our responsibility goes beyond the language classroom (Krashen, 1982: 76). He also states that our task is to provide the students with the tools they need to continue improving without us. We need to provide enough input so that they can gain the linguistic competence necessary to begin to take advantage of the informal environment, the outside world. In other words, they need to know enough of the second language so they can understand significant portions of non-classroom language. However, it does not mean to omit the classroom activity entirely.

From this theory, there is one technique that can be used in an informal class without removing the formal class in which students can obtain what they need in learning a new language. It is group chat discussion. Group chat discussion provides both natural environment and maximum exposure which means the students can obtain a maximum comprehensible input by discussing something or chatting on the social media. We can utilize the social media for language practice by leaning on the fact that people nowadays usually cannot live without their smartphone, and so do the students. Many people always hold their smartphone and carry it with them everytime and everywhere; from they wake up, until they go to sleep. According to Himmelsbach (2013), this device has become a pervasive part of everyday life. In

recent years the average users tend to replace their traditional mobile phones, PDAs, and Palms with smartphones. This is a chance that can be utilized to enhance students' speaking skill.

Similarly, from an observation, it is found out that the students in faculty of the author do not usually speak English outside the classroom even though they are studying in an English Department. They do speak English in the classroom, but once they get their free time, they prefer to speak Bahasa Indonesia. This is the problem why there are still many English learners who are unable to speak English fluently and accurately although they have already reached an advance level; they make speaking English as an obligation in the classroom instead of making it as a habit in their life. By making a new habit of chatting and discussing something using English on the smartphone, surely the students can feel a natural English conversation in their daily life that hopefully can increase their speaking skill.

We have known that the best way to acquire English as a second language is by interaction which is meaningful, and also students can be able to speak after they obtain maximum exposure from the natural environment. We can manipulate this by using chatting application in smartphone. As we know that people having chit chat happens naturally and meaningfully. They focus on the content and not on the form. This is based on the theory of the input hypothesis which says that language acquisition can only take place when a message which is being transmitted is understood, when the focus is on what is being said rather than on the form of the message (Krashen, 1982: 55). This is one of the ways to help the students be able to speak English.



Furthermore, we also need to decide which application that might be suitable for the online chatting used by the students. We can choose the easiest and the simplest application to use. One of the very familiar applications for everyone in this world is WhatsApp. Based on the statistic website about mobile internet and apps survey, [www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com), WhatsApp took the first place of the most used instant messaging along 2017 with 900 million monthly active users. It was followed in the second place by LINE messenger with 217 million active users who access it on a monthly basis. WhatsApp can be suitable to be applied as the media to help the student to acquire English and improve their speaking skill. Not only does this app become the most popular and used messenger worldwide, WhatsApp also contains features that can ease the students during the online instructional process. It is a free and simple accessible chatting application of which feature allows the users to share and receive picture, audio, and video. So, it has complete feature that can be utilized in the process of acquiring English.

This thing can make the instructional process more interesting. The students do not only follow the teaching and learning activity inside the classroom, but they also join the informal chatting group outside the classroom. This also can give them more exposure and more intensity of language practice. This kind of model which combines both face-to-face classroom activity and online class learning is called blended learning. In fact, there are some previous research with respect to this kind of teaching and learning style. They prove that blended learning is effective to improve English vocabulary level (Djiwandono, 2013), and it also suitable to improve listening skill (Sofiana, 2015). There are also some evidences that it is suitable for writing and reading skills. That is why this research is conducted in order to find out whether blended learning is also suitable for improving students' speaking skill.

Furthermore, there is always unclear model of blended learning that is used by the researchers or the teachers. It is difficult to get the details of the way to teach English by using blended learning, and what should be considered for speaking activity in a blended learning class. In this research, topic choice freedom was analyzed whether the different degree of freedom in choosing the topic can give different effect and result of the students' speaking performance. In addition, the detail information about what actually the language learners obtain during both online and offline class is explained and elaborated further. By observing in every meeting, the author describes the change or any improvement that is seen during the instructional process.

The motive of finding this thing out also came from the author experience. She has been learning some languages besides English: Arabic, French, and Japanese. Disappointingly, there is not enough chance to practice it, making the language learning progress does not run well. This happens because there is no friend or any acquaintance that can help her practice the target languages. This also happened when she was learning Japanese for about one year; it did not work very well. She learned it from watching Japanese local TV show on the internet and tried to imitate every single sound and word they uttered. The learning progress did not work well before she knew Sana. Sana is a girl from Japan whom the author greeted on the internet. After knowing that she is a good girl who lives in Fukuoka, the author tried to keep in touch with Sana by chatting. She knows that the author is not Japanese, and Sana is not really bothered with the author's bad Japanese language. Even she always tries to help the author to read certain *kanji* –Chinese letters in Japanese –when the author does not know how to read it. That made her become a friend, a partner, and a Japanese tutor of the author ever since. Now, the author can speak Japanese a little

bit. It seems like chatting helps the author a lot in speaking Japanese, and perhaps it can also help us in learning other languages such as English.

In short, students speaking skill in English hopefully can be improved by applying this kind of blended learning. By following blended class, the students do not only learn English in the classroom, but they also can practice and acquire English outside the classroom by joining group chat discussion through WhatsApp. Furthermore, in order to know whether there is any different of the students' speaking skill based on the different degree of topic choice freedom, it is investigated in this research. There are three different degrees of the freedom in choosing the topic here.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Having known the theories and the problems above, we finally reach the point of this research. The research questions that can be formulated based on the explanation above are stated below:

1. Is there any improvement of students' speaking skill after being taught through blended learning?
2. Is there any significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class?

Those are the problems which had been solved in this research. Furthermore, the detail information with respect to the research questions above is elaborated in this paper whether the blended class gives any effect and helps the students to improve their speaking skill. In line with that, the reason why certain degree of topic choice freedom is effective to improve the students' speaking skill in blended learning activity is also discovered.

### **1.3.Objectives**

Looking at the theories, problems, and also the research questions, we can settle on that the purpose of this research is to find out:

1. whether there is significant improvement of students' speaking skill after being taught through blended learning, and
2. whether there is significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class.

In addition, some instruments were used in this research to measure how far the influence of blended learning activity on the students' speaking skill. Moreover, whether the improvement occurs will be explained and enlarged in detail in the discussion.

### **1.4.Uses**

There are some uses that can be summarized from this research:

1. Theoretically, it can support and strengthen the previous research that proves blended learning is effective for English learning especially in speaking skill or perhaps the other skills.
2. Practically, it can be advantageous for the English teachers to help the students to master English speaking skill by applying blended learning.
3. The online class in this learning model is really beneficial for those who want to learn English but do not have enough time to join the formal class.

Other uses might be discovered by the readers after comprehending the whole explanation in this paper.

### **1.5. Scope**

This research used a quantitative and qualitative methods to process the data. The focus of this research was on teaching speaking by applying blended learning model in the classroom in order to find out whether it gives any improvement, and whether different degree of freedom in choosing the topic gives different effect on the students' speaking skill. In the blended learning class, the offline class occurred like usual, and it was added by the online class which took place outside the classroom using WhatsApp online chatting application. The chatting process was dealing with a group chat discussion which means that the students joined a group discussion online. The material of the teaching and learning was based on the syllabus of the students who are being the subject of the research. Furthermore, the subjects chosen were those who have learned English since they were in elementary school until high school which means they have spent twelve years full for learning English; still, they cannot speak English well. They also can be described as advance English learners who still have problems in speaking English. Those are the range of this research; moreover, some terms regarding this experiment are discussed below.

### **1.6. Definition of Terms**

In this research, there are some terms that mostly appear in the explanation of each chapter. Those terms are dealing with the core of this research, such as:

#### **1. Blended Learning**

It is a kind of learning which includes both formal learning in the classroom and informal learning outside the classroom which usually occurs online.

## 2. Control

This term is used in order to describe the 0% freedom in choosing speech topic. In this case, control also means the speech topic of which the students delivered is controlled by the teacher, meaning that the students have to imitate the speech given by the teacher but in their own words.

## 3. Free

The term free here means the students get 100% freedom to choose the topic of their speech, but the teacher still gives them an example first before the students perform their speech.

## 4. Guided

Guided here means the students are guided by the teacher to decide their topic. The students have 50% freedom to choose their own topic while another 50% is controlled by the teacher.

## 5. Offline

It is a usual instructional process that occurs in the classroom where the students as the center of the classroom activity monitored by the teacher.

## 6. Online

The online refers to an informal activity outside the classroom by using smartphone to continue the discussion with respect to the topic discussed in the classroom before.

The discussion of the terms has ended the first chapter in which it elaborates the research background, research questions, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope, and definition of terms. For the strong theories and some previous research which supported this research are discussed in the next chapter.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Associated with many things in the previous chapter, this chapter is ahead of some theories which are discussed in a framework. It consists of speaking, teaching speaking, technique in teaching speaking, group chat discussion, group chat discussion in teaching speaking, procedure of teaching speaking by using group chat discussion, advantages and disadvantages, theoretical assumption, and hypotheses.

### **2.1. Speaking**

To speak means that one person utters or produces sounds from his speech organs of which sounds are meaningful. After hearing those sounds, other persons can give feedback by producing other sounds or actions. However, if it just produces sounds and is not concerned with meaning, it is not speaking because animal can also do that. That is what differs human from others creatures; human can speak, while animals or plants can not. In the case of language learning, speaking can be defined as a skill mastered of the target language by the language learners. This skill is quite different with the other three skills because speaking happens in an actual time, meaning that people can not take back what they have said. That is why we have to consider it before saying something like what Prophet Muhammad said which is stated in Sharh Bukhari and Muslim in Arba'een an Nawawi in Badi (2002: 80) that whosoever believes in God and in the Last Day, either speak good or be silent. Thus, speaking is dealing with any kind of sounds containing information we transferred from our speech organ to

other people which could be positive or negative. There are also some definitions of speaking according to some experts.

According to Byrne (1986), speaking is an oral communication. It is a two ways process between speaker and listener, and it involves productive and reactive skill of understanding. It means speaking can only happen if there are two persons sharing their things, even though there is only one who acts as the speaker while another person is just a listener. Furthermore, if both of the speaker and the listener speak one to another, it means dialogue occurs. However, speaking can also occur if there is one person who speaks. It can be considered as a monologue. It probably happens when one person speaks to himself in his own room like what we usually do in our life. It does not mean we are insane, but it is just one way of expressing or rehearsing our opinion before actually saying it in front of the public. Sometimes, we need to do that to make sure that our speech is reasonable enough to be expressed to the other people, even though at the other time we also need to speak spontaneously when it is needed to.

Thornbury, as it is quoted by Harmer (2007: 123), said where there is a task to complete; speaking is the way to complete it. There is no other reason to not consider speaking as a media to do something or to finish a certain work. When the students truly want to master a foreign language, they will finally use speaking skill as the tool to communicate or to do their job. It means that speaking is not their main goal. If they consider it as their main goal, after mastering it they will not use it anymore because they think their goal has been achieved. On the other hand, when the language learners realize that they learn a certain language in order to communicate, they will always use the language in such situation where they believe to practice it. Correspondingly, learning a foreign language does not mean only to know the linguistic feature or to solve the language structure. Beyond than that, learning a language means finally at some points, the



language learners are able to express their feeling and thought by using that new language which will become their second language.

Speaking can be so easy when we do that by using our mother tongue. However, it also can be difficult if we speak by using other than our first language. Compared to the other three skills, speaking is considered harder by many people. It is harder than reading, writing, or listening because there are two reasons which support this theory (Bailey as it is quoted by Nunan, 2003: 48). First, unlike reading and writing, speaking happens in real time: usually the person we are talking to is waiting for us to speak right then. It makes those who do not use to speak with a new language feel uncomfortable and nervous. Second, when we speak, we cannot edit and revise what we wish to say, as we can if we are writing. So, speaking happens with real people in an actual time which requires fast respond and real action. It is so hard for those who have a high monitor frequency inside their head to speak because they will tend to think and try to arrange the sentences with a perfect grammar in their head before actually popping it out to the people. Such performers may speak hesitantly, often self-correct in the middle of utterances, and are so concerned with correctness that they cannot speak with any real fluency (Krashen, 1982: 19). It leads to the time consuming so that those people would feel embarrassed by this and finally would avoid speaking. This usually happens to the language learners in EFL countries. Some of them do not get enough encouragement and motivation to shoo away their nerve and fear of speaking.

We can not blame the students because of their fear of speaking. The thing that the teacher can do to help is trying to encourage and motivate them to speak. Once they are daring to speak, it will be easier to improve their speaking skill. In line with that, the thing that we can do to find out whether their speaking skill improves is by doing an observation. Brown (2004: 140) says that speaking is a

productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed. This also means that speaking is a skill of which result can be measured by considering the product which can be in a form of speech. That is why the measurement can be done by doing an observation or an authentic assessment. Brown also states that those observations are in variably colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of the test-takers listening skill, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral production test. This makes the result of the measurement or assessment different from one scorer to the other. He also said that to assign not one but several scores for each response, each score represents one of several traits such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, grammar, and comprehensibility (Brown, 2004: 140). It means that, the way people define that one speaks correctly or not is by considering or assessing their speech based on those aspects of speaking.

According to Gower (1995: 99-100), there are two main aspects in speaking: accuracy and fluency. Accuracy is concerned with the use of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These are some explanation of each:

1. Grammar

Grammar is generally thought to be a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level (Nunan, 2003: 154). He also states that sentences are acceptable if they follow the rules set out by the grammar of the language. For example, in English, one rule states that “a subject followed by a verb followed by an object” is *grammatical*. The sequence of words “The bit dog man the” is ungrammatical because it violates this rule, while “The dog bit the man” is grammatical because it obeys the rule. Moreover, the sentence “The man bit the dog,” is grammatical, but would be considered unacceptable by many people for other reasons. The reason is because it sounds weird and uncommon if a

man bit a dog. This also happens in the case of speaking. Thus, if one misuses the grammar when he is speaking, it will cause a misunderstanding and misconception.

## 2. Vocabulary

As it is quoted by Nunan (2003: 130), Nation said that words are clearly vocabulary. The words such as *come*, *go*, *Mexico*, *glasses*, or *raining*, can be considered as vocabulary. Similarly, anything of which is concerned as words is vocabulary even though it is a group of words (phrase). Sometimes, groups of words should be learned as units. This is because as a way of quickly developing fluency and of picking up native-like expressions, it made it easier in most cases if the meanings of the single words that make up the multiword units are also understood (Nation as it is quoted by Nunan, 2003: 131). The phrases like *go away*, *United Kingdom*, *French fries*, or *go shopping* can be considered as vocabulary in the context of multiword. Moreover, in the case of speaking skill, vocabulary is one of the aspects which should be carefully considered because once people use a wrong diction; it will lead to the miscommunication. For example, a native speaker will use the word *vacant* to describe a toilet which is available to use because no one uses it at that time. However, the one who concerns it as an unfamiliar word in English tends to use the word *empty* to describe the same thing. The native speaker will misunderstand about it when we say *the toilet is empty*. They will think that the toilet is literally empty; there is nothing inside, no water, and no toilet stuffs. The proper vocabulary to use in this case is *vacant*, meaning the toilet is available or can be used because there is no one uses it right now. Even though the general meaning of both *empty* and *vacant* is same, the exact meaning or the detail description is so much different.

### 3. Pronunciation

Most people think of pronunciation as the sounds we make while speaking. As speakers of a language, we need to be able to understand each other with relative ease. The pronunciation patterns native speakers use reflect those commonly accepted by particular speech communities (Murphy as it is quoted by Nunan, 2003: 112). The use of pronunciation has been standardized by a certain institute, for example in United Kingdom, they have RP or Received Pronunciation which is used by those people who live there as a standard of English pronunciation. Regardless, we can not deny that in our real life, we can sometimes face a situation where the one to whom we speak has a misunderstanding pronunciation. When the author was in Thailand for about one month, she got some misunderstandings in the first week of her living. Mostly, Thai people can not pronounce double consonant like in the word *play* or *sleep*. They tend to avoid it by omitting the second consonant or adding a vowel in between, so they will pronounce it /'peɪ/ (omitting the sound of /l/) and /se'li:p/ (adding the sound of /e/ and changing the stress) instead of /'pleɪ/ and /'sli:p/. This also occurs to some of the language learners in Indonesia, but mostly the case happened is adding vowel compared to omitting the sound. Thus, the language learners should be guided to avoid this kind of pronunciation before it fossilizes on them.

On the other hand, fluency is dealing with the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously. Burns (1997: 167) states that the core speaking skills means developing the ability to process speech quickly to increase fluency (e.g. speech rate, chunking, pausing, formulaic language, and discourse markers). Fluency also copes with the intonation one makes when he speaks. By observing from the intonation, we can find out whether the speaker understands what he said

or not. If he suddenly stops his sentence in an uncommon pausing, it indicates that he does not comprehend it well.

Despite of those four aspects of speaking skill: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency, there is another aspect proposed by Brown (2004: 140). It is comprehensibility. Comprehensibility is dealing with whether the utterances made by the speaker can be understood. Similarly, there is also another term that closely describes the same thing: comprehension. In this case, comprehension is concerned with the ability of the language learners to understand the speech or the utterance they listen. If the language learners have a good comprehension, it means that they can reasonably give feedback by producing utterances or showing actions after listening to the speakers. Likewise, a good comprehension is needed for language learners which might indicate a sign of a good speaking skill.

According to those statements above, speaking can be categorized as the skill in learning a new language of which skill is concerned with an oral communication that also varied in some aspects: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. If the language learners want to be able to speak well and perfect, they have to consider all of those five aspects of speaking skills. Likewise, those five aspects will also be considered in this research. Furthermore, in order to help the language learners to pay attention on those five aspects, the teacher needs to apply those aspects on the process of teaching and learning. So, the students can also learn how to achieve a good value of speaking product by considering the five aspects as the well defined standard of a better students' English speaking skill

## 2.2. Teaching Speaking

Teaching language actually means a process of making the language learners willing to practice the target language. Brown (2004: 5) affirms that teaching sets up the practice games of language learning: the opportunities for learners to listen, think, take risks, set goals, and process feedback from the “coach” and then recycle through the skills that they are trying to master. The language learners need to be active by practicing those sets of rules in the games. This also happens when a teacher wants to teach a certain skill of a language to the students, for example teaching speaking. Teaching speaking is sometimes considered a simple process. Commercial language schools around the world hire people with no training to teach conversation. Although speaking is totally natural, speaking in a language other than our own is anything but simple (Bailey as it is quoted by Nunan, 2003: 48). However, it does not really sound that easy. In fact, sometimes the students consider speaking so complicated, yet the teacher still needs to make the students ready to speak.

According to Harmer (2007: 123), there are three main reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom. Firstly, speaking activities provide rehearsal opportunities - chances to practice real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom. Secondly, speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all of the languages they know provide feedback for both teacher and students. Everyone can see how well they are doing: both how successful they are, and also what language problems they are experiencing. And finally, the more students have opportunities to *activate* the various elements of language they have stored in their brains, the more automatic their use of these elements become. As a result, students gradually become autonomous language users. In addition for the teacher, five principles for teaching speaking that are proposed by Bailey (quoted by Nunan, 2003: 54-56) can be considered.

The principle that comes up first is *being aware of the differences between second language and foreign language learning contexts*. As we know that speaking is learned in two broad contexts: second language and foreign language situations. A second language (SL) context is one where the target language is the language of communication in the society, for example like in United Kingdom or Australia. Conversely, a foreign language (FL) context is one where the target language is not the language of communication in the society like in Indonesia. Learning speaking skills is very challenging for students in FL contexts because they have very few opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom.

The second principle is *giving students practice with both fluency and accuracy*. Accuracy is the extent to which students' speech matches what people actually say when they use the target language. Fluency is the extent to which speakers use the language quickly and confidently, with few hesitations or unnatural pauses, false starts, word searches, etc. In language lessons—especially at the beginning and intermediate levels—learners must be given opportunities to develop both their fluency and their accuracy. They cannot develop fluency if the teacher is constantly interrupting them to correct their oral errors. Teachers must provide students with fluency- building practice and realize that making mistakes is a natural part of learning a new language.

Another principle that should be considered is *providing opportunities for students to talk by using group work or pair work, and limiting teacher talk*. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that teachers do approximately 50 to 80 percent of the talking in classrooms. It is important for language teachers to be aware of how much they are talking in class so they do not take up all the time the students could be talking. Pair work and group work activities can be used to increase the amount of time that learners get to speak in the target language during lessons. One further interesting point is that when the teacher is removed from the

conversation, the learners take on diverse speaking roles that are normally filled by the teacher (such as posing questions or offering clarification).

Moreover, *planning speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning* is also one of the important principles of teaching speaking. Research suggests that learners make progress by communicating in the target language because interaction necessarily involves trying to understand and make yourself understood. This process is called negotiating for meaning. It involves checking to see if the learners have understood what someone has said, clarifying their understanding, and confirming that someone has understood their meaning. By asking for clarification, repetition, or explanations during conversations, learners get the people they are speaking with to address them with language at a level they can learn from and understand.

The last principle that needs to be concerned is to be able to *design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking*. When we talk with someone outside the classroom, we usually do so for interactional or transactional purposes. Interactional speech is communicating with someone for social purposes. It includes both establishing and maintaining social relationships. Transactional speech involves communicating to get something done, including the exchange of goods and/or services.

If all those principles are considered, hopefully the students are able to make their speaking skill better after joining the classroom activities. However, not only do the teachers need to concern the principles of teaching speaking, they also need to pay attention on the techniques they use in it. This is because one of the ways to achieve a successful language instructional process is by applying a proper technique during the teaching and learning activities.



### 2.3. Techniques in Teaching Speaking

According to Bailey as it is quoted by Nunan (2003: 56-58), there are some classroom techniques and tasks for speaking:

1. Information gap

Information gap is a useful activity in which one person has information that the other lacks. They must use the target language to share that information. For example, when a class is discussing about a report they heard of a disaster that happens to some countries, one of the students knows a lot about the natural disaster in Ohio that happened lately, while another student comprehends about the catastrophe that occurred in England. In order to compare which disaster is the most horrible one and to find out the reasons, they have to get the unknown information from their friends by sharing it with the target language.

2. Jigsaw

Jigsaw activities are a bidirectional or multidirectional information gap. Each person in a pair or group has some information the other persons need. For example, one student could have a timetable for train travel in Canada. Another could have a map of Canada. Without showing each other the visual information, they must speak English to plan a one-week trip.

3. Role-plays

Role-plays are also excellent activities for speaking in the relatively safe environment of the classroom. In a role-play, students are given particular roles in the target language. For example, one student plays as a reporter that reports a live event in a certain occasion. The other plays the role of a person who is being interviewed by the reporter trying to explain the

details of the event. Role-plays give learners practice speaking the target language before they must do so in a real environment.

#### 4. Simulations

Simulations are more elaborate than role-plays. In a simulation, props and documents provide a somewhat realistic environment for language practice. So for instance, in a language lesson about the grocery store, a teacher might bring in “products” for the students to buy (a box of crackers, coffee, a jar of jam) and even play money for making their purchases. A check-out counter would be set up for the students to practice transactional speaking with the cashier.

#### 5. Contact assignments

Contact assignments involve sending students out of the classroom with a stated purpose to talk to people in the target language. In a second language environment, you can send students on an information treasure hunt in a nearby business district. Provide a worksheet which the students complete by asking merchants questions.

#### 6. Group Discussion

Moreover, Kayi (2006) added that another activity that can promote speaking skill is discussion. He said that a discussion can be held for various reasons. The students may aim to arrive at the conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solutions in their discussions group. The group members can be either assigned by the teacher, or the students may determine it by themselves. By doing a discussion, the students can practice their speaking skill by both sharing their ideas and receiving others’ opinions. This activity provides a greater chance for the members of the group to give questions, answer the questions, and offer clarification because the teacher is removed from the conversation. In addition, a group discussion also can be used in order to decide the final product before the

students perform something. For example, before playing a role in a drama or doing a speech, the students can make a discussion group to decide the main point, the preparation, the costumes, and other stuffs. So, discussion can lead the students to do other activities. Similarly in this research, a group discussion will be used as the main technique; furthermore, the group discussion will occur in both offline class in which students do in the classroom and online class in which they do a group chat discussion.

Those are some examples of technique in teaching speaking. There are a lot of techniques regarding this case; however, the technique that will be used in this research is the modification of the technique proposed by Kayi's (2006) which is a group discussion. There is not much difference in the modification because the same technique will be used in a different medium which is internet.

#### **2.4. Group Chat Discussion in Blended Learning Activity**

One of the techniques which are usually used in a language classroom is group discussion. This technique is able to make all of the students to speak up, that is why it is used in this research which is concerned with speaking. This activity can be initiated by having students work in groups to prepare a short list of controversial statements for others to think about (Richards, 2008). Similarly, after a bunch of pupil gathers in one team in order to prepare some statements by discussing it beforehand, the statements will be contributed to the other groups or presented in front of the others.

Group discussion is one of the beneficial activities that can be applied in a language classroom because there is evidence that opportunities for learners to engage in conversational interactions in group and paired activities can lead to increased fluency and the ability to manage conversations more effectively in a second language (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 104). The students can freely

express their ideas in their group without being forced by the teacher to talk. They naturally will rise up and speak up when they feel they need to contribute their opinion, ask question, argue with their friends, and negotiate with the thing they disagree. As it quoted by Fujimoto (2010), Long and Porter (1985) state that interaction in small group leads to increased input and output thereby facilitating second language development. When learners negotiate meaning, it creates more comprehensible input which supposedly leads to language acquisition. In the process of interaction, modified input is produced making the input more accessible. So, even though sometimes the students produce errors, they practice their speaking skill on their own by listening to their friends and from this event their friends can help them to correct the inappropriateness of their speaking that finally will make them realize of their mistakes and errors.

In this research, the author modified the term group discussion into group chat discussion. It is similar to a traditional group discussion; however, this term can be used to describe the discussion which occurs in the classroom and outside the classroom. It can be done through the internet, meaning that the students join a group in one of the social media (re. WhatsApp) and involve in the chatting activity happened on it. In this activity, the students are encouraged to talk and share their idea not only through the offline group but also through the online group which is considered as blended learning. This activity is derived from the problems where the students do not usually speak English outside the classroom, and they also do not have much time to learn English inside the classroom. Since they need more input to support their speaking skill and also the media which can maintain it, this online chat group is formed. This activity is beneficial in the term of efficiency because the students do not need to go to see each other of which it is both time consuming and money expending. However, whether this activity is effective to improve the students' speaking skill is still questionable.

## 2.5. Group Chat Discussion in Teaching Speaking

The way group chat discussion can improve students' ability in speaking is still distorted. This happens because there are not many findings that figure out the relationship between online group discussion and English speaking skill. However, there are some findings that suggest a traditional group discussion or a face-to-face group discussion is good for students' speaking skill.

One of the interesting findings regarding speaking skill and group discussion comes from Argawati (2014). She conducted a research in which she found out that there are some improvements on the students' speaking skill quantitatively and qualitatively after being taught by using group discussion activities. She also states that group discussion is one of the best methods of learning speaking in foreign language. It helps the students improve their speaking skill. In group, the students have opportunity to use English among themselves and practice each other with their friends. Practicing speaking with their friends increases their confidence in saying some words without any worry whether they say some wrong words or not.

In addition, Fujimoto (2010) said that the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research on small group work had an impact on the practice of teaching. In an article on small group work, delineated five reasons why group work should be used in language classrooms: 1) increased language practice; 2) improved quality of student talk; 3) individualized instruction; 4) a positive affective climate; and 5) increased motivation (Long and Porter, 1985, quoted by Fujimoto, 2010). Those five aspects are positive enough to give good effect on the students' better performance in speaking English.

Moreover, since group chat discussion can be categorized as a part of blended learning, we can take a look at the previous findings which were coped

with both speaking skill and blended learning. These kinds of research have been conducted by some people.

One of the research proved that blended learning environment was advantageous to the public speaking course. Ibrahim and Yusoff (2012) conducted a research about enhancing students' speaking skill through blended learning by using an online website named wiki. However, they did not state whether the blended learning itself can improve students' speaking skill or not. They only states that the environment that is created in a blended model can give benefits to the students who joined a public speaking course.

Blended learning can also give benefits to enhance students' motivation in speaking (Susanti, 2017). Her research findings reveal the fact that the use of blended learning is effective to boost students' motivation in speaking class. At first, the students' motivation was observed during the learning process to see the affect of the implementation of blended learning quantitatively. Moreover, she was collecting a data of those 34 students by distributing a questionnaire with respect to the students' motivation in speaking through blended learning by using Edmodo. Nevertheless, the reasons why it can enhance students' motivation in speaking are still unidentified. She does not explain why a certain blended model can make students' motivation in speaking English become higher.

Furthermore, Abu-Sheera (2015) found out that blended learning was highly effective in improving students' level in speaking skill. She gave the students homework such as asking students to open a particular website on the Internet and watch the same chapter she was teaching in the classroom then write six sentences and listen to their pronunciation from the video of the chapter. In the next lesson the teacher checked their pronunciation to those sentences. However, she did not watch the students whether they really visited the website or not, and the dominant

learning activity was the classroom activity. She also did not explain what kind of technique she applied to her pupils in the blended learning class.

The ultimate finding that is connected with this research was conducted by Alhabbash (2012). In the light of those findings, he compared three different treatments. Those are traditional method as the control group, classroom discussion, and online discussion. From the computation, there are statistically significant differences in the level of speaking ability among those three treatments. He used Skype program in his research to communicate with his students as they can speak and exchange videos and audios freely. He did the research by communicating with his students online five times a week and each period one hour. At the end, this study leads to recommend the necessity of implementing classroom and online discussion in teaching English language to bring better outcomes in students' speaking skill.

In line with that, this research which is concerned with the implementation of group chat discussion in improving students' English speaking skill arises. A group chat discussion is chosen due to the fact that nowadays people always cope with technology every day, including students. Furthermore, this research occurs owing to the evidence that language learners do not usually use the target language outside the classroom, and that they do not have much time to practice it inside the classroom. Thus, not only can group chat discussion help the students to practice more English outside the classroom, but it also gives them a greater chance to obtain maximum comprehensible exposures.

This can be the media that can trigger the students to communicate and interact with their friends in their own group. Without being interrupted by the teacher, the students can enjoy the chatting activities by sharing their thought, supporting their friends, arguing with nonsense ideas, and solving the problem they face together in their group. The students also do not need to be afraid of

making mistakes or producing errors while they are having a discussion on the online group because the teacher will not correct them, but they get the correction from their own friends by realizing it naturally that they split in a certain word.

Likewise, this research was conducted in order to make sure for the second time whether online and offline discussion can improve students' speaking skill. Furthermore, the special thing that can distinct this research from the previous one is that the type of social media used in this research is different. In this research, the program which is used is WhatsApp. It is a mobile application that allows the users to keep in touch with their friends or acquaintances by chatting and sharing moments through voice notes, videos, voice calls, and also video calls. There is also no research yet about blended learning which is dealing with this mobile app.

Also, in this research the author tried to distinct the students' freedom in speaking. We know that usually some teachers decide the topic for the students in the classroom; moreover, there are also some other teachers who let the students decide their own topic of the material. By leaning on that fact, the author tried to give different degree of freedom in choosing the topic to find out the most appropriate way to improve the students' speaking skill with respect to the topic choice freedom. There are three degrees of freedom in choosing the topic used in this research that was determined by using some types of speaking; those are guided, controlled, and free. Those types are modified from the seven types of teaching skill in language learning proposed by Setiyadi (2006: 72).

The author only took three types since there was only six meeting for the treatment. All of the three types were applied with different degree of freedom in choosing the topic of speech. In guided topic, the author gave 50% freedom to the students to choose their topic. In this first treatment, the teacher guided the students to make the speech outline first. It was because the students predominantly did not understand how to compose their speech. Even they did not



know how to make the thesis statement in the first place. This is the reason why guided topic was applied as the first treatment. This type was done by choosing a topic about the benefits of something, and the students needed to follow what they heard about that benefit: first, making the thesis statement and second, making the developing sentences. Having done the outline, they elaborated their outline spontaneously as their speech. After that, controlled topic was applied. Having known how to make an outline and a speech spontaneously, the students tried to make another speech for the second time. In that treatment, the students had 0% freedom to choose their topic. They listened to the teacher giving the example of a speech about English movie, and they had to imitate the speech by paraphrasing it. At the end, the students freely chose their own topic in free topic treatment. They had 100% freedom to decide what they were going to talk about. This was based on their heart and feeling; what they really wish, and what they really want to say to the world.

Likewise, this research was conducted in order to prove them all. There is also a comparison between the three degrees of freedom in choosing the topic so that the one which is most suitable with blended learning can be discovered. Moreover, it also has fundamental theories that support this study as a strong evidence to sustain the result of this research.

## **2.6. Procedure of Applying Group Chat Discussion in Teaching Speaking**

There is no exact way or model in teaching speaking using group chat discussion, meaning that the teacher should be creative to create or to modified available model as a suitable learning process both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Even though the technique that is used here is a group chat discussion, the formal class also occurred. Inside the classroom, the teaching techniques were mixed based on the material they learn that day, but a group discussion always remained in every meeting.

Likewise, in a group chat discussion, the students discussed a certain topic by chatting and also sharing voice note. However, before starting the speaking practice, the students made a small group consisted of four to five students for each group. Each group of the students had a WhatsApp group named by themselves, and they decided to name it as the name of the characters of Harry Potter sequels. The teacher also joined each of the group to monitor the chatting activity. However, the teacher was not allowed to interrupt their discussion in a small group even though the teacher found any mistake or error unless the students asked for it. The students also joined a big group on WhatsApp in which the tasks were contributed by the teacher. In this group, the teacher could join the conversation. After having a complete group, the students joined both offline and online class. These are the procedures of teaching and learning activity:

1. The students are starting the class by listening to a certain topic or watching a video that will be discussed later.\*
2. After that, the students try to guess new vocabulary they get from the recording or the video.\*
3. Dealing with the vocabulary, the students have to repeat a certain pronunciation of the vocabulary they just learn.\*
4. The students talk about the speech by having the example from the teacher beforehand. The topic of the speech is similar to the recording or video they get at the first time.\*
5. After that, some of the students have to retell what the speech/topic is about with their own words.\*
6. Other students need to give their idea towards what their friends have retold to the class.\*
7. After that, the students gather with their own group to discuss a topic they have listened before and make the outline of the speech.\*

8. One of the members of each group comes in front of the class voluntarily telling the result of their discussion.\*
9. There will be some games related to the topic, also with the vocabulary and pronunciation.\*
10. The students need to answer quickly of the questions they heard from the teacher.\*
11. The students are told about the grammar that is dealing with the topic.\*
12. At the end of the class, the students have to record their speech by using voice note online and send it to the teacher via WhatsApp.\*\*
13. The students get a new task from the teacher via mobile phone. The students can get their own material from the internet. The material can be videos, articles, pictures, or recordings.\*\*
14. The students begin the chat by sending the material to their own group. There are three to four members for each chat discussion group.\*\*
15. In one day, there is only one student who sends his/her material in each group.\*\*
16. The student chats the others in the group something regarding to the material he/she sent.\*\*
17. The other students chat in their group talking about the material their friend shared, giving feedbacks.\*\*
18. The students give their opinions and questions by chatting and sharing voice note via WhatsApp.\*\*
19. Another student sends another material in the next day, and the others do the same as they did the day before: chatting and voice noting about that material.\*\*
20. There is one different student in each day sharing their material, and the other students have a chat about those different materials.\*\*

21. In last day of the chatting, the students decide which one of all material they bring to the classroom next meeting.\*\*

Out of the topic that is related to the offline class, the teacher will also give the students some random topics to be discussed. The topic can be different from the main topic in the classroom, but it is still dealing with the main subject of their learning, for example if they learn how to give a good speech, they need to focus on giving a perfect speech. However, the topic of the speech might be different. Those can complete the procedure that was applied in the treatment.

## **2.7. Advantages and Drawbacks**

Any kind of things in this world is for sure has both advantages and drawbacks. It is also applied in a group chat discussion which is also considered as blended learning. Due to the fact that WhatsApp is rarely used as the media of an instructional process, it is needed to understand the advantages and the drawbacks of it in the term of blended learning activity. The advantages and the drawbacks of the online discussion through WhatsApp in case of blended learning are described below.

### **2.7.1. Advantages of WhatsApp Chatting**

There are some advantages of WhatsApp chatting application in the use of blended learning class, those are:

1. WhatsApp chatting application is free and easy to use.
2. This application has some features which can be utilized to share the materials, such as pictures, videos, audios, documents, and voice notes.
3. WhatsApp chatting can be done any time we want. This gives the students flexibility in joining the discussion because they can join it when they have their spare time.

4. The situation where the students do not face their partner directly in speaking like their friends or the teacher helps them to avoid unwillingness to speak up. It happens because sometimes in the real life discussion, the students are prevented to speak up because of their fear being heard by the others. They are usually afraid of making mistakes.
5. The students can have a talk at the same time no matter where they are.
6. The informal situation during chatting in WhatsApp makes the students opened up to share their feeling and thought naturally just like they way they chat their friend in daily life.
7. Through WhatsApp chatting, the students can ask and discuss the previous material in the classroom of which they do not really understand yet.
8. The students who do not join the class before are able to get the material from their friends in the group. The students who have joined the class can explain the material to their friend, while the teacher can monitor them and guide them if they tell something improper.

Those are some advantages that can be utilized by both the teacher and the students in a blended learning class.

### **2.7.2. Drawbacks of WhatsApp Chatting**

Having advantages does not mean free from disadvantages. Blended learning also has some drawbacks which are described in the following:

1. It will be a problem in a blended class if the students do not have this application, or even they do not have smartphone.
2. The teacher needs extra treatment to trigger the students to begin the conversation in the group. Sometimes, it is hard to make all of the members of the group join the online discussion.

3. Sometimes, the internet connection does support the discussion activity in the group.
4. Since the teacher does not see the students at the time the discussion is held, it is hard to handle the way they speak during the discussion. Sometimes, there will be a student who just read an article when he or she is asked to describe a certain material or give her or his opinion about something. In this case, the teacher's sensitivity in noticing whether the students read or speak spontaneously is needed.
5. The materials developed by the lecturers cannot simply be the same set that they had developed for handouts. They have to be reformatted so that they guide the students through a process of independent study when they are not in a face-to-face session. This additional task required of the lecturers is yet to be appreciated for what it is worth. Students sometimes feel that they are given more work to do when distance modalities are used.

Those are some advantages and disadvantages from WhatsApp in blended learning activity. Having known those things, hopefully the author can utilize all of the advantages and diminish the drawbacks so that the instructional process can run well.

## **2.8. Theoretical Assumption**

Group chat discussion can be utilized to help the students improve their speaking skill as it provides them an opportunity to be able and dare to speak up without worrying about making slip, error, or mistake. By joining this, the students have a greater chance to practice their English by sharing their thought, supporting their friends, arguing with nonsense ideas, and solving the problem they face together in their group. Moreover, not only can group chat discussion

help the students to practice more English outside the classroom, but it also gives them a greater chance to obtain maximum comprehensible exposures.

Krashen (1982: 58) proposed that the classroom is of benefit when it is the major source of comprehensible input. When acquirers have rich sources of input outside the class, and when they are proficient enough to take advantage of it (i.e. understand at least some of it), the classroom does not make an important contribution. Thus, the real advantage of the informal environment is that it supplies comprehensible input. However, it does not mean that the classroom activity is bad and should be omitted. Conversely, classroom activity is still needed to make sure that the students obtain any progress of their learning activity. Furthermore, our responsibility goes beyond the language classroom (Krashen, 1982: 76) which means how we can make the students also use English outside the classroom. He also states that our task is to provide the students with the tools they need to continue improving without us. We need to provide enough input so that they can gain the linguistic competence necessary to begin to take advantage of the informal environment, the outside world. This is one device that can be provided by the teacher to help the students obtain more input.

There is an evidence that opportunities for learners to engage in conversational interactions in group and paired activities can lead to increased fluency and the ability to manage conversations more effectively in a second language (Lightbown and Spada, 1993: 104). Similarly, the students can use this occasion in order to talk and speak up expressing their thought and feeling to the others. By making English as the tool of communication, we are hoping that the students do not consider it as the goal of their learning. On the other hand, English in this case is the mean that help them to achieve a certain things and finish a certain job while the teacher without being known by them tried to assess their English speaking skill.

Based on these theories, it is believed that by doing a group chat discussion, it can improve the students' speaking skill. The reason is group chat discussion provides a greater chance for the students to speak in a natural way. It also facilitates them to share information by using English without noticing that actually their speaking skill is being assessed. Eventually, the author believes that the most suitable topic choice freedom for this case is in the free topic because they could 100% choose whatever topic they really want to share based on their heart or their thought. The reason is mostly when the students are asked to make a speech freely; they usually stay in their comfort zone meaning that they are likely choosing the topic they usually talk about, so that they already knew the vocabulary, grammar, and other things with respect to their speech. That is why the author considers this as the most appropriate degree of freedom in choosing the topic for teaching speaking in a blended class.

## **2.9. Hypotheses**

In a quantitative research, it is needed to compose the hypothesis based on the problem formulated in the first chapter. According to the problem that is found out in the first chapter, the hypotheses which are proposed in this research are concerned with:

1. There is significant improvement of students' speaking skill after being taught by using blended learning.
2. There is significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class.

There are five aspects of speaking considered in this research: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. The perfect topic for this blended model is also elaborated in this research. These all are further discussed regarding its cause and its effect in this paper.



Thus, the framework that has been discussed in this chapters are speaking, teaching speaking, technique in teaching speaking, group chat discussion, group chat discussion in teaching speaking, procedure of teaching speaking by using group chat discussion, advantages and disadvantages, theoretical assumption, and hypothesis. For the way of conducting the research is conferred in the next chapter.

### III. METHODS

This chapter discusses about research design, population and sample, data collecting technique, research procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability, scoring rubric, data analysis, and hypothesis testing.

#### 3.1. Research Design

This is a quantitative and qualitative research of which aim is to measure the improvement of students' speaking ability through blended learning. *One Way Anova* formula was used to analyze the data since there were four scores that should be measured. Furthermore, in order to find out the difference of students' speaking skill, *Scheffe* test was used. Since it was a *quasi experiment*, there was only one class in which the treatment or blended learning was applied. The concept of the blended learning here is an offline class which is a formal class that happens inside the classroom and an online class that occurs outside the classroom. The offline class was done six times in which took two hours for each meeting where each two-meetings is for one topic, while the online class occurred eighteen times with three times a week in which takes two until three hours per day. Furthermore, this research used time series designed as follow:

T1 X1 T2 X2 T3 X3 T4
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Note :

- T1 : Pre-test
- X1 : Treatment (50% freedom in choosing topic)
- T2 : Test
- X2 : Treatment (0% freedom in choosing topic)
- T3 : Test
- X3 : Treatment (100% freedom in choosing topic)
- T4 : Test

All of the tests can be said equal but different and have the same difficulty level. It means that all of them similarly measure the same aspects of students' speaking ability; however, the topics used are different. This kind of distinction in deciding the topic was used in order to avoid self learning of the students. So, it can decrease the possibility of the students' self-learning as another variable that can interrupt the result of the test.

Furthermore, all of the treatments done by the author were blended learning meaning that in each meeting there were both online and offline class. *Anova* test was used to determine the first hypothesis. Furthermore, the second hypothesis in accordance with the topic choice freedom used in blended class was obtained by using *Scheffe* test in SPSS to investigate the significant difference in the students' speaking skill. Additionally, the qualitative data are obtained and analyzed in the discussion. It is dealing with the most suitable topic choice freedom for the students in improving their speaking skill in blended class which was discovered by comparing the mean of each test.

### **3.2. Subject of Research**

The population of the research is advance English learners in Indonesia of which subject chosen is the students aged around 19-20 years old from one class of English Department in University of Lampung. Moreover, the subjects chosen were those who have learned English since they were in elementary school until high school which means they have spent twelve years full learning English; still, they cannot speak English well. They were the twenty students who can also be described as advance English learners in English Department who still have problems in speaking English.

### 3.3. Data Collecting Technique

In this research, the variables are divided into two: independent variable (X) and dependent variable (Y). The topic choice freedom in blended learning is considered as the independent variable (X) since it was the one which was investigated. Furthermore, speaking skill is considered as the dependent variable (Y) because it was measured in order to see the effect of it in blended learning.

The data of this research was in the form of students' speaking score in performing a speech which is also dealing with some aspects of speaking proposed by Brown (2004) which are pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar and comprehensibility. Since the skill which was being measured is a performance, an authentic assessment was used in this research. The form of the data put in the appendix is the transcript of students' speaking performance. In collecting the data, the author used the following steps:

1. Pretest

A kind of readiness assessment test in which measures the students in the term of their pre-requisite skill (Gronlund and Waugh, 2009: 7) is administered. Alike with its name, this test is conducted before the instructional process. The actual purpose of this test is to find out the students' present knowledge and skill before being taught by the teacher. It is also used to find out whether the performance of the students' speaking skill improves from the pretest to the tests after the treatment. Even though it is kind of spontaneous test, the teacher does not give it out of the blue. Conversely, the teacher has to explain what the students need to do, what kind of speaking performance they act upon, and what aspect will be scored by the teacher.

## 2. Treatments

This is done after conducting the pre-test. The students joined both offline and online classroom. In the offline classroom, the student followed an ordinary language instructional process based on the syllabus of the department. There were three treatments applied in this research of which all of the treatments were blended learning which is distinct by the topic choice freedom. Each treatment used different frequency of students' freedom in choosing the topic of speech they would deliver. The first treatment was done by applying 50% freedom of the students choosing the topic. It is represented by guided topic. The second treatment had 0% of the students' freedom in choosing the speech topic which is represented by the name of controlled topic. Furthermore, in the last treatment, it allowed the students to choose whatever they want to talk about with 100% freedom of choosing the topic. It is represented by free topic. Thus, the difference of students' performance was found out.

## 3. Tests

There were three other tests beside the pretest. The second test (T2) was scoring the students' speech performance of which topic was the benefits of something. This was done after the students joined blended class using guided speaking. Additionally, the third test (T3) was done to assess the students' speaking skill when they delivered a speech about movie. This was also done after the second treatment of blended learning or in the fourth week which was using controlled speaking. The last one was the fourth test (T4). This test was done after the students joined blended class using free speaking. This test obviously measured their ability of making a free speech or a speech about any topic they chose.

Those tests were conducted in order to see whether there is an improvement of students' speaking skill before and after they were taught through a group chat discussion with three different topics of speech. The result whether the three different topics gave a different result of the students' performance is also investigated and described in this paper. In line with that, the most suitable topic for this blended model in improving students' speaking skill can also be declared.

### **3.4. Research Procedures**

The procedures of the research are as follows:

#### **1. Determining Problem**

This research arrives from the problems which happened in learning process. Some of the students consider speak English difficult even though they are already in an advance level. They also only use English in the classroom activities and forget it after the class is over. Although they are studying in English department, they do not practice English except inside the classroom. They also have a little chance to express their idea because of the limited time in the classroom and the number of students which makes not all of the students can perform their speaking skill in the classroom.

#### **2. Selecting and Determining the Population and Sample**

The populations of this research was the advance speaking learners in University of Lampung in 2017/2018 academic year. The sample is one class in which consists of approximately 25 language learners.

#### **3. Selecting the Materials**

The materials are dealing with advance speaking material for example how to deliver a speech, how to be a reporter, how to present a result of a

research, and how to explain scientific articles and graphs. For the six meetings, the material that will mostly be used is how to deliver a speech where for each two meetings, there were different topics used. In the first two meetings, the guided speaking was used with the topic of delivering speech about the benefits of something. The second two meetings was done by using controlled speaking of which topic was speech about movie. Ultimately, two last meeting was completed by asking the students to deliver a free speech since they were taught using free speaking. Delivering a speech was selected as the material because they were going to learn that subject at that time, so the author just followed the rule.

#### 4. Administering the Pretest

The pretest was administered before treatment of which aim is knowing the students' speaking skill before giving the treatment through group chat discussion. Before joining the pre-test, the students got a simple instruction and example of the pre-test so that they have background knowledge of it.

#### 5. Conducting the Treatments

The treatments administered were six offline meetings. Each meeting consists of 150 minutes. Additionally, the online meetings are eighteen times each of which took one hour per day at daytime or night (based on the students' spare time). A different material was given in every two meetings based on the syllabus. After joining the offline class, the students needed to follow up the same materials on the group chat discussion which were added by some other light materials they discussed. After that, the material they had discussed on the group chat was shared and presented in the offline class afterward.

#### 6. Administering the other test

The other three tests were administered after the treatment of which aim is to know the progress of the students' speaking improvement after being given the treatment through group chat discussion. The second test (T2) was done after guided speaking, the third one (T3) was conducted after controlled speaking, and the last test (T4) was administered after the students joined the blended learning with free speaking.

#### 7. Analyzing the Test Result (Pretest and other three tests)

The score of all of the tests were compared to see whether the score having any improvement. The three tests based on three different topics were also compared in order to find out which one is the most suitable topic for this research. The analysis was done by two raters to avoid subjectivity of the test results. The first rater was the author herself, and the second rater is the advance speaking class lecturer in University of Lampung in the academic year of 2017/2018. He is Mahpul, M.A., Ph.D. who was having his master degree in La Trobe University and his doctorate in Curtin University. He has been teaching English for about twenty years, and his expertise is applied linguistic.

Those are the procedures in doing this research. Other thing that needs to be considered in this research is the instrument, and whether the instrument is valid and reliable so that the result can be accepted.

### **3.5. Research Instrument**

Performance assessment was used as the instrument of this research which in this case is a speaking test. At first, the pretest was administered to the students to measure their initial ability in speaking. The speaking test was based on the



material in the syllabus. In scoring the students' performance, the modification of scoring rubric by Harris' Oral-English rating sheet (1969: 84) will be used.

### **3.6. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

In fulfilling the criteria of a good test, validity and reliability of the test should be considered. They are as follows:

#### **3.6.1 Validity of the Instrument**

Validity is concerned with the interpretation and use of assessment results. For example, if we infer from an assessment that students have achieved the intended learning outcomes, we would like some assurance that our tasks provided a relevant and representative measure of the outcomes (Gronlund and Waugh, 2009: 46). It means that when we would like to measure that the students' ability in speaking is fair good, we need the evidence to support the fact that their speaking ability is fair. This can be done by considering some types of validity in determining the validity assessment result.

##### **1. Content-Related Evidence**

Content-related evidence of validity is especially important in achievement assessment in which is dealing with how well the assessment measures the intended learning outcomes of the instruction (Gronlund and Waugh, 2009: 48). According to Gronlund and Waugh (2009), we can provide greater assurance that an assessment provides valid results by saying that (1) the learning outcomes to be assessed had been identified first, (2) the plan that specifies the sample of the tasks to be used was well prepared, and (3) the assessment procedure that closely fits the sets of specifications was prepared as well. In this research, the author has identified the learning outcomes first by examining the syllabus. Moreover, the author has prepared the tasks before attending the class. The materials used in this

research were also discussed with the in charge lecturer before being administered to the students. Lastly, the author has prepared the assessment procedure first before giving the tasks to the students. Moreover, the author tried to compose the material based on the teaching objective which is written in the syllabus of the advance level students in University of Lampung.

## 2. Construct-Related Evidence

The construct-related category of evidence focuses on assessment result as a basis for inferring the possession of certain psychological characteristics. For example, we might want to describe a person's reading comprehension, reasoning ability, or mechanical aptitude (Gronlund and Waugh, 2009: 55). This category is helpful to give the evidence that the students' result of speaking skill can be inferred by using the test conducted by the author. It means that from the test result, it can reflect the thing that is actually being measured.

Gronlund and Waugh (2009) also state that this evidence of validity for a test includes (1) a description of the theoretical framework that specifies the nature of the construct to be measured, (2) a description of the development of the test and any aspects of measurements that may affect the meaning of the test scores, (3) the patterns of relationship between the test scores and other significant variables, and (4) any other type of evidence that contributes to the meaning of the test scores. Those are some features which are dealing with the construct-related evidence validity. After dealing with the validity, we also need to consider the reliability of the instrument.

### **3.6.2 Reliability of the Instrument**

Since the instrument used in this research is a speaking test which is considered as performance assessment, the reliability of the test needs to be estimated. Reliability refers to the consistency of assessment results (Gronlund

and Waugh, 2009: 58). Likewise, in order to find the reliability of the data, inter-rater reliability is used in this research. The reliability of these performance judgments can be determined by obtaining and comparing the scores of two judges who score the performances independently. The scores of the two judges can be correlated to determine the consistency of the scoring, or the proportion of agreement in scoring can be computed (Gronlund and Waugh, 2009: 65). Inter-rater reliability of the tests were examined by using statistical measurement using the following formula:

$$R = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

Notes:

- R : Reliability data  
 N : Number of students  
 D : The difference of rank correlation  
 1 - 6 : Constant number

( Shohamy, 1985: 213)

Finding the coefficient of the scores between two raters, the author examined the coefficient value by seeing the standard of reliability proposed by Arikunto (1998: 260):

1. A very low reliability has range from 0.00 to 0.19.
2. A low reliability has a range from 0.20 to 0.39.
3. An average reliability has a range from 0.40 to 0.59.
4. A high reliability has a range from 0.60 to 0.79.
5. A very high reliability has a range from 0.80 to 0.100.

Based on the explanation above, it can be assumed that the students' performance task is reliable if the values accomplish the range of 0.60-0.79 (a high reliability). Furthermore, the reliability of each task for this research is:

1. Result of Reliability in the Pretest (T1)

$$R = 1 \frac{6\sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{6(430.5)}{25(25^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{2583}{15600} \quad 0.8344230769 \text{ (Very High Reliability)}$$

2. Result of Reliability in the Second Test (T2)

$$R = 1 \frac{6\sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{6(274.5)}{25(25^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{1647}{15600}$$

$$R = 0.8944230769 \text{ (Very High Reliability)}$$

3. Result of Reliability in the Third Test (T3)

$$R = 1 \frac{6\sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{6(412)}{25(25^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{2473}{15600}$$

$$R = 0.841474359 \text{ (Very High Reliability)}$$

4. Result of Reliability in the Fourth Test (T4)

$$R = 1 \frac{6\sum d^2}{N(N^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{6(388.5)}{25(25^2 - 1)}$$

$$R = 1 \frac{2331}{15600}$$

$$R = 0.8505769231 \text{ (Very High Reliability)}$$

From all of the reliability tests above, it can be summarized that all the results shows each of the speaking test has a very high reliability. It means that all of the tests have a good consistency of assessment results.

### 3.7. Rubric of Scoring System

In evaluating the students' speaking scores, speaking task by Harris (1969: 84) was used. Based on the speaking task, there are five components, namely: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension.

#### 3.1. Table of Scoring Data from Aspects of Speaking Test

Aspects of speaking	Rating scales	Description
<b>Pronunciation</b>	17-20	Speech is fluent and effortless as that native speaker.
	13-16	Always intelligible though one is conscious of a definite accent.
	9-12	Pronunciation problems necessitate concentrated listening and Occasionally lead to understanding.
	5-8	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problem most Frequently be asked to repeat.
	1-4	Pronunciation problem so severe as to make speech unintelligible.
<b>Vocabulary</b>	17-20	Use of vocabulary and idiom virtually that is of native speaker.
	13-16	Sometimes use inappropriate terms and must rephrase ideas, because of inadequate vocabulary.
	9-12	Frequently use the wrong word, conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.
	5-8	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary make comprehension quite difficult.
	1-4	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible.
<b>Fluency</b>	17-20	Speech is fluent and effortless as that of native speaker.
	13-16	Speed of speech seems rather strongly affected by language problems.
	9-12	Speed and fluency are rather strongly affected by language problems.
	5-8	Usually hesitant often forced into silence by language problems.
	1-4	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible.

<b>Comprehension</b>	17-20	Appear to understand everything without difficulty.
	13-16	Understand nearly everything at normal speed although occasionally repetition may be necessary.
	9-12	Understand most of what is said at slower than normal speed with repetition.
	5-8	Has great difficulty following what is said can comprehend only "social conversation" spoken slowly and with frequent repetition.
	1-4	Can not be said to understand even simple conversation in English.
<b>Grammar</b>	17-20	Grammar almost entirely in accurate phrases.
	13-16	Constant errors control of very few major patterns and frequently preventing communication.
	9-12	Frequent errors showing some major patterns uncontrolled and causing occasional irritation and misunderstanding.
	5-8	Few errors, with no patterns of failure.
	1-4	No more than two errors during the dialogue.

The students who gain score ranging from one to four is considered 'inadequate', while the score ranging from five to eight can be said 'poor'. Moreover, the score ranging from nine to twelve is categorized 'fair', while the score ranging from thirteen to sixteen is categorized 'good'. Last, the score ranging from 17-20 is categorized 'outstanding'.

The score of speaking skill dealing with the five aspects can be computed in percentage as follows:

Pronunciation .....	20
Grammar .....	20
Vocabulary .....	20
Fluency .....	20
Comprehension.....	20
	_____ +
Total score .....	100

### 3.2. Table of Rating Sheet Score

Subject	Pron. (1-20)	Gram. (1-20)	Voc. (1-20)	Fluency. (1-20)	Comprehension. (1-20)	Total (1-100)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

### 3.8. Data Analysis

The students' scores will be computed in teaching speaking by group chat discussion as follows:

1. Scoring the tests by using inter-rater.
2. Tabulating the result of the test and calculating the score of all tests. A statistic application named SPSS 23 will be used to calculate the scores and also to analyze whether there is an improvement on students' speaking achievement after the treatment.
3. Composing a discussion regarding to the result.
4. Drawing the conclusion. The conclusion is developed from the result of statistical computerization that is one way *anova* in SPSS 23.

### 3.9. Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses of this research are:

$$H_0 = \text{Sig.} > 0.05$$

$$H_1 = \text{Sig.} < 0.05$$

$H_0$  : There is no significant improvement of students' speaking skill for being taught by using blended learning.

$H_1$  : There is a significant improvement of students' speaking skill for being

taught by using blended learning.

$$H_0 = \text{Sig.} > 0.05$$

$$H_1 = \text{Sig.} < 0.05$$

$H_0$  : There is no significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class.

$H_1$  : There is significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class.

In testing the first hypothesis that the blended learning can improve the students' speaking ability significantly, *One Way Anova* was used. Furthermore, *Scheffe* test is used in order to find out whether there is a significant difference of each freedom degree in choosing the topic. The hypotheses were statistically tested by using stastical computerization (SPSS 23).

In short, those are the explanations of this chapter which are concerned with research design, population and sample, data collecting technique, research procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability, scoring rubric, data analysis, and hypothesis testing.



## V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter is final chapter on where presents the conclusion of the research findings and suggestions for English teachers who want to try to use blended model in their speaking class as the way to improve their students' speaking skill.

### 5.1 Conclusions

The objective of this research is to investigate whether blended learning can improve students' English speaking skill. From this research which has been conducted, it can be concluded:

1. Blended learning can improve students speaking skill profoundly in every aspect of speaking. This means the students need to join the traditional class as usual and also use their mobile phone to chat with their friends on an online group where they can talk about anything. This improvement happened because more time is provided for the students, so that they get more opportunity to practice their English more.
2. There is a significant difference of students' speaking skill among three different degrees of freedom in choosing a topic in blended class. Having free topic in delivering speech can facilitates the students in improving their speaking ability. The topic that is freely chosen by the students gives more positive aspect to help them get a natural environment to speak up. Moreover, in online class, the more natural the chat is, the better the chat is going on. Letting the students to speak is good for their speaking practice.

## 5.2. Suggestions

After doing this research, the author found some things that need to be considered. For the further research, it is suggested that:

1. The treatment should be applied more than one and a half month in order to get more accurate result of the data. More time or longer frequency of the treatment day is needed, so that better finding will be obtained.
2. The subject of the research should be chosen randomly, so that it can represent the rest of the population, or generalization can be decided.

Additionally, there are also some suggestions for the teacher who wants to apply this blended model in the instructional process:

1. Moving media like video or short clip should be featured while doing the online class in order to trigger the students to join the online class.
2. The teacher should decide and prepare the suitable materials for each degree of students' freedom in choosing the topic. It is needed to make the material firm and well presented to avoid the students' confusion.

Finally, those statements above represent the conclusion of this study during the research of blended learning. Moreover, the suggestion above can be considered to conduct a better further research with respect to blended learning. Other skill such as listening, reading, and writing can also be investigated whether they can be improved with blended learning.

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