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**THE USE OF REALLIFE APPLICATION IN
 LEARNING COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH
 SKILL OF INDEPENDENT STUDENT
 EXCHANGE IN 6th SEMESTER ENGLISH
 DEPARTMENT AT NOMMENSEN HKBP
 UNIVERSITY MEDAN**

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana penggunaan aplikasi RealLife membantu pertukaran mahasiswa merdeka semester 6 jurusan bahasa Inggris di Universitas Nommensen HKBP Medan dalam mempelajari keterampilan bahasa Inggris komunikatif atau keterampilan berbicara secara umum. Metodologi penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK) dimana peneliti hanya menggunakan satu siklus. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Data kuantitatif diambil dari tiga tes yaitu pre-observation test, pre-test dan post-test. Semua tes menunjukkan persentase peningkatan siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris komunikatif. Dari 20% - 75% siswa telah menerapkannya saat berbicara bahasa Inggris dengan teman dan orang lain. Temuan dari penelitian ini adalah keterampilan bahasa Inggris komunikatif telah dipahami oleh siswa dengan baik dan aplikasi RealLife sebagai media yang berhasil membuat mereka percaya diri dan bebas berbicara bahasa Inggris dengan orang karena memberikan keadaan di mana mereka tidak bertemu siapa pun yang selalu mengkritik tentang mereka. kesalahan dan juga mereka tidak akan pernah di-bully atau didiskriminasi oleh orang-orang di RealLife.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan Bahasa Inggris Komunikatif, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, Aplikasi RealLife.

Abstract

This study aimed to find out how the use of RealLife application helped the independent students exchange in 6th semester English department at Nommensen HKBP University Medan in learning communicative English skill or generally speaking skill. The methodology of this study was classroom action research (CAR) where the researcher only used one cycle. The data were collected by using quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data was taken from three tests, they were pre – observation test, pre – test and post – test. All the tests showed the percentage of students’ improvement in learning communicative English. From 20% - 75% students have applied it when speaking English with friends and others. The findings of this study was communicative English skill has understood by students well and RealLife application as the media which succeed made them got their confidence and freedom to speak English with people because it provided circumstances where they didn’t meet anyone who always criticized about their mistakes and also they would never got bully or discrimination by people in RealLife.

Keywords: Communicative English Skill, Classroom Action Research, RealLife Application

INTRODUCTION

This time, students at Universities should be able to speak English. But most students get into trouble with it. This problem requires analysis about how they think in English, especially in speaking. They still can’t speak English either for some reasons. First, when students talk to someone or friend who can speak English good enough, they are often interrupted because they

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do not understand. Second, The students confirmed that if they cannot respond with English because they did not know a few words in English or lack of vocabularies that's why they always said in bahasa. Then some of them also respond by bilingual (combine English and Bahasa).

Communicative English is the language in which students study from their real-life interactions, which can help strengthen their learning value. Communicative English is a concept that is being studied by doing so. Students learn English by communicating with others. When they communicate in English regularly, they can learn the efficiency of their communication. When students are first learning how to enhance communicative English skills, do not expect to be talking elegantly. Communicating successfully requires effort and time as it demands one must be able to afford judgment in the language which helps them avoid grammatical mistakes despite making no attempts at communication with the other person. Research studies show that when people try to learn a language through study alone, it may prove difficult for learners as their abilities in the language are limited compared to even novice by native speakers of English.

According to Mahmud (2017) who learned about "the communicative style of English students at Makassar State University. The findings are students who use various styles as strategies to communicate in class presentations. Their communicative style can be speech actions, discourse markers, language choices, address terms, and information. The contribution of this study is used as the reference to my research which discuss communicative English. The similarity is discuss about communicative English. The differences is the previous focus on communicative style while the researcher focus to communicative skill. The other difference is location of research, sample and method in conducting the research From the background above, the researcher decides do a direct observation from the students' point of view. Based on informal interviews with students in Nommensen University, they consider that speaking skills as a difficult skill to master and apply when talking with people in daily activities. Students are afraid to speak English for fear of wrongdoing, fear of ridicule and fear of criticism. they become feel unconfident to speak. Also in their mind, there is a fear that they think at the beginning. Finally make them choose to speak Bahasa rather than English. So, the researcher introduces to the students a communicative language activities interaction through interesting application for learning English and then giving them the opportunities to practice their speaking skill as much as possible without afraid being wrong. The name of the application is RealLife. This Application is fun, relevant and dynamic English conversations with native speaker from all countries and other experienced fluency coaches by using RealLife as the media of speaking activity, the students are helped to know how to talk communicatively with speakers worldwide. Learning English speaking can be done by online but most of the learners prefer this way. In addition RealLife requires the students opportunity to be active, readiness to speak freely, and relax because they can ask or answer questions based on their own words. So, days by days students' confidence and responsibility are trained, this will help them to speak with their friends in a class when joining English subject. It can be inferred that RealLife Application is a suitable media in learning the communicative English skill for students. That's why the researcher is interested to do a research about "The use of RealLife application in learning communicative English skill of independent student exchange in 6th semester English Department at Nommensen HKBP University Medan." Why the subjects of this research are PMM students? Because they have had the opportunity to communicate with many other PMM students who come from various islands in Indonesia, so their speaking interactions are extensive.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design in this study will be classroom action research (CAR). This classroom action research focuses to improve the communicative English skill of 6th semester students of English department at Nommensen HKBP University Medan through the use of RealLife application.

Instrument of Collecting Data

The instrument of collecting data Quantitative and Qualitative data will be used to receive data. The speaking test scores as tools are used to collect quantitative data. Speaking test here was kind of test that they answered orally and the researcher made 3 tests, they were Pre – observation test, Pre – test and Post – test. They were used to measure students’ speaking from beginning.

Qualitative data is conducted to determine a scenario that arises throughout the educational process. In collecting qualitative data, the writer uses:

1. Observation sheets are used to observe every situation that arises during the teaching and learning process, including teachers, students, and the consequences of those actions. Student participation or activity in the learning process is assessed by observation.

2. Interview

The interview here used to get the information by making question and answer session in order to get the specific information. The data expected to catch was how the process of the research and the respond of the sample based on the point of view the objects of study nor based on the researcher.

Procedure of Collecting Data

The research procedure in this study consists of four essential steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In this classroom action research, the researcher conducted one cycle through the using of RealLife application which are consist of four stages, they were: planning, action, observation and reflection.

1. Cycle I

- a. Planning. This phase was an arrangement for doing something. In planning was considering everything that was related to the action that did about the preparation of equipment needed in teaching – leaning process. The activities consist of:
 - a) Preparing the lesson plan in cycle 1
 - b) Preparing the teaching material
 - c) Preparing the instrument for collecting data such as observation sheet and diary note.
- b. Action. Action was the process in doing something. It is the implementation of planning. The researcher was explained the speaking strategy and introduced them about speaking application namely RealLife English.
- c. Observation. Observations carried out by researchers aim to examine:
 1. The students' activity in speaking
 2. The students' responses during the teaching and learning process
 3. The students' speaking skill improvement
- d. Reflection. Reflection is the evaluation or the feedback process from the action. It used to help the teacher to make decision. Reflection had evaluation aspects to evaluate theeffect of spacious issue and suggest the way to handle it. If the result of the study didn't reach that is determined. When the score needed can't be achieved, further cycle would be applied.

2. Cycle II

The researcher chosen to conduct the second cycle of the learning process based on the results from the prior cycle. Depending on the outcome of the first cycle, the following cycle applied:

- a. Planning. This phase was an arrangement for doing something. In planning was considering everything that was related to the action that did about the preparation of equipment needed in teaching – leaning process. The activities consist of:
 - a) Preparing the lesson plan in cycle II
 - b) Preparing the teaching material
 - c) Preparing the instrument for collecting data such as observation sheet and diary note.
- b. Action. The researcher put the revised lesson plan into practice during this stage. After the students learn through RealLife English in a longer period of time, the researcher instructed the students to speak English based on the topic given with their friends in class.
- c. Observation. The researcher saw how engaged and successful the students were during this stage. Now the researcher checked to see if students comprehend more and compare their performance between cycle I and cycle II.
- d. Reflection. Reflection is the evaluation or the feedback process from the action. It used to help the teacher to make decision. Reflection had evaluation aspects to evaluate theeffect of spacious issue and suggest the way to handle it. If the result of the study didn't reach that is determined. When the score needed can't be achieved, further cycle would be applied.

Technique of Collecting Data

There were three techniques which used by the researcher in collecting the data, they are: interview, observation and speaking test.

1. Interview. The interview was done to know more about the students' speaking skill before treatment. Therefore, the interview would simply be used to assess the situation.
2. Observation . To obtain the required information, observations are made by the researcher. To gathering data, the researcher watching classroom circumstances and conditions during the teaching and learning process. The researcher observed class activities as they occurred and took notes as they were being taught and learned. The researcher gathered information

through made observations and records anything that can be captured through researcher's feelings. In this activity, the researcher looked at how the students behave in class, the teaching and learning process, and student attitudes.

3. Speaking test. The speaking test that used in this study were pre-observation test, pre-test and post-test. The pre-observation test was done before using speaking application namely RealLife English. It is to measure students' speaking at first. Meanwhile, the pre-test and post-test were implemented after using RealLife.

Technique of Analyzing Data

The Qualitative data analyzed from diary notes and observation during the research. Meanwhile, quantitative data analyzed in scoring the students' speaking test orally. Through quantitative data the researcher would know whether there is improvement or not on the students' speaking ability through the implementation of speaking communicative between the student and researcher. This necessary showed this part of this necessary part because the readers need to know the data in real. Showing the data used to give the reader to make consideration of the correction for data formulation. To find the mean score in each cycle, the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:

\bar{X} = class of mean score

$\sum X$ = total score

N = total number of students

The percentages of students who get success and unsuccessful in speaking test for each cycle apply the following formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of pupils that received a score of 72 or above

R = Number of students who received a score 72

T = total number of students

Scoring System

In scoring the data of this research, oral test will be given to the students in order to evaluate the students' speaking competence. Some criterions should be given considered the need to be scored. According to Harmer (1991) Some elements of speaking test were categorized into six skills. those are vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, comprehensibility, and self-confidence. But the researcher made limitation and focus on 3 parts as in scope of study mentioned. And these are the rubrics of speaking skill.

Table Rubric Assessment in Speaking:

Table 1. Vocabulary

No	Types of vocabulary	Range	Score
1	Unsatisfactory Very limited vocabulary; making comprehension quite difficult	10	
2	Fair Frequently using wrong word speech limited to simple vocabulary	15	
3	Good Sometimes using inappropriate terms about language because of inadequate vocabulary	20	
4	Very good Rarely having trouble.	25	

Table 2. Fluency

No	Types of fluency	Range	Score
1	Unsatisfactory Speed of speech and length of utterances are so far below normal, long pauses, utterances left unfinished.	20	
2	Fair Doing definite stumbling but managing to rephrase and continuing	30	
3	Good Speech is generally natural	40	
4	Very good Being understandable	50	

Table 3. Comprehensibility

No	Types of comprehensibility	Range	Score
1	Unsatisfactory Difficult to catch the words	10	
2	Fair Able to catch a few simple words	15	
3	Good Able to catch simple words	20	
4	Very good Able to catch the words well.	25	

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As was already established, CAR (classroom action research) was a type of study design that included both qualitative and quantitative data. The result of the data came from qualitative and quantitative data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were used to generate the data for this study. Speaking test was the quantitative data. The qualitative information came from observation, and interview. The study was conducted in one class using two cycles that has four steps: planning, doing, observing, and reflecting. Three meetings made up the research, which was held in April 2023.

The Analysis of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data was taken from the speaking test given in three times such as pre-observation test, pre-test and post-test. In the pre-observation test, the students generally got some bad scores, it can see in table 4.1. In the first cycle, the student get any improvement, It can see in 4.3. Some students got under a standard of minimum completeness of mastery. In the second cycle, the researcher can see any improvement from the students in speaking test, it can be seen in 4.4. In the cycle two there are also any students who got under a standard of minimum completeness but the students can show the improvement by the value and not many as the first cycle. the researcher made a comparison table in the pre-test cycle 1 and pos-test cycle 2.

In the pre-test cycle I, the student got scores total of 1292. In post-test cycle II 1549.

Table 4. The Students' Score in Pre – Observation Test

No	Initial Name	Speaking Score
1.	IH	50
2	NN	65
3	DS	70
4	MN	60
5	HS	60
6	FZ	60
7	FL	65
8	RM	70

9	DS	65
10	NS	78
11	CS	78
12	IS	76
13	IP	77
14	SS	65
15	SY	62
16	YP	55
17	ER	58
18	DH	64
19	ES	56
20	EP	68
Total score		$\sum x = 1302$
Mean		$\bar{X} = 65,1$

According to the previous mentioned facts, only a very small percentage of students passed the pre-observation test. The researcher did it in this occasion using a percentage calculation.

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{4}{20} \times 100\%$$

$$= 20 \%$$

Following the pre-observation test, the researcher conducted the following activity with the children based on the classroom action research methodology itself. Here, the researcher makes an effort to talk about how to set up an action research structure that includes a four-phase cycle.

- a. Planning. Prepared the materials, lesson plan, teaching media, students exercise and everything related to the action.
- b. Action. Using the RealLife application, the researcher carried out the action over the course of three meetings, including giving tests and doing treatments. The researcher divided the lesson into pre-, during-, and post-activity categories to better plan her instruction of the students. In detail, the researcher present in the following table.

Table The Activity of The Researcher in Action Section:

Table 5.Meeting 1

Activity	Description
Preliminary activity	Firstly, greeting the students Then, the researcher introduced himself and gave direction about the activity in this research.
During activity	The researcher gave the pre-test
Post activity	The researcher closed the meeting and gave the information about what's the activity for the next day.

Table 6. Meeting 2

Activity	Description
Preliminary activity	Greeting the students Gave the further direction about the activity in this research.

During activity	The researcher introduced an application namely RealLife English used in this study and gave the direction to download it from playstore. The researcher used the application in teaching and learning process.
Post activity	The researcher gave the Q&A session over the teaching and learning process. The researcher gave post-test by using RealLife English to know about the vocabulary, fluency and comprehensibility of students. The researcher gave the direction about the next day and closed the meeting.

Table 7. Meeting 3

Activity	Description
Preliminary activity	Greeting the students Then he gave the further direction about the activity in this research.
During activity	The researcher did post-test for students.
Post activity	The researcher told his thanks to all students for their participation during this research, then closed the meeting.

- c. Observation. The action was watched, and field notes were taken of the outcome. A few cases were discovered by the researcher such as the students got difficulties in using grammar, the students couldn't pronounce the words well and the students spoke with a lot of pauses because lack of vocabularies. The problem was related to the background of problem mentioned in previous chapter namely
- d. Reflection. Based on the data gathered by the researcher, it was determined that the students' speaking skill had improved as a result of using the RealLife application. This section includes the action's strengths and weaknesses as a consideration for the researcher as to whether to continue the next cycle or not.

Table 8. The Student's Score in Pre-Test Cycle I

No	Initial name	Vocabulary	Fluency	Comprehensibility	Score
1	IH	18	20	13	51
2	NN	25	20	15	60
3	DS	26	30	18	74
4	MN	20	20	12	52
5	HS	20	20	12	52
6	FZ	22	20	14	56
7	FL	21	20	15	56
8	RM	25	30	15	70
9	DS	20	20	14	54
10	NS	35	40	20	95
11	CS	36	40	20	96
12	IS	31	30	20	81
13	IP	32	30	20	82
14	SS	19	20	14	53

15	SY	24	20	15	59
16	YP	22	20	16	58
17	ER	27	30	20	77
18	DH	23	20	18	61
19	ES	20	20	15	55
20	EP	20	20	10	50
Total score					1292
Mean					64,6

From the data above, the mean of the students in pre-test cycle I was 64,6. The total number of students who passed the pre-test can be seen by using the formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{6}{20} \times 100\%$$

$$= 30 \%$$

Table 9. The Students' Scores in Post-Test Cycle II

No	Initial name	Vocabulary	Fluency	Comprehensibility	Score
1	IH	23	24	20	67
2	NN	30	24	22	76
3	DS	31	34	23	88
4	MN	30	24	20	74
5	HS	30	24	20	74
6	FZ	28	24	20	72
7	FL	26	24	22	72
8	RM	30	34	24	88
9	DS	29	24	20	73
10	NS	32	40	25	97
11	CS	30	40	25	95
12	IS	34	34	24	92
13	IP	35	34	24	93
14	SS	24	20	22	66
15	SY	32	20	20	72
16	YP	28	20	24	72
17	ER	30	32	24	86
18	DH	25	22	20	67
19	ES	22	20	20	62
20	EP	23	20	20	63
Total score					1549
Mean					77,45

This data showed the significant improvement because the implementation of RealLife English application. Based on the data above it can be interpreted the mean of the students in post-test cycle II was 77,45 that was kind of significant improvement. Then the researcher tried to find of the whole students who pass the post-test can be seen by using the formula :

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{15}{20} \times 100\%$$

$$= 75 \%$$

Table 10. Students' Score from Pre - Observation to Post-Test

The improvement in students' speaking scores from the pre-observation test, pre-test cycle I, and post-test cycle II

No	Initial name	Pre - observation - test	Pre-test	Post-test
1	IH	60	51	67
2	NN	65	60	76
3	DS	70	74	88
4	MN	60	52	74
5	HS	60	52	74
6	FZ	60	56	72
7	FL	65	56	72
8	RM	70	70	88
9	DS	65	54	73
10	NS	78	95	97
11	CS	78	96	95
12	IS	76	81	92
13	IP	77	82	93
14	SS	65	53	66
15	SY	62	59	72
16	YP	55	58	72
17	ER	58	77	86
18	DH	64	61	67
19	ES	56	55	62
20	EP	68	50	63

From all the tests that the research had done, it can be seen that students' scores keep improving. In pre-observation test the students got scores total of 1302 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 20%. In pre-test cycle I the students got scores total of 1292 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 30%. And in post-test cycle II which is the last test from this study, the students got scores total of 1549 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 75%. In this case those score showed the successful of the classroom action resarch toward English department students of the sixth (6) semester in the application of RealLife English.

The Analysis of Qualitative Data

The data qualitative in this research was performed by observation, diary notes and interview.

Observation

Finding out about students' participation in the teaching and learning process through observation is the goal. It is employed to learn about student responses to situations that occurred during study. So, from the researcher's perspective, the research was successful. Furthermore, the researcher was a teacher who was present to facilitate and control the investigation. Their response to this study was favorable. Utilizing the RealLife English as the media, they enjoyed teaching and studying.

Diary Notes

A research diary serves as a record of the researcher's participation in a project. The results of the diary entries made after each meeting revealed significant student improvement. According to diary entries, the students shown progress in their behavior throughout the teaching and learning process, especially while their speaking activity.

Interview

The interview is used to get the information by making question and answer session. the data that would be expected was about the process of this research which taken place. The responses of the respondents to this study had been answered directly and consciously. The data were accepted by the students, they were excited using the RealLife English and they agreed if speaking English must be communicative. The students were expected to be not perfect which means the speakers may not making any mistakes when speaking English.

The first interview was done by the researcher before introducing and using the RealLife application:

- Researcher : if someone or your friend asked you to speak English in a public place, did you repond them in English ?
- RM : *Gak. Karena itu di tempat umum yang berarti ada banyak orang, jadi kurang pede untuk merespon bahasa Inggris karena takut salah grammarnya, vocabularynya tidak pas*
- DS : *Gak. Karena saya tidak berani, takut banyak yang salah daripada benarnya.*
- NS : Yes. But not full English because sometimes forget the English, so I mix it with Indonesia
- FZ : *Gak. Karena takut di bilang sok English dengan orang-orang yang ada di tempat tersebut.*

From the interview above, the main problem and mostly happened to the students were they still had a fearness of making mistakes in speaking English, officially on the grammar and vocabulary, lack of self-confidence and also people called them with over confidence (*sok English*). So all these reasons were made them hard to speak English.

The second interview was the researcher introduced and asked the student to speak with people in RealLife to see the difference between using or not.

- Walter (from RealLife) : Hi, where are you from ?
- CS (Cici Saragih) : I'm from Indonesia, and you ?
- Walter : Can you guess ?
- CS : I see from your flag, you are from United State
- WS : Exactly. Wow you're brilliant in guessing. What do you do now ?
- CS : Thank you. I'm student in University. What about you ?
- Walter : Well, I'm an English educator at school. Anyway what major do you take ?
- CS : English Department. How long you work become English educator ?
- Walter : About 6 years. Do you often using this app ?
- CS : I use this app for the first time because my friend tells me to download and use it for his experiment. I'm as the object for the thesis.
- Walter : Oh I see. So you're in here because you want to help your friend to complete the thesis.

So based on the second interview, it can be concluded that RealLife can help the students become more confident to speak English because they didn't get some criticism if they made mistakes and their speaking partner understood the meaning of their question and statement.

According to Alodia Amalina in her youtube channel, there was a content entitled "Unboxing RealLife English App – TechBased." (<https://youtu.be/EPmRy0Aj4wA>). In that content, she stated that RealLife basically helped people to develop their confidence and fluency in speaking communicative English, so that is why the researcher choosed this application as the media because the four problems on the interview were already answered and solved.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data were collected, the researcher briefly concluded:

1. The scores of students' speaking test by using RealLife application was improved and showed successful. In pre-observation test the students got scores total of 1302 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 20%. In pre-test cycle I the students got scores total of 1292 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 30%. And in post-test cycle II which is the last test from this study, the students got scores total of 1549 and the percentage of students who passed the test was 75%.

2. RealLife application in this study has helped the students in speaking communicatively with people. This application has made the students got their confidence to speak English with people because it provided circumstances where they didn't meet anyone who always criticized about their mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and others. They also never got discrimination or bully from people in RealLife about their efforts and willing in speaking English so that they could always continue to practice and did not stop.

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