

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE USE OF OMEGLE TO ENHANCE ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL

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### Abstract

*This study aimed to find out the students' perception toward the use of Omegle as learning media to enhance their English speaking skills. Omegle is a free communication platform that may connect individuals from various ethnicities and countries for one-on-one dialogue. Omegle users generally use English to interact with each other since English is a lingua franca and has a majority of speakers around the world. Respondents of this study were English Language and Literature students at Universitas Airlangga who used Omegle. The results of this study found that undergraduate students of Universitas Airlangga have a positive perception of systems in Omegle and are interested in its use for improving their English speaking skills. Therefore, the researchers suggest that future work may be able to include the development of a prototype for interactive learning media that assist and provide useful feedback for students in improving their English skills.*

**Keywords:** Omegle, students perception, speaking skills, learning media

### INTRODUCTION

The speaking skill is essential and must be possessed by every individual, including students, because it is part of language tools (Brown, 1994). Students use their speaking skills to be able to communicate, exchange ideas, and information with the intended person. Speaking skills are also very beneficial for students in pursuing their studies or careers, especially if it is in English (Pustika & Wiedarti, 2019). Since the English language is a lingua franca, that is almost learned in educational institutions in every country (Seidlhofer, 2005). Hence, the most-spoken language in the world is English (Piercy, 2012). Nevertheless, in its development, the speaking skill is still regarded as the most complex skill in language learning. This is because speakers must understand various components such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency (Leong & Ahmadi, 2016).

In recent years, digital communication media has developed very rapidly. This development is characterized by various types of digital communication media with their respective function and uniqueness. Digital media is networks that connect various types of communication into a more expansive scope (Coudry, 2012). The range in media and networks is spacious, enabling people to reach out to particular far-distance communication. As seen nowadays, many digital media now present features for communicating across countries that allow people to interact at different times and places, even if the function is not limited to communication. One of the digital communication media that has a uniqueness and not limited function for communication is Omegle.

Omegle is a video communication platform that can randomly connect users with other users from different ethnicities and countries for one-on-one dialogue (Rooms, 2007). The easy interaction and connection between Omegle's users from various backgrounds is a new action after creating digital media. Most Omegle users interact with each other using English because there is a possibility of being met with other users from different countries. The language that



both users can use is English. Additionally, communication or interaction specifically with strangers online is the prominent uniqueness of this platform. According to Bevandhy and Atnan (2018), for students who use Omegle, one of their motives is to be able to interact or integrate.

Some research explains that interaction through digital media can improve speaking skills (Belal, 2014; Ningrum, 2014; Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). Omegle, which is a digital media and emphasizes interaction, certainly has the potential to become a medium for learning and honing speaking skills, especially in English. Thus, based on the illustration, researchers will investigate students' perception of the use of Omegle to enhance their English speaking skills. This study focuses on students' perceptions because the Omegle users are dominated by students, especially at the tertiary level. By conducting this research, Omegle may be further developed to become a learning tool that can enhance English skills.

## METHOD

This study aims to determine the perception of students toward the use of Omegle to enhance their English speaking skills. The data is taken from students who used Omegle. The subject was 30 students from English Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Airlangga. The research design in this study was descriptive and qualitative—the approach used by researchers to seek and examine the meaning of activity and perception. The approach is used to find the meaning of particular behavior during activities engagement (Creswell, 2013). Based on the consideration of the object and the purpose, a descriptive qualitative approach is the most accurate method used in this study.

Furthermore, the data collection techniques were obtained through library research from related sources and questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents. The questionnaire consists of seven statements related to their interaction and speaking skills with Omegle. The respondents are also expected to give reasons for their choices in each statement.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The conducted study showed students' responses toward the use of Omegle to enhance their English speaking skills. The results are attached on the table below:

**Table 1. student's responses toward the use of Omegle to enhance English speaking skill**

	Statement	Result	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Omegle helps improve the speaking skills in English	90%	10%
2	Omegle is a convenient medium for interacting using English	60%	40%
3	Interact in English with Omegle is difficult	10%	90%
4	Omegle often connects you with users from abroad who also speak English	80%	20%
5	Omegle keeps you motivated to enhance your English speaking skills	86,7%	13,3%
6	Omegle helps you to master your English speaking skills	66,7%	33,3%
7	It is necessary to use Omegle in enhance english skills	70%	30%

90% of the respondents agreed that Omegle helps improve their speaking skills in



English, while 10% disagreed that Omegle can improve their speaking skills in English. 60% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Omegle is a convenient medium for interacting using English, while the other 40% disagreed that Omegle is convenient for interacting using English. 80% of the respondents disagreed that interacting in English with Omegle is difficult, while 20% of them agreed with the statement that interacting in English with Omegle is difficult. 86,7% of the respondents agreed that Omegle keeps them motivated to improve their English speaking skills. The other 13,3% of them disagreed that Omegle keeps them motivated to improve their English speaking skills. 66,7% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Omegle helps them to master their English speaking skills, while 33,3% of them disagreed that Omegle helps master their English speaking skills. 70% of the respondents agreed that Omegle needs to be used to improve English skills, while the other 30% disagreed with the statement that Omegle needs to be used to improve English skills.

The questionnaire results above emphasizes that Omegle is an effective platform that allows its users to connect with other people all around the world from different backgrounds. In meeting with strangers, they are required to interact in English. Some respondents agreed that Omegle brings improvement in their speaking skills. The majority of the respondents mentioned that through Omegle, they tend to be more active in using English since they can interact with a person. Omegle helps create opportunities for users to have a conversation by implementing their speaking skills, which allows users to practice by performing and doing. According to Edgar Dale's Pyramid of Learning, practice by doing is categorized as a 75% effective learning method (Masters, 2013). The respondents also said that their intensity in using Omegle is also quite frequent, which helps them communicate in English more often. It emphasizes that Omegle users' intensity in using the platform presents a high involvement in their English speaking skills improvement. Bevandhy and Atnan (2018) also supported the argument. In his research, most voted answers agreed on the intensity of using the platform, and regularity of communication is the most dominant aspect. However, some of the respondents still disagree that Omegle could bring improvement in their speaking skills. Some respondents claimed they are not actively engaged in using Omegle, which creates a different perception of Omegle's advantages in improving English speaking skills.

Interacting with people online will run smoothly if the platform also supports convenience and there are no technical problems. The majority of this study's respondents perceive that Omegle is a convenient medium for interacting using English. Several respondents mentioned that uncomplicated use of the platform made them feel comfortable using it, resulting in uninterrupted conversation. Another point that the respondents mentioned is the interactive interlocutors. Some respondents also said that their motives in meeting foreign and new people create excitement and convenience for them in using the platform. On the other hand, twelve respondents seemed disturbed with the technical problem while using Omegle, such as not working and connection server issues. In addition, there are not only interactive interlocutors but also unpleasant and non-interactive interlocutors. Omegle is aware of predators consuming the platform through its disclaimer about understanding uncontrollable human habits and behavior (Citron & Wittes, 2017).

In terms of interacting in English, the majority said it is not difficult. Generally, this happens because the user already has good English skills when using Omegle. When both users have good English skills, certainly the interaction will be more engaging and enjoyable. However, some respondents say there is still difficulty interacting with Omegle. The root cause



of this problem is due to anxiety during speaking. The anxiety occurs because most Omegle users are non-native speakers that use English as a second language, and they are also paired with strangers. According to Young (1991), the phenomenon of anxiety in speaking English as a second language is common among students because of several factors. Furthermore, the interactions are carried out with strangers who have not been known before, since Omegle is all about. Interaction with strangers can increase our anxiety and uncertainty levels (MacIntyre et al., 2005).

Omegle users can interact with people from various countries since it is a global platform. Most of the respondents explained that when they use Omegle, they are often met by users from different countries. Users from different countries connected by Omegle most of them can also speak English. The interaction or communication also applies the same, majority carried out in English since English is the lingua franca and has the most significant number of speakers. If the users use their native language, which is different, the communication will not become effective. Using language that both users understand and agree on is essential during interaction or communication, especially in using Omegle. However, there is still the possibility of meeting in the same country. It depends on the random system performed by Omegle.

Then, the survey also performed information about the students' motivation when using this platform as a learning medium. From the table above, it is seen that a majority of students perceive that the use of Omegle has increased their motivation to scale up their ability in English speaking skills. Research done by Young (1990) revealed that language learners expressed more anxiety over speaking than any other English language skill. Additionally, he mentioned that students tend to have higher anxiety during speaking activities. However, since Omegle is a learning medium, they feel motivated to improve their speaking because Omegle provides an enjoyable environment instead of other learning facilities. Next, this platform may also help the user interact with many individuals from diverse regions. Through that experience, students will have the opportunity to meet new friends from various backgrounds. Furthermore, students will also be brave in telling their ideas to those new folks without experiencing any fear of getting corrected. In Omegle, all users will only focus on how they communicate and understand each other, and nobody will be strict with specific rules in using grammar when undergoing interaction. Therefore, it is agreed that Omegle has a benefit in raising students' motivation to improve their English speaking skills.

Next, see the benefits taken from Omegle. Many students believe that this platform can assist them in mastering their English speaking skills. The respondents stated that based on their experience of using Omegle, they had boosted significant progress in their Speaking skills. The study found that many respondents struggled with English speaking for the first time (Young, 1990). However, during the long-term period of using Omegle, they are trained to speak English fluently with many people. They acquire an immense improvement in their lexical resources, grammatical knowledge, and confidence when they speak their second language. They would learn English by practicing in Omegle, and this habit yields them to advance their skills, especially in Speaking. Lastly, during the survey, most students also implied that this platform, Omegle, is suggested to be used as a learning medium. Using this platform, students' ability, especially in English speaking skills, will be improved significantly due to various benefits from Omegle. Many of them recommend this platform since Omegle provides many advantages to students that make them enjoy and enhance their English speaking skill.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION)



Based on the provided findings and discussion, it may be implied that speaking is essential since it helps students to communicate with each other. Nonetheless, the ability of students to speak in English is still limited. Many students tend to get anxious and nervous, especially when they speak in front of other individuals. Students usually consider their foreign language speaking skills to be lacking, so they feel not confident in their speaking skills. Therefore, it is essential to create an enjoyable environment where students can express and improve their ability to speak English comfortably. The right atmosphere for students may be able to help them enjoy the process of developing their speaking skills. One of the media that is useful to assist them with this issue is Omegle.

Considering the benefits taken from Omegle, this study found that this platform can establish a positive perception in the students. A majority of students are interested in its use for improving their English speaking skills. They show significant social interaction, engagement, feedback, and increased learning after using Omegle as their learning media. The improvement in speaking in English in front of other people indicates that students are successfully managing the tension they had while trying to speak up in a different language through the enjoyment of Omegle's users in interacting with the English language. Not only that, Omegle helps improve students' ability to learn by actually making the conversation in a foreign language, in this case, English.

Looking at these matters, Omegle is recommended to be used by students to develop their English speaking skills. The statement has been proven through results and discussion to conclude that the digital media, Omegle, positively impacts students' ability to speak English. Then, researchers also suggest that future work may be able to include the development of a prototype for interactive learning media that provide helpful feedback for students in improving their English skills. Hopefully, students are more competent in scaling up their abilities so that it may be easier to communicate and understand any information which is spoken in English.

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