

## Effect of Zoom on English Speaking for EFL Students

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of using Zoom as a learning platform on the English-speaking proficiency of undergraduate students. A quasi-experimental research design was employed, comparing an experimental group that attended English-speaking classes via Zoom with a control group that participated in traditional face-to-face instruction. The participants were 60 undergraduate students from Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia, selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure similar baseline English proficiency levels. The primary instrument for assessing speaking proficiency was a standardized oral examination administered as both a pre-test and post-test. Data collection included these tests and supplementary surveys and semi-structured interviews to capture students' experiences and perceptions. Quantitative data were analyzed using paired sample t-tests, independent sample t-tests, and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to evaluate improvements within and between groups. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The results revealed significant improvements in speaking proficiency for both groups, with the Zoom-based group showing a significantly higher improvement than the control group. These findings suggest that Zoom's interactive features and flexibility can effectively enhance English-speaking skills. The study implies that digital platforms like Zoom can be integrated into English language teaching to create more engaging and supportive learning environments, promoting speaking proficiency. Future research could explore the impact of such platforms on other language skills and across diverse educational contexts.

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

English-speaking proficiency;  
learning platform;  
Zoom

#### Article History:

Received: 10 May 2024

Revised: 29 May 2024

Accepted: 9 June 2024

Published: 14 June 2024

#### How to Cite in APA Style:

Andewi, W., & Trinovita, D. (2024). Effect of Zoom on English Speaking for EFL Students. *LinguaEducare: Journal of English and Linguistic Studies*, 1(1), 17-28.

<https://doi.org/10.63324/lec.1.1.3>

## Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has transformed educational practices worldwide, particularly in the realm of language learning. English, being the global lingua franca, is a crucial skill for academic and professional success (Widiati et al., 2018). Effective communication in English is essential for students in non-native English-speaking countries like Indonesia, as it opens doors to international opportunities and resources. However, traditional classroom methods often limit the

scope for enhancing speaking proficiency due to time constraints, lack of individualized feedback, and varying levels of student engagement (Hastomo & Septiyana, 2022). As a result, educators and institutions are increasingly integrating digital tools and platforms to supplement language learning and foster speaking skills. One such digital tool that has gained prominence in recent years is Zoom, a video conferencing platform that became widely popular during the COVID-19 pandemic (Mansur & Asmawati, 2021). Zoom has been adopted across educational institutions globally to ensure continuity of learning amidst physical distancing measures.

While Zoom is primarily designed for virtual meetings and webinars, its interactive features—such as breakout rooms, screen sharing, chat functions, and recording options—have made it a valuable tool for language teaching, especially for developing speaking skills. These features facilitate real-time interaction, peer collaboration, and instant feedback, which are essential components for mastering speaking in any language (Sugianto et al., 2022). The platform's flexibility allows educators to create a dynamic and immersive learning environment that can be tailored to suit various pedagogical approaches and learner needs. Despite the growing use of Zoom in language education, there is a paucity of empirical research on its specific impact on English-speaking proficiency. Most existing studies have focused on the general advantages of online learning platforms, such as increased accessibility and flexibility, without delving into the effectiveness of these tools for developing particular language skills (Hastomo & Zulianti, 2022; Khusniyah & Khusniyah, 2020; Nuryanto, 2021; Sutiyo & Hastomo, 2022). As a result, educators and policymakers lack evidence-based insights into the pedagogical benefits and limitations of using Zoom for English-speaking instruction.

The transition from traditional classroom settings to online learning environments, driven by the need for remote education during the pandemic, has brought to light several challenges and opportunities in language education (Hastomo et al., 2024). In the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), the development of speaking proficiency poses unique challenges. Speaking is considered one of the most difficult skills to master due to the need for real-time processing, spontaneous speech production, and the integration of linguistic, cognitive, and social competencies (Mu'awanah et al., 2021). Traditional EFL classrooms often face constraints such as large class sizes, limited class hours, and a lack of authentic speaking opportunities, which hinder the development of speaking skills. Zoom, as an online learning platform, presents a potential solution to these challenges by offering an interactive and engaging medium for language instruction. However, the effectiveness of Zoom specifically for enhancing English-speaking skills remains underexplored. While anecdotal evidence suggests that Zoom's features—such as breakout rooms for group discussions, instant feedback via chat, and the ability to record and review speaking performances (Hastomo, Kholid, et al., 2024)—could facilitate speaking practice and proficiency, there is a need for empirical studies to substantiate these claims. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of Zoom on the English-speaking proficiency of students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia, using a quasi-experimental research design.

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it contributes to the growing body of literature on the use of digital tools in language learning by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Zoom for developing English-speaking skills. Second, the findings of this study have practical implications for educators, language instructors, and curriculum designers who are looking to integrate online platforms into their teaching practices. Understanding the impact of Zoom on speaking proficiency can inform instructional strategies, helping educators create more effective and engaging learning experiences for their students. Third, this research can guide policymakers in making informed decisions about incorporating technology in language education, especially in the post-pandemic era, where blended learning models are becoming increasingly prevalent. For educational institutions like Institut Bakti Nusantara, where English proficiency is a key component of the curriculum, the results of this study could provide insights into optimizing the use of digital tools for language teaching. Moreover, the study addresses the broader issue of digital equity in education. By exploring how Zoom can be leveraged to enhance English-speaking skills, the research sheds light on how technology can bridge learning gaps and provide equitable access to quality education, particularly for students in remote or under-resourced areas.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of using Zoom as a learning platform on the English-speaking proficiency of students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung. To achieve this, the study seeks to answer several research questions: Does the use of Zoom significantly improve the English-speaking proficiency of students compared to traditional face-to-face instruction? What are the differences in speaking proficiency gains between students who use Zoom for English-speaking classes and those who do not? How do students perceive the effectiveness of Zoom in enhancing their English-speaking skills? By addressing these questions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical benefits and challenges of using Zoom for English-speaking instruction in a non-native English-speaking context.

Based on the research objectives and existing literature, the following hypotheses are proposed for this quasi-experimental study: Hypothesis 1 (H1): Students who participate in English-speaking classes via Zoom will show a significant improvement in their speaking proficiency compared to students who do not use Zoom. Hypothesis 2 (H2): The improvement in English-speaking proficiency will be greater in the experimental group (using Zoom) than in the control group (traditional face-to-face learning). These hypotheses will be tested using statistical methods to determine the effectiveness of Zoom as a learning tool for developing English-speaking skills.

This study focuses on undergraduate students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia, and examines the impact of Zoom on their English-speaking proficiency. While the quasi-experimental design provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of Zoom, there are some limitations to consider. The study is limited to a specific context and may not be generalizable to all EFL learners or educational settings. Additionally, factors such as students' prior experience with online learning, technological proficiency, and access to stable internet connections may influence the results. Future research could explore these variables in more detail to provide a more

nuanced understanding of the impact of digital tools on language learning. In summary, this study seeks to explore the potential of Zoom as a digital tool for enhancing English-speaking proficiency among EFL learners. By addressing a critical gap in the literature and providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Zoom for language instruction, this research aims to inform teaching practices, curriculum development, and policy decisions in the field of language education.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a quasi-experimental research design to evaluate the impact of using Zoom as a learning platform on the English-speaking proficiency of undergraduate students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia. The quasi-experimental design allows for comparison between an experimental group and a control group to assess the effectiveness of the intervention—in this case, the use of Zoom for English language speaking classes (Creswell, 2012). This method is particularly useful in educational research where random assignment of participants to groups is not always feasible. By adopting this approach, the study aims to provide robust evidence on the effectiveness of digital learning tools in enhancing speaking skills among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung. A total of 60 students were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which ensures that participants are representative of the population under study and meet specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The students were divided into two groups: an experimental group of 30 students who attended English-speaking classes via Zoom, and a control group of 30 students who continued with traditional face-to-face classroom instruction. The selection criteria for participation included being enrolled in the English language program and having a similar baseline level of English proficiency, as determined by their scores on a standardized English placement test conducted at the beginning of the semester.

The demographic profile of the participants included a mix of male and female students aged between 18 and 22 years. All participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the study and provided their informed consent to participate. The study ensured anonymity and confidentiality by assigning each participant a unique code, and all data were handled in accordance with ethical guidelines to protect the participants' privacy and rights.

### **Research Procedure**

The research was conducted over a period of eight weeks, during which both the experimental and control groups received instruction aimed at improving their English-

speaking proficiency. The study was divided into three phases: pre-intervention (pre-test), intervention, and post-intervention (post-test).

During the pre-intervention phase, a pre-test was administered to both groups to assess their initial English-speaking proficiency. The pre-test consisted of a standardized oral examination that evaluated various aspects of speaking, such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. The scores from the pre-test were used as a baseline to compare the progress of both groups after the intervention.

The intervention phase involved the actual implementation of the different teaching methods for each group. The experimental group attended English-speaking classes via Zoom. The classes were designed to make full use of Zoom's features, such as breakout rooms for small group discussions, screen sharing for visual aids, chat functions for quick feedback, and recording options for later review and self-assessment. The classes were conducted twice a week, with each session lasting 90 minutes. The instructors used a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which emphasizes interaction and communication as both the means and the goal of language learning. Activities such as role-plays, debates, group discussions, and presentations were incorporated to encourage active speaking practice and engagement.

In contrast, the control group attended traditional face-to-face classes conducted in a classroom setting. These classes were also held twice a week for 90 minutes each and followed the same syllabus as the experimental group, using the CLT approach. However, the control group did not have access to the additional interactive features provided by Zoom. Instead, they engaged in similar speaking activities within the confines of a physical classroom. The instructional materials, activities, and teacher-student interaction were kept consistent between both groups to ensure that the only variable being tested was the medium of instruction (Zoom vs. face-to-face).

At the end of the eight-week intervention period, both groups participated in a post-test, which was identical in format to the pre-test. The post-test scores were used to evaluate any changes in English-speaking proficiency and to determine the effectiveness of the Zoom-based intervention.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Zoom on English-speaking proficiency. The primary quantitative data were obtained from the pre-test and post-test scores, which provided measurable indicators of students' speaking proficiency before and after the intervention. The standardized speaking tests were evaluated by two independent raters to ensure reliability and consistency in scoring. The inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's Kappa coefficient, and any discrepancies in scoring were resolved through discussion and consensus.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected through student feedback surveys and semi-structured interviews conducted with a subset of participants from both groups. The surveys and interviews aimed to gather insights into the students' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward the different learning methods. Questions

focused on the perceived benefits and challenges of using Zoom for language learning, student engagement, and the overall effectiveness of the platform in enhancing speaking skills. The qualitative data provided valuable context and depth to the quantitative findings and helped identify any potential factors influencing the results.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

The data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize the pre-test and post-test scores of both groups. Inferential statistics were then employed to test the study's hypotheses and determine whether there were significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

A paired sample t-test was used to analyze the pre-test and post-test scores within each group, allowing for the assessment of any significant improvement in speaking proficiency over the eight-week period. An independent sample t-test was also conducted to compare the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups, adjusting for any initial differences in pre-test scores. The significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$  to determine statistical significance.

Additionally, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to control for potential confounding variables, such as students' baseline proficiency levels and prior experience with online learning platforms. ANCOVA helped isolate the effect of the intervention (Zoom-based learning) on the dependent variable (English-speaking proficiency). The qualitative data collected from the surveys and interviews were analyzed thematically to identify common themes, patterns, and insights. Thematic analysis involved coding the qualitative responses, categorizing them into meaningful themes, and interpreting the findings in the context of the study's research questions and objectives.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to ethical standards in educational research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions. The anonymity of participants was maintained, and all data collected were kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. The research proposal was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Institut Bakti Nusantara, ensuring that the study met ethical guidelines and standards.

In conclusion, the research method employed in this study provides a robust framework for examining the impact of Zoom on English-speaking proficiency among EFL learners. By combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of how digital tools can be leveraged to enhance language learning outcomes.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**



This section presents the results of the study, focusing on the impact of using Zoom as a learning platform on English-speaking proficiency among students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia. The findings are based on quantitative data collected from pre-test and post-test scores of both the experimental and control groups and qualitative data gathered through surveys and interviews. The results are discussed in relation to the research questions, hypotheses, and relevant literature.

The quantitative data analysis was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of Zoom in enhancing English-speaking proficiency. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, were calculated for both the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. The experimental group, which attended English-speaking classes via Zoom, showed a significant increase in their mean speaking proficiency scores from the pre-test ( $M = 60.5$ ,  $SD = 8.4$ ) to the post-test ( $M = 75.2$ ,  $SD = 7.9$ ). Similarly, the control group, which participated in traditional face-to-face classes, also showed an improvement in their speaking proficiency scores, with a mean increase from the pre-test ( $M = 59.8$ ,  $SD = 7.6$ ) to the post-test ( $M = 68.1$ ,  $SD = 8.1$ ). However, the improvement observed in the experimental group was greater than that in the control group.

To further assess the significance of these improvements, a paired sample t-test was conducted within each group. The results indicated a statistically significant increase in speaking proficiency for both the experimental group ( $t(29) = 8.92$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and the control group ( $t(29) = 6.47$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings suggest that both instructional methods—Zoom-based and traditional face-to-face—were effective in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. However, to determine whether the observed differences between the two groups were statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was performed on the post-test scores. The results showed a significant difference in the post-test scores between the experimental and control groups ( $t(58) = 3.84$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the students in the Zoom-based group outperformed their peers in the traditional classroom setting.

Further analysis using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to control for any initial differences in pre-test scores between the groups and to isolate the effect of the intervention on the post-test scores. The ANCOVA results confirmed that the use of Zoom as a learning platform had a statistically significant effect on students' English-speaking proficiency ( $F(1, 57) = 12.37$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), even after adjusting for the baseline proficiency levels. These findings support Hypothesis 1 (H1), which posited that students who participated in English-speaking classes via Zoom would show a significant improvement in their speaking proficiency compared to those who did not use Zoom.

The qualitative data collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews provided additional insights into the students' experiences and perceptions of using Zoom for English-speaking classes. The thematic analysis revealed several key themes, including increased engagement, interactive learning, immediate feedback, and flexibility. Many students in the experimental group reported that Zoom's features, such as breakout rooms, facilitated small group discussions and peer interactions, which were conducive to practicing speaking skills. They highlighted that these interactive elements

helped reduce anxiety, increase participation, and create a more supportive learning environment. One student mentioned, "In the Zoom classes, I felt more comfortable speaking up because we could practice in small groups. The breakout rooms were very helpful for building confidence."

Another theme that emerged from the qualitative data was the value of immediate feedback provided through Zoom's chat function and the ability to review recorded sessions. Several students appreciated the instant feedback from their instructors and peers, which allowed them to correct mistakes and improve their speaking skills in real-time. Moreover, the option to record and revisit sessions enabled students to self-assess their performance and track their progress over time. This feature was highlighted as particularly beneficial for pronunciation practice and self-reflection. As one participant noted, "Having the recordings helped me see where I was going wrong and how I could improve my pronunciation and fluency."

On the other hand, some challenges were also identified, such as technical issues (e.g., unstable internet connections) and the need for better time management during online sessions. A few students expressed concerns about the lack of non-verbal cues in virtual classes, which sometimes made it difficult to interpret their peers' and instructors' responses. Despite these challenges, the overall perception of using Zoom for English-speaking classes was positive, with many students emphasizing the platform's flexibility and convenience as major advantages.

## Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with the existing literature on the benefits of digital tools for language learning. Previous studies have highlighted the advantages of using online platforms like Zoom for enhancing language skills, particularly speaking, due to their interactive features, flexibility, and potential for creating a learner-centered environment (Nurieva & Garaeva, 2020). The results of this study provide empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of Zoom in facilitating English-speaking proficiency among EFL learners. The significant improvement in speaking skills observed in the experimental group can be attributed to several factors associated with the use of Zoom.

First, Zoom's interactive features, such as breakout rooms, promote collaborative learning and provide more opportunities for meaningful communication practice. Research has shown that small group discussions and peer interactions are crucial for developing speaking proficiency, as they allow learners to practice speaking in authentic and varied contexts (Sugianto et al., 2022). The findings of this study align with these insights, suggesting that Zoom's capacity to facilitate small group interactions and provide instant feedback played a critical role in enhancing students' speaking skills.

Second, the use of digital tools like Zoom can reduce anxiety and increase learner engagement. Anxiety is a common barrier to speaking in a foreign language, and reducing anxiety can significantly enhance students' willingness to communicate (Hastomo, 2021). The qualitative data from this study indicate that the Zoom-based classes created a more relaxed and supportive environment, which encouraged students



to participate actively and take risks in their speaking practice. This finding supports the notion that online learning platforms can help mitigate the affective barriers to language learning by providing a safer and more comfortable space for learners to practice speaking.

Third, the immediate feedback provided through Zoom's chat function and the ability to review recorded sessions contribute to more effective learning. Studies have shown that timely and specific feedback is essential for language development, as it allows learners to identify errors, refine their language use, and develop greater accuracy and fluency (Chamran et al., 2021). The opportunity to revisit recorded sessions for self-assessment also aligns with principles of reflective learning, which emphasize the importance of self-monitoring and self-regulation in language acquisition (Zimmerman, 2002). The positive feedback from students regarding these features suggests that Zoom's functionalities can be leveraged to enhance the effectiveness of speaking instruction.

Despite the positive findings, this study also highlights several challenges associated with using Zoom for language learning. Technical issues, such as unstable internet connections, can disrupt the learning process and affect student engagement. Furthermore, the lack of non-verbal cues in virtual settings may hinder effective communication and comprehension, particularly in language classes where facial expressions and body language play a vital role. Addressing these challenges requires careful planning and the adoption of strategies to minimize technical disruptions and ensure effective communication in online environments.

In conclusion, the results of this study provide strong evidence for the effectiveness of Zoom as a digital tool for enhancing English-speaking proficiency among EFL learners. The findings suggest that Zoom's interactive features, immediate feedback mechanisms, and flexibility offer significant advantages for language learning, particularly in developing speaking skills. These results have important implications for educators, language instructors, and policymakers seeking to integrate digital tools into language education. By leveraging the potential of platforms like Zoom, educational institutions can create more dynamic, engaging, and effective learning experiences that promote speaking proficiency and overall language development.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the impact of using Zoom as a learning platform on the English-speaking proficiency of undergraduate students at Institut Bakti Nusantara in Lampung, Indonesia, through a quasi-experimental design comparing Zoom-based and traditional face-to-face instruction. The findings indicated that while both instructional methods improved speaking proficiency, the Zoom-based group showed significantly greater improvement. Statistical analyses, including paired sample t-tests, independent sample t-tests, and ANCOVA, confirmed that the use of Zoom significantly enhanced students' speaking proficiency, even after adjusting for baseline differences. Qualitative feedback from students highlighted Zoom's benefits, such as interactive features,

immediate feedback, and reduced anxiety, although challenges like technical issues and the absence of non-verbal cues were also noted.

These findings suggest that digital platforms like Zoom can be effectively integrated into English language teaching to enhance speaking skills, providing flexibility and fostering a more supportive learning environment. However, the study's limitations, including its focus on a single institution and specific skill (speaking), suggest the need for further research. Future studies could explore a more diverse sample, the long-term effects of Zoom-based learning, and its impact on other language skills to better understand its potential in language education. Overall, this study provides evidence supporting the use of Zoom to enhance English-speaking proficiency and highlights its potential for broader application in blended learning models.

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