

USING VOICE CHAT IN VALORANT GAME FOR SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT: VALORANT PLAYERS' PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract: This study explores how Valorant players use voice chat to develop speaking skills. Effective communication is crucial in team-based games like Valorant. The research used questionnaires and interviews with 39 players to understand voice chat's impact on speaking skills. Results showed that most players felt voice chat improved their English vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. Specifically, 77% learned new vocabulary, and 75% noticed vocabulary improvement through voice chat. Additionally, 87% felt their speaking skills improved, and 82% saw better fluency when communicating with foreigners in the game. These findings indicate that voice chat not only aids team coordination but also helps players practice and improve speaking skills in real situations. Overall, the study confirms voice chat in Valorant is an effective tool for developing speaking skills, suggesting that communication technology in video games can aid language learning. This research paves the way for further studies on integrating game elements into language teaching.

Keyword: Voice Chat, Speaking Skills, and Video Game

INTRODUCTION

The digital age has transformed how we connect, especially through online gaming, which offers interactive experiences both solo and with others. Games like Valorant, a popular first-person shooter by Riot Games, emphasize teamwork, strategy, and communication. Effective communication is essential in modern gaming for coordinating actions and strategies, especially in team-based games like Valorant (Reinders & Wattana, 2014).

Communication skills are crucial in various aspects of life (Himmah et al., 2020), and Valorant requires players to communicate via voice chat and text, enhancing their communicative competence, particularly when interacting with players from different countries. This makes the game a valuable tool for developing speaking skills. Motivation to learn English, influenced by personal goals and societal demands, can be boosted by engaging and interactive platforms like video games (Reinders & Wattana, 2014). Video games can make language learning more interesting compared to traditional methods (Umamah & Saukah, 2022).

In Malang, Indonesia, English proficiency is important, but conventional learning methods may not suit everyone. Valorant, with its diverse player base, offers a unique environment for cross-cultural communication and language learning (Anggraini & Sugiyanto, 2021). Players use voice chat for team coordination and strategy, honing their foreign language skills through game-related communication.

However, challenges such as toxicity, harassment, and language barriers exist in voice chat. Understanding how players overcome these challenges while using voice chat for skill development is crucial. Previous research (Susanti, 2022) shows that players use various

communication strategies in Valorant, often creating new terms or neologisms specific to the game.

This research focuses on analyzing how Valorant players perceive the use of voice chat in developing their English speaking skills. According to psycholinguistic and language learning theories, verbal interaction via voice chat can significantly benefit speaking skills. Cognitive and social interaction theories (Ibda, 2015; Sari, 2018) suggest that social relationships are crucial for cognitive development. Voice chat in games offers real speaking experiences, supporting learning and providing valuable verbal input (Riswal, 2021). Thus, voice chat is not only a communication tool but also a powerful instrument for developing speaking skills in language learning.

The purpose of this study is to explore how Valorant players perceive the use of in-game voice chat for developing their speaking skills. By examining players' experiences and feedback, this research aims to understand the effectiveness of voice chat as a tool for language learning within the gaming environment. Additionally, this study seeks to identify which aspects of speaking skills—such as vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, or overall communicative competence—show the most significant improvement as a result of using voice chat in Valorant. By analyzing these elements, the study intends to provide insights into the potential educational benefits of integrating voice chat features in video games for language skill development.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design to examine Valorant players' perceptions of using voice chat to improve speaking skills. This method explores how individuals give meaning to their experiences. Data collection is done naturally, with the researcher as the main instrument, using various techniques and emphasizing understanding over generalization. This method suits analyzing players' views on voice chat for English skill improvement, using questionnaires and interviews.

The study involves 39 Valorant players from the UMM Esports community. Data collection is done online through questionnaires and interviews. The researcher will interview the 5 players with the highest questionnaire scores. Data is gathered using questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire contains 16 close-ended questions on a 5-point Likert Scale, translated into Indonesian for clarity. It aims to understand players' perceptions of voice chat's impact on their speaking skills. Interviews, with 10 questions adapted from Susanti (2022), provide deeper insights into players' experiences.

Data is collected through online questionnaires and follow-up interviews. The questionnaire assesses players' perceptions of voice chat in Valorant, while the interviews provide qualitative insights. Both tools are translated into Indonesian to ensure comprehension. Data analysis follows Sugiyono's (2020) model, involving data display and conclusion drawing. Descriptive text presents the data, focusing on voice chat's role in improving English speaking skills in Valorant. Conclusions are drawn and verified through interpretation and matching with questionnaire findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

This chapter presents the results of the study and explains the findings based on theories from previous studies to draw conclusions. The research used questionnaires and

interviews to analyze 39 Valorant players' perceptions of using voice chat to improve English speaking skills. Data was collected online. The questionnaire examined Valorant players' perceptions of voice chat for developing English speaking skills through four sections: duration of playing Valorant, habits while playing, motivation to speak English during gameplay, and the level of English speaking development.

The Data of Questionnaire

The first aspect explored was the length of time players have been playing Valorant. Respondents answered this open question based on their personal experience. The results are classified and described in Table 1:

Table 1. Leght of Time Playing Valorant

Options	Frequency
1 - 12 months	11
13 - 24 months	20
25 – 36 months	7
more than 36 months	1

In Table 1, respondents were asked about the length of time they have been playing Valorant. The data analysis showed that 11 respondents (28%) have been playing for 1-12 months. The largest group, with 20 respondents (51%), has been playing for 13-24 months. Seven respondents (18%) have been playing for 25-36 months, and only one respondent (3%) has been playing for more than 36 months. The researcher concluded that most respondents have substantial experience with Valorant, as 51% have been playing for over a year, allowing them to be familiar with the game's features and updates.

Playing Habits

This section explores players' habits while playing Valorant through three statements.

Table 2. Habits to Play Valorant

Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
I play Valorant Game every week	38	15	28	11	21	8	13	5
I often use voice chat to communicate with foreigners while playing Valorant Game	51	20	33	13	8	3	8	3
I always use voice chat to communicate with my team in Valorant Game to practice my English	72	28	15	6	3	1	10	4
SA: Strongly agree A: Agree D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree								

The findings reveal that 66% of participants play Valorant weekly, indicating regular engagement with the game. Regarding voice chat usage, 51% of players strongly agree and 33% agree that they use voice chat to communicate with strangers, though 16% disagree, suggesting some players find it challenging to communicate with new people. Despite this, 87% of players use voice chat consistently with their team to practice English. This shows that while most players are dedicated and actively use voice chat to enhance their English skills, there is a need for continued practice to improve communication with strangers.

Overall, players value voice chat for language development and team coordination in Valorant.

Motivation to Speak English through Valorant Game

This section includes 7 statements that explore players' motivation to speak English during gameplay and how voice chat boosts their confidence and speaking ability. The detailed results are shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Motivation to Speak English through Valorant Game

Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
I am excited while communicating using English with other players at Valorant Game	49	19	44	17	5	2	3	1
I really enjoy speaking English using voice chat while playing Valorant Game	49	19	41	16	8	3	3	1
Using Valorant game makes me optimistic that I can speak English better	46	18	33	13	13	5	8	3
Oral communication by using Valorant game can increase my confidence in speaking English	56	22	28	11	10	4	5	2
Using Voice chat in Valorant game motivates me to speak English better	59	23	28	11	10	4	3	1
I feel more comfortable speaking in English while playing Valorant Game	51	20	28	11	15	6	5	2
I am motivated to speak English after using voice chat in Valorant Game	49	19	33	13	15	6	3	1
SA: Strongly agree A: Agree D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree								

Respondents' motivation to speak English through Valorant is measured by their increased ability and confidence. Table 4.3 shows that 19 respondents feel more motivated and enjoy speaking English during gameplay. Additionally, 46% of respondents are more optimistic about speaking English because of practice with voice chat, and 56% feel their confidence has increased. Most respondents (59%) agree that voice chat improves their English speaking skills. Furthermore, 51% feel more comfortable speaking English, and 49% feel more motivated to use English in other situations after using voice chat in Valorant. Overall, using voice chat in the game boosts motivation and confidence in speaking English.

Speaking Skill Development

This section of the questionnaire examines how players' speaking skills develop after using voice chat for practicing English. It includes 7 statements, with details and results presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Speaking Skill Development

Statement	SA		A		D		SD	
	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F
I have learned many new vocabularies while playing Valorant Game	54	21	23	9	18	7	5	2
Using voice chat in Valorant Game can improve my vocabulary	44	17	31	12	21	8	5	2
Using voice chat in Valorant Game can	49	19	38	15	8	3	5	2

improve my speaking skill								
Using voice chat in Valorant Game can improve my English fluency while communicating with foreigners	49	19	33	13	13	5	5	2
I feel my English pronunciation has improved after using voice chat in Valorant Game	38	15	36	14	23	9	3	1
I feel that Valorant Game has improved my English speaking skill	49	19	38	15	10	4	3	1
SA: Strongly agree A: Agree D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree								

According to the data, most Valorant players felt that using voice chat significantly improved their English speaking skills. Specifically, 77% of players learned new vocabulary, 75% found that voice chat helped improve their vocabulary, and 87% felt their speaking skills improved with voice chat. Additionally, 82% reported better English fluency when communicating with others, and 74% noticed improved pronunciation. Overall, 87% of players believed their English language skills had improved through voice chat. These findings indicate that voice chat in Valorant effectively enhances vocabulary, speaking ability, fluency, and pronunciation, highlighting its value as a tool for improving English skills while gaming.

The Data of Interview

The second research instrument was interviews, used to confirm questionnaire data. Five top-scoring respondents were interviewed with 10 open-ended questions. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 The summarized result of the interview from 5 interviewees.

No	Question	Summarized Answer
1	Please tell me some background information about your experience with Valorant? e.g., how long you have been playing, preferred communication, etc.	The length of time playing Valorant varies, some less than 1 year and some more than 2 years. The preferred communication is to use the voice chat feature because it is flexible, effective, quickly conveyed, can make it easier and more practical.
2	Do you have any experience talking with English speakers by using Voice chat in Valorant?	In playing a game of Valorant, it is likely that one team or another will meet outsiders who will need to communicate using their language.
3	Do you feel that using voice chat in Valorant has improved the development of your fluency in speaking English? Why or why not?	In playing the Valorant game when communicating to improve fluency in English, the reason is that they often meet with outsiders in playing, chatting habits and feel confident because the ability to communicate is developed.
4	Do you think that using voice chat in Valorant when speaking with other players can help your pronunciation in English to be better? Why or why not?	Valorant helps players improve English pronunciation.
5	How about your vocabulary mastery, do you feel that using voice chat in valorant can increase your vocabulary? Why or why not?	Valorant game helps players improve their vocabulary using voice chat
6	Do you think that your grammar is better after using voice chat in valorant when	Valorant players feel that grammar has become less of a concern after using voice

No	Question	Summarized Answer
	speaking with a foreigner? Why or why not?	chat, as outsiders sometimes do not pay attention to grammar
7	Has voice chat in Valorant impacted your ability to comprehend spoken English? Why or why not?	Valorant has influenced the ability to understand English speech, due to the habit of listening when communicating.
8	Are there any specific moments where you feel voice chat in Valorant has helped you develop your speaking skills in English?	Moments during the game, giving information about attacking the opponent to explain strategy or set strategy.
9	Which aspect of speaking skill improves the most after practicing speaking English using voice chat?	The most improved aspects are vocabulary and pronunciation
10	How would you describe the overall impact of voice chat in Valorant on your English speaking skill?	The most improved aspects are vocabulary and pronunciation

Interviewees shared their Valorant experience, with some playing for 2-3 years and others starting within the last 3-6 months. Most preferred voice chat over other communication methods for its flexibility and quickness, stating it enhances interaction and information delivery. Voice chat in Valorant allows players to communicate with English speakers globally. Most players reported frequent interactions with non-native English speakers, which supports their English practice. Interviewees identified several benefits of using voice chat: 1) Fluency: Players reported improved fluency due to regular English use in the game. 2) Pronunciation: Many felt their pronunciation improved, though one had doubts. 3) Vocabulary: Players noted significant vocabulary growth from in-game interactions. 4) Grammar: Grammar was less emphasized since players focus more on communication. 5) Comprehension: Most felt their ability to understand spoken English improved with practice.

Strategizing during gameplay was highlighted as a key moment for improving speaking skills. Intense communication during these moments helps players practice English in context. Vocabulary and pronunciation were reported as the most improved skills. Four out of five interviewees felt their vocabulary expanded, while one noted better pronunciation. Voice chat in Valorant significantly impacts English speaking skills by facilitating frequent interactions with native speakers and improving communication skills.

Discussion

Valorant players view voice chat as crucial for developing speaking skills, providing a direct and interactive communication platform that enhances tactical coordination, information exchange, and decision-making during the game. Beyond functional use, voice chat helps players improve verbal expression, listening skills, and communication adaptability (Skudder, 2021). Players experience growth in communication clarity, confidence, and verbal conflict management, as voice chat facilitates immediate and important exchanges (Varian et al., 2023).

Voice chat's role extends beyond mere communication, enriching the overall gaming experience and promoting skill development. Valorant is noted for its effective combination of shooting mechanics, unique character skills, and team tactics involving voice chat (Gamboa, 2024). Features like text and voice chat, pings, and emotes support teamwork and game objectives (Antony et al., 2023). Data analysis reveals that voice chat significantly enhances skills like strategy explanation and tactical direction (Gamboa, 2024).

The study highlights that the most improved aspects of speaking skills are vocabulary and pronunciation. Voice chat helps players expand their vocabulary and refine pronunciation through real-time interactions (Umpornpun, 2021). This aligns with (Hanif, 2022), who found that online games can enhance English skills through features like voice chat. Comparing this with previous research, (Abdullah & Yamat, 2022) noted improvements in confidence with WhatsApp Voice Messages, while (Horowitz, 2019) found that multiplayer games boost English communication skills and reduce anxiety.

In summary, Valorant's voice chat feature not only supports in-game communication but also contributes to significant improvements in vocabulary and pronunciation, making it a valuable tool for developing speaking skills.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The study concludes that Valorant players believe voice chat significantly enhances their speaking skills, especially vocabulary and pronunciation. The longer players use voice chat, the more they improve in these areas. This emphasizes the importance of interactive media for language skill development. 1) Students: Use various media to enhance language skills and focus on effective training methods for measurable improvements. 2) Lecturers: Utilize interactive media to improve language learning and help students grasp language concepts better. 3) Future Researchers: Explore additional linguistic aspects, motivations in language learning through games, and other virtual media like chat services for further insights.

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