

# **Students' Perception of the Use of the Application HelloTalk for the ESL Classroom**

by

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Submitted to the

**Department of English and German Studies**

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master's in Teaching and Learning English as a  
Foreign / Second Language**

at the

**UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA I VIRGILI**

June, 2021



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## Abstract

The main areas of interest of the following study are MALL and one of the language exchange applications- *HelloTalk*. The purpose of this study is to verify whether *HelloTalk* can motivate language students to interact and learn in English not only inside, but also outside the classroom. The research had a form of a case study. The participants were Polish and Ecuadorian English students aged between 21 and 30. Their level of English varied between A2 and B2. The data collection instruments were pre- and post-questionnaires, an interview, and a teacher's journal. The educational materials were tailor-made worksheets. The study was divided into two parts. The first one consisted of online English classes with the researcher and the second- using *HelloTalk* by the students to exchange language with native speakers of English. The results of the study showed that 87% of students enjoyed using mobile applications to learn languages, 96% of participants felt less anxious while speaking in English after using *HelloTalk*, and 96% of students found speaking in English easier after the treatment with *HelloTalk*. What is more, 90,5% of students found writing in English less difficult after using *HelloTalk*. According to the interviews and the teacher's journal, there were the following factors that influenced students' answers: frequency of use, level of English, language partners, features of the application, and time spent on using the app. Students' perception of the app was positive in terms of improving both speaking and writing skills. The hypotheses were confirmed.

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# **CHAPTER 1 - Introduction**

## **1.1 Changing technologies and new forms of language learning**

The world nowadays is changing rapidly due to technology, and the application of technology to education is part of that change. Because of the technological revolution in the XX century, the lives of average citizens started to look completely different from those of people in the previous decades. People began using technology in every single aspect of their lives. Inventions such as a radio or television came first. They were supposed to entertain people and provide them with the information from all around the world. The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century brought up many changes in terms of implementing technology in language learning. During this time, the Internet was invented. Within a few decades, it became the most powerful system that definitely impacted people's lives. Soon after the development of the Internet, mobile phones became a reality first in cars and later as hand-held devices.

Originally, phones were used to talk with other people only. However, after some time, they started to become more than necessary. They gave the possibility of sending messages or listening to the music. The 21st century brought a huge change in the perception of mobile phones. It escalated to the point, when people could do almost everything using their mobile phones. There is no danger in saying that the omnipresent Internet allows us do almost everything without even the need of going outside. Ghavifekr (2015) reminds us that technology changed completely the way people perceive life.

Mass media developed in a relatively short time. Applications that came along with them, became part and parcel of people's lives. With the help of social networks, such

as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, users are able to communicate with people from the farthest parts of the world. A person without a mobile phone may be seen as somebody who is out of touch with reality.

The use of computer technology for education transformed teaching and learning in many ways. However, the use of mobile phones for language learning has also added a new dimension and opened many more possibilities to the learning and teaching experience. It has changed teaching methods, increased students' exposure to English and allowed for more interaction and collaboration.. It is commonly accepted that technology offers new ways of learning for students. Some of them remained unknown before the development of mobile phones or the Internet (Sabiq, 2010). Language classes that incorporate technology are much more entertaining and engaging for students.

## **1.2 Mobile applications and HelloTalk in the ESL classroom**

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has become a very popular type of learning nowadays. Because of mobile phones, learning must be ubiquitous. To keep students involved in the learning process, teachers have to search for and use technological tools that can be adapted to the present needs of students. The research from 2015 organized by Pew Research Center showed that till 86% of the younger adults (aged 18-29) owned a smartphone. Nowadays, language teaching has to take into account the characteristics of these *digital natives* (Prensky, 2001) and teachers have to implement changes that integrate *mobile learning* (m-learning) to make language learning more engaging, dynamic, interactive, informal and flexible. One way to implement those changes is to integrate mobile applications into the classroom.

Mobile applications offer many advantages for language learning and practice. They allow students to study autonomously. Steel (2012) conducted a study in which she investigated students' perspectives on benefits of using mobile apps. Students valued language learning mobile apps for their accessibility, multiple functions, or the wide diversity of available apps. What is more, the language used while chatting or talking with other users is much more dynamic and natural than the one used in the classroom (Mosavi & Nezerat, 2012). Classes that incorporate mobile applications may teach learners to work collaboratively, and they may also lower the students' learning anxiety level. Luque-Agulló & Martos-Vallejo (2015) mention that mobile applications are not only useful in terms of revising lexical matters (e.g. by mobile applications which allow to prepare flashcards for free), but also to improve students' grammar as well. Many of those applications are highly interactive and contain huge variety of different exercises such as quizzes, games, cloze tests, etc. In many cases they do provide the immediate feedback as well. According to Godwin-Jones (2017) mobile applications allow students to incorporate language learning into their daily lives. Students' mobile phones are loaded with the applications which provide individually personalized paths of learning (also Kukulska-Hulme (2006). Moreover, he mentions collaborations of students and teachers (Talaván & Ávila-Cabrera (2015), Moreno & Vermeulen (2015)) who worked on customization of mobile applications to improve, e.g. speaking practice or listening comprehension. Kukulska-Hulme (2006) writes that among others, mobile language learning applications support natural, spontaneous communication which assures development of a real life speaking skills.

There are some mobile applications that have been well-known to language teachers and learners for quite some time now. Beginning with *Duolingo*, the application was created in 2011 by Luis von Ahn and Severin Hacker (Loeven, et al.,



2019). It is a platform that can be accessed via any device that has got access to the Internet. This free application provides the possibility of digital game-based learning. Users need to complete units in order to move to the other levels (Cunningham, 2015). 68 units are semantically or grammatically themed. Cunningham (2015) argues, that even though the application is effective with students with less advanced level of particular languages, it does not have a lot to offer to the advanced students of particular languages. In terms of implementing it into language classes, some teachers send it as a part of an online homework (Munday, 2016).

Another mobile language learning application worth mentioning is *Memrise*. It was created in 2010 and it is available in both mobile and web versions. It was developed mainly to improve users' richness of language (Valencia et al., 2020). Flashcard-like structure of the application may be especially engaging for the beginner learners of various languages who are eager to learn new vocabulary in an easy way (Nushi & Eqbali, 2017). Students are given the possibility of keeping track of their progress which makes the whole learning process engaging and entertaining. Nevertheless, according to Nushi & Eqbali (2017), one of the big disadvantages of the application is lack of explanation of any grammar or the phonology. The practice of speaking and listening skills are also omitted in the learning process.

Another interesting language learning mobile application is *Babbel*. This application, unlike the others mentioned above, provides the ability of learning the most common languages. The units can be chosen according to the students' level or thematically (Nushi & Eqbali, 2018). The application is free to some extent, as only one lesson of each course is available for free. The application provides explicit explanation of grammar and vocabulary, it provides examples of the introduced rules and tests the users' knowledge of it immediately. However, the application uses the deductive

approach and translates every single rule it describes. Some may consider such way of acquiring language unnatural and with insufficient exposure to the target language. The courses that are available are prepared by the “*Babbel’s* language experts” (Nushi & Egbali, 2018).

Finally, *HelloTalk* is a mobile application that was founded in 2011 by Zackary Ngai. The description of the application provided on the official *HelloTalk’s* page claims to create an engaging and intuitive environment for language learners of different languages. Its main function is to allow users connect and perform language exchanges with the native speakers of particular languages (Rivera, 2017). Unlike the other language learning applications, it does not concentrate only on acquiring or enriching users’ vocabulary or grammar, but also on using in in a real-life conversations. *HelloTalk* users are provided with the opportunity of communicating with others not only via text messages, but also through voice messages or phone calls. It is one of the few applications that makes such interaction that easy.

Among other functions (such as “language exchange”, posting and commenting posts of other users on “Moments” wall, or correcting other users’ comments), *HelloTalk* also enables learners to become language teachers of their own mother tongue while keeping the role of learners of their target language. (Rivera, 2017). Therefore, both input and output is present on each user’s part. Thus, such a function blurs the traditional roles of both teachers and learners, so clearly defined in a more traditional approach to language learning.

### **1.3 Aim of the study**

This study seeks to check whether the mobile application *HelloTalk* can motivate students to learn and interact in English, not only in but also outside the classroom. The

main objective of the study is to show that the use of *HelloTalk* can have a positive impact on students' productive skills and enhance their learning experience. Besides, there are two specific objectives being considered:

**-Specific objective 1:** to analyze students' perception toward the use of *HelloTalk* for language learning.

**-Specific objective 2:** to explore the extent to which this highly interactive app increases their confidence to speak and write in English.

### **1.3.1 Research questions and hypotheses**

The present study attempts to present the following research questions:

**RQ1:** What are students' perceptions of using *HelloTalk* for language learning in the ESL classroom?

**RQ2:** To what extent does the use of *HelloTalk* help students improve their confidence to use productive skills (speaking and writing)?

The corresponding hypotheses are as follows:

**-Main Hypothesis:** The use of *HelloTalk* will have a positive impact on students' productive skills (speaking and writing).

**-Specific Hypothesis 1:** Students' perception of the use of *HelloTalk* in the ESL classroom will be positive.

**-Specific Hypothesis 2:** The use of the mobile app *HelloTalk* will increase their confidence to write and speak in English with native speakers.

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

There are only a few papers available about *HelloTalk*, but these are mostly descriptive. They either focus on describing the different options and possibilities that

the app offers (Niuschi & Makiabadi, 2019), considering the strengths and weaknesses of the application (Teske & Rivera, 2018), or present the effectiveness of this application for the development of writing skills (Wibowo & Raihani, 2019). It is also worth mentioning that even if there are some studies about *HelloTalk*, none of them takes into consideration students' perception on the use of the application. All the papers mentioned above are very recent and focus exclusively on the teachers' and researchers' opinions. None of them measures students' satisfaction on the use of the application or discusses the effectiveness of *HelloTalk* to improve students' speaking. Therefore, the novelty of the study justifies the research on *HelloTalk* as more data on students' perception of the app and its usefulness for interaction are necessary.

## **CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will offer a review of the use of technology in language learning, showing the shift from CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) with the subsequent development of ubiquitous learning and mobile apps for language exchange. It will also discuss *HelloTalk* and compare it to other tandem learning apps.

### **2.2 Technology in language learning**

Technology has been used in education for some time now. At the end of the 20th century (1960), new technological aids (tape-recorder and strip projector) were used for the first time in the classroom. Some teachers reacted enthusiastically (Barani, 2011), while some decided to reject this innovation from the very beginning (Henriksen et al., 2016). Regardless of the different opinions, the use of technology in ESL classrooms is inevitable and sooner or later it will become even more ubiquitous and powerful than it is now (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

It seems crucial to ask the following question: what is technology de facto and how can it be used for language teaching? Chapelle and Voss (2017) remind us that technology does not mean computers or mobile devices only, but also recording equipment, statistical programs, or database programs capable of recognizing languages. However, the use of mobile technologies with the underlying principle of “anytime, anywhere” popularized by Kukulska-Hulme & Shield (2008) has become a growing area of interest for teachers and researchers. Besides, students use mobile

phones in their everyday life outside the classroom, so incorporating them into the classroom as a tool for language learning should be very beneficial for them.

For some years now, mobile phones have proven to be very beneficial for language learning. App developers have also found in education and language learning a new area to explore. Mobile applications have given rise to new ways of learning and increased students' motivation to learn. Many of these apps, like *Duolingo*, have successfully been used to help students increase their vocabulary and practice their grammar; others have helped them improve their reading and writing skills, like *Facebook* or *Instagram*. *Youtube* is also an application that can be used to learn a foreign language since people can find an enormous amount of content and it is being updated daily (Tolochko, et al., 2019). These social media apps, not originally intended for language learning, have allowed learners to have more exposure to written and spoken English. Younger generations of teachers, who are more aware of the changes in language education, try to incorporate mobile technologies and gamified language learning applications into their course syllabi.

## **2.3 CALL and MALL in the ESL classroom**

Eponymous approaches, like Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), became extremely important in the recent decade (Ozturk, 2013). CALL can be understood as a selection of instructions which need to be uploaded on the computer in order to use it for language learning (Gündüz, 2005). However, it may be erroneously understood that CALL refers only to the computer itself used either by the teacher or students. CALL, as a matter of fact, has to do with any computer equipment used (such as a mouse, monitor, printer, etc.)

Furthermore, Hubbard (2008) notes that CALL is tightly connected to the future of language education. As mentioned earlier, some teachers, especially those for whom technology continues to seem mysterious, were rather pessimistic in terms of implementing technology in the classroom. It was mainly because they were fearful that computers will eventually replace them. Nevertheless, as Gündüz (2005) points out, computers are just tools designed to help people. They do not have capability of thinking but performing the orders given by the users. Thus, teachers should not fear for their position and rather appreciate the almost limitless help they may provide (Brierley & Kemble, 1991).

MALL first appeared in 2000s, along with the development of the first mobile technologies (Kannan & Munday, 2018). According to Pew Research (2018), up to 77% of the US citizens owns a smartphone, so their availability is an important characteristic of MALL. Mobile devices and smartphones have overtaken every single aspect of our world. Traditional classes conducted with specific, strictly planned schedules are incorporating mobile learning. M-learning is a type of education that can be adjusted to the specific needs of different learners. Students no longer need to show up at a certain time slot and place. Learning can be done “anytime, anywhere,” (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). That is the reason why more and more students decide on this type of language learning (Shahzad et al., 2020). Classes are dynamic because of the possibility of being “connected” whenever the students feel such need.

One of the most known types of m-learning is the use of mobile applications or apps to learn languages. There are many applications available to refine language skills. Applications such as *Duolingo*, *Babbel*, *Memrise*, or *Busuu* were developed to improve not only lexical or grammar skills, but also speaking and listening (Gomes, et al., 2016). The big variety of the languages that can be learnt while using those applications draws

attention of language learners from all around the world. Nevertheless, it is only recently that some mobile apps have incorporated the possibility of language exchange and the practice of production skills: writing and speaking. One of those applications is *HelloTalk*, which, created an opportunity for language exchange with native speakers from all around the world. (Kannan & Munday, 2018).

### **2.3.1 Advantages of MALL for language learning**

As Tai & Ting (2011) point out, MALL has definitely changed language teaching and learning. Multiple language macro skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading) and micro skills (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.) may be improved with the help of MALL. As Gomes (2016) mentions, mobile technologies offer a friendly and engaging environment without the stressful supervision of teachers. Students are given an opportunity to be autonomous in their language learning process.

With apps such as *Babbel* or *LiveMocha*, users are able to practice informal language through social interactions. Subjects discussed while using those applications resemble almost real-life conversations, which help learners to break down their language barrier (Gomes, et al., 2016). Moreover, huge diversity of mobile devices provides opportunities for learning in fun and interesting ways (Gomes, et al. 2016).

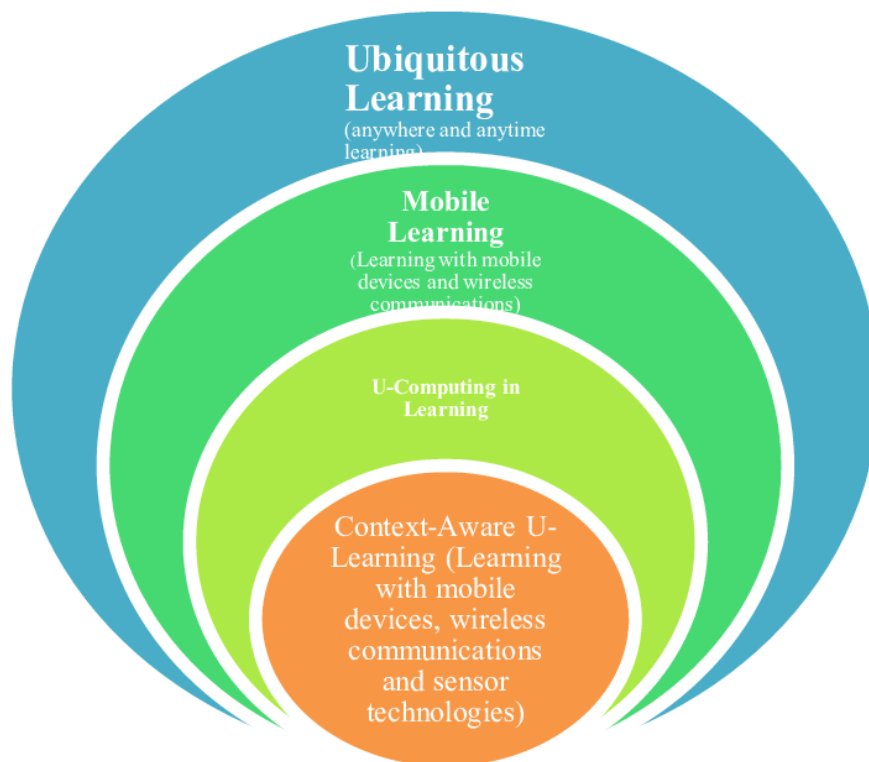
Another advantage of mobile devices is their portability. They can be carried everywhere and used anytime, which facilitates the whole learning process (Shazhad et al., 2020). Miangah and Nezerat (2012) provided an early summary of the advantages of using MALL. Some of the most important advantages mentioned are portability, individuality and the ubiquitous character of language learning. But the list of advantages of m-learning is even wider according to Sizova et al. (2020). Among others, MALL allows independent and autonomous learning, and students can decide how much time they want to spend learning certain topics. What is more, the intensity



of such trainings while online is much higher than in traditional classes; hence, students constantly surround themselves with language incentives. The flexibility of MALL is another important advantage for learners who may have problems with face-to-face communication. Besides, MALL allows communication not only with peers from the workplace, school, or university, but also with people from all over the world (Sizova et al., 2020),.

## **2.4. Ubiquitous learning**

As previously mentioned, one of the most important characteristics of MALL is that it is ubiquitous because it is mobile. Cope & Kalantzis (2010) state that there is a strong connection between ubiquitous learning (u-learning) and ubiquitous computing (u-computing). The second term refers to the omnipresence of computers in people's daily lives nowadays. In their article, Kannan and Munday (2018) refer to Jones & Jo (2004) who define ubiquitous computing as a process of continuous integration of computers into different parts of our lives. This type of learning offers a learning path adjusted and adapted to the specific needs of students (Kannan & Munday, 2018). There is a clear connection between u-computing and u-learning. While u-learning is based on the concept of learning anywhere and anytime (Yahya et. al, 2007), u-computing allows language students to do so through the usage of various computing devices, such as computers, mobile phones, tablets, etc. Figure 1 below (Hwang et. al., 2008) illustrates this connection.



**Figure 1.** Relationships between u-learning, mobile learning, u-computing in learning and context-aware u-learning (Hwang et al., 2008)

Ubiquitous learning means that learners may study languages whenever and wherever they feel like it because of the portability of mobile devices. Yahya et. al (2010) mention difficulties in creating one general definition of u-learning. After considering few of such definitions, they present their own: “U-learning is a learning paradigm which takes place in a ubiquitous computing environment that enables learning the right thing at the right place and time in the right way.” (Yahya et. Al., 2010, p. 120). Tahir et. al (2018) mention some the most important characteristics of ubiquitous learning, such as interactivity, accessibility, or adaptability. They also point out that the ubiquitous character of learning is important because it allows students to use real-life language in a real-life context. The language that is being taught in schools nowadays is rather formal and we rarely use it on a daily basis. With the help of mobile

devices, which are accessible anytime, everyday language can be finally practiced according to its communicative function (Tahir et al., 2018).

U-learning and m-learning are not the same thing and they cannot be used interchangeably. As mentioned above, while u-learning concentrates around learning anytime and anywhere and refers to the environment that allows using mobile learning devices to learn at any location, m-learning is understood as learning that happens via wireless devices such as phones (Yahya et. al, 2007). Although those definitions seems rather similar, it is crucial to establish the distinction between them. Therefore, an additional definition of u-learning was provided: “[u-learning is a] new learning paradigm in which we learn about anything at anytime, anywhere utilizing ubiquitous computing technology and infrastructure”. (Yahya et. al, 2007, p.120)

## **2.5. Mobile apps for language exchange**

There are several mobile applications that provide the possibility of language exchange with native speakers, for example, *Tandem*, *HiNative*, *TripLingo*, and *HelloTalk*. *Tandem* allows users to talk with native speakers from all around the world. According to Dahlhoff (2020), *Tandem* is very similar to *HelloTalk* as both applications give users the possibility of chatting, phone calling, translating or transliterating. They are both free, but only up to a certain extent. Nevertheless, users of both applications may be satisfied with the free versions only. There is a possibility of paying for a “pro account” in both applications, after which the users are given much more variety of different features. Nevertheless, while signing up to *HelloTalk* is extremely easy and takes up only five minutes, with *Tandem* learners need to wait up to seven days to be accepted and to start using the application properly (Dahlhoff, 2020).

*HiNative* is based on the questions & answers system. Users may ask questions using their target language or answer questions asked by the other users (Dahlhoff, 2020). The basic features are free for all users; however, some premium options (such as video calls or audio features) are available if the users decide to pay a monthly fee. Learners using this application, as an additional motivation, collect points for learning new vocabulary and answering questions of other users. However, as Dahlhoff (2020) states, it is not unusual that some questions remain unanswered. Moreover, the language exchange via questions and answers format is not as natural as the real life conversations with native speakers using *HelloTalk*.

Another application that provides the possibility of language exchange is *TripLingo*. According to Lales (2013), this application is especially useful for the travelers who want to use the language of the place they traveled to according to its culture. It provides information about particular slang or tips for traveling. It also helps users to pronounce chosen phrases using the function of a live translator. Some of the drawbacks of the application mentioned by Lales (2013) are that it does not offer a big variety of free options and that it has some limitations in terms of using a live translator (possibility of translating only few of the most common languages). Additionally, the application does not teach the new language fully, but rather provides some tips which may help travelers in different places.

### **2.5.1 *HelloTalk*, an app for oral and written language exchange**

As previously stated, mobile applications are great examples of ubiquitous learning. They started becoming more and more popular among learners of all languages (Heil, et al., 2016). It is no surprise that language teachers began to implement them in their classes as it has been proven that the MALL approach is more effective than non-mobile learning (Haerazi, et al., 2020). Rivera (2017) presents a

thorough description of the mobile app *HelloTalk*. This conversation-based application is divided into five main sections: *Talks*, *Moments*, *Search*, *Learn*, and *Me*. In the *Moments* section, users might see their chats with the other users. In case of troubles with understanding the messages of other users, if users tap on the message, the automatic translation in their native language is provided (there is a limit of five free translations per day) (Richards, 2016). Additionally, apart from the possibility of chatting with other users, the learners can also make free phone calls, send each other photos, voice messages, or send digital gifts or cards (Richards, 2016). The new option of oral language exchange appeared quite recently. The users set a time and decide on the length of the meeting. The meeting itself resembles the form of a phone call. During the set time, students are able to teach the other user their native language and learn their target language at the same time. All of the conversations that take place using this option are recorded and can be listened to repetitively after completing the oral language exchange.

There is an interesting similarity between *HelloTalk* and other very popular applications such as *Instagram* or *Facebook*: users are able to share their pictures or thoughts with others, using the *Moments* section (Richards, 2016). They are able to post pictures or simply share their thoughts on varied topics there. Learners can also comment each other's posts, save them to "favorites" or to "like" them. An interesting option is the possibility of correcting each other's comments. This way the target language of the users can be naturally and constantly improve in a non-stressful, comfortable and friendly environment. In the *Search* section users are able to look for other learners who wish to learn particular languages. The application automatically shows users who are interested in learning our native language and who can help us with our target language. In the *Learn* section, the users are given the possibility to

learn new vocabulary (they can use this option for free only for 5 minutes daily), read some articles, or listen to them. The readings are divided according to topics; however, only 8 readings in a separate section are free. The last section, *Me*, shows the main page of the users' profiles. It provides such tools as translate (where learners are given the possibility of translating a short text to variety of different languages), and notepad (where all of the saved posts from the *Moments* section are saved) or recordings (where recordings from the language exchange can be listened to) (Vollmer Rivera, 2017). An interesting feature is "al grammar", where the users can use the free grammar correction of the provided texts. This feature can be used only ten times a day for free and is able to check only texts written in English; still, it seems helpful especially for the beginner users of English.

As mentioned above, the application is free but only to some extent. In all of the features (such as translations into the user's native language, grammar check, or learning vocabulary), there is a daily limit either measured by the time (e.g. learning new vocabulary for five minutes daily) or by the amount of grammar checks (e.g. ten daily grammar checks).

In recent years, only a few studies have focused on *HelloTalk*. Wibowo & Raihani's study (2019) on the effectiveness of *HelloTalk* to improve writing skills shows that the app can effectively improve students' writing skills. A pre- and post-test conducted with a group of 10th grade students shows that there is a significant improvement in their writing skills after using *HelloTalk* (Wibowo & Raihani, 2019, p.15). According to Nushi & Makiabadi (2018), students can practice their writing skills by chatting with other users and they are able to practice real-life language for free. They also state that *HelloTalk* is especially useful for the younger generations of learners because of the social environment. Nugroho et al.'s study (2021) focuses on

*HelloTalk* and vocabulary acquisition. The experiment was conducted with six young students in Kadudampit, Cianjur, and they were asked to use the application in order to learn new vocabulary. After using it, learners agreed that the application is easy to use and that it contains many interesting pictures and stories.

Authors like Richards (2016) and Vollmer Rivera (2017) just provide a review of the app only to highlight it can connect students with native speakers around the world. Teske & Vollmer Rivera (2018) focus on the development of language learners' identities within *HelloTalk*

## **2.6. The need for the study**

Most of the papers on *HelloTalk* just describe the application itself. Some papers simply describe *HelloTalk* thoroughly (Rivera, 2017, Nushi & Makiabadi, 2019, Kuning, 2020), and they concentrate on describing the features of the application rather than conducting an actual study about it. In terms of productive skills, there is only one study that focuses focus on the effectiveness of *HelloTalk* to improve writing (Wibowo & Raihani (2019). Still, none of these authors deal with the effectiveness of the application to improve speaking. Furthermore, none of the papers on *HelloTalk* takes into consideration students' perception on the app.

There are many studies on students' perception about the use of mobile applications in general. Nevertheless, they concentrate on more popular applications such as *Duolingo* (Ekinci & Ekinci, 2017, Gafni, et al., 2017) or *Instagram* (Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016). None of them considers the use of the application *HelloTalk*. In sum, there is no paper that explores students' perception on the language exchange app *HelloTalk*, especially in terms of production skills like speaking and writing.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study that focuses on students' perception on the usefulness of *HelloTalk* to improve production skills like speaking and writing.



## **CHAPTER 3 – Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the methodology followed for the experiment will be described. This chapter contains a justification of the research design chosen, a description of the setting and participants, the materials and measurement instruments used for the study, along with the procedure and data collection methods. The purpose of this study is to show that the use of *HelloTalk* can have a positive impact on students productive skills and enhance their learning experience.

### **3.2 Research design**

The research design of the project is a case study and not a quasi-experimental design because there are no experimental or control groups. Because the treatment (the use of the app *HelloTalk*) will be applied to a group of students of different ages and levels of English, the case study seems to be the most appropriate research design for the project. A mix-method approach will be applied that includes both quantitative (from a pre- and post-questionnaire) and qualitative data (from an interview and teacher observations in a journal).

### **3.3 Setting**

The setting of the study was not carried out in a secondary school but in the form of private lessons with a group of students from different countries. Therefore, participants took part in private classes. Because of the current global pandemic and numerous

restrictions, face-to-face classes were not possible to conduct. Thus, online classes via Skype, which all students are familiar with, were chosen for this study. All participants agreed on such arrangement. The researcher was in Tarragona, Spain, and the participants were either in Poland or in Ecuador.

### **3.4 Participants**

A single group of 15 English learners participated in this study. Therefore, a case study was conducted as there is only one group of students with different levels of English, and they all used *HelloTalk* to express their perception on it. All of the students were adults aged between 23 and 30 years old. The participants were both female (11) and male (4) and they were randomly selected. Specific information on an internet page was posted and they volunteered to take part in the study. The students were native speakers of Polish (11) and Spanish (4). In order to find out about their level of English, participants had to complete an online placement test before the treatment. The results were as follows: Level A2 (2 students), level B1 (7 students), and level B2 (6 students). Having students of different levels of English may be relevant and interesting for this particular study because this way it is possible to check which type of students enjoy using the application the most. Moreover, it will be possible to check which application features were used according to the students' level of English.

### **3.5 Materials and measurement instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Materials used**

The materials created for the study consisted of a set 6 worksheets tailor made for the experiment. The worksheets were prepared to help students' practice conversation

skills and to make them more confident while using the application later. That is also the reason why the worksheets covered real-life topics: to resemble the conversations that they would participate in while using *HelloTalk*. Additionally, the worksheets provided ideas to talk about during the classes. They covered the topics that may be discussed while using the app *HelloTalk*, namely: “Motivation”, “Success”, “Job”, “Hobby”, “Sleep & Social Media”, and “Globalism & Personal Space” (Appendix A-F). The worksheets were discussed following the order above, so the “Motivation” worksheet was discussed during the first class, the “Success” worksheet was considered during the second class, “Hobby” during the first, etc. Each worksheet was discussed during only one class. There were some worksheets that were not finished, however, this fact did not affect the whole purpose of the study.

Each worksheet looked similar in a sense: worksheet 1,2,3,5, and 6 started with a set of introductory questions to introduce the topics of the worksheets. Worksheet 4 started with a short introductory video (TED Talk) instead of the questions. After the introductory part, in worksheets 1, 2, 4, and 5 students were asked to read short texts and complete the exercises about them. Worksheet 3 was based on a picture instead of a text, and in worksheet number 6 a video and an audio file were provided. During the classes participants were asked multiple additional questions (according to their individual preferences) to make sessions resemble real-life conversations as much as possible.

### **3.5.2 Measurement instruments**

The measurement instruments used for the case study were a pre- and post-questionnaire on their perception about *HelloTalk* administered at the beginning and end of the treatment, an interview administered at the end of the treatment, and teacher observation of each session on a journal. The pre- and post questionnaires were filled in

to provide quantitative data for the study, the interviews were conducted to supply qualitative data, and the teacher observations in the journal would help corroborate or refute findings in general on their perception of *HelloTalk*.

The pre- and post-questionnaires were prepared to measure students' satisfaction and compare it before and after using *HelloTalk*. All of the students completed both questionnaires. The pre- and post-questionnaire consisted of exactly the same questions. The questionnaire consisted of 25 closed-ended questions (see Appendix G) in the form of a 5-point Likert scale. The first 8 questions are general questions on the use of mobile applications to learn English or on skills, their anxiety levels when communicating in English and whether they enjoy learning English in general. Questions 9 to 25 refer specifically to the use of *HelloTalk*. Students were supposed to answer the questions on *HelloTalk* only in the post-questionnaire. (from question 9 to question 25). The aim of the questionnaires was to check students' perception and satisfaction with the mobile app *HelloTalk* to learn English. It was also designed to check their motivation to learn English as a foreign language. The purpose of the questionnaire was to provide quantitative data for the Research Question 1: What are the students' perceptions of using HelloTalk for language learning in the ESL classroom?.

The second measuring instrument was the interview (Appendix H), which was conducted at the end of the study. It contained 9 open-ended questions. The first question was about their wish to continue using the application after the study, and the second one concentrated on improvement of their language skills because of the app. The third question pertained to the increase of the confidence while speaking and writing in English because of *HelloTalk*. Questions number 4 and 5 were about their general feelings about the effectiveness of the application to improve language skills.

Questions number 6 and 7 were about the improvement and gaining more confidence in terms of speaking and writing in English. In question 8 the participants could express their opinions about the best and the worst features of the application, and in the last question they wrote whether they enjoyed their role as teachers of their native languages. The form of interview was chosen so that the students could express their opinions about *HelloTalk* and share their comments about using it. The interviews were an extremely valuable source of knowledge as they provided qualitative data for Research Question 2: To what extent does the use of *HelloTalk* help students improve their confidence to use productive skills (speaking and writing)? Each interview lasted for around 10 minutes and it was conducted during the last meeting along with completion of the questionnaires.

It is important to note that both the pre- and post-questionnaire and the interview were translated into the students' native languages (Polish and Spanish). They were both originally prepared in English; however, some concerns appeared about the ability of comprehending the mentioned papers (e.g. the level of some students was only A2, which is relatively low). The aim of those questionnaires and interview was to check students' perception, not to verify their level of English as this factor is already known. Considering the importance of reliable answers and cautiously prepared translations, a native speaker of Spanish and Polish translated the questionnaire and the interview questions (Behr, 2018).

A teacher's journal was also used to collect data via class observation. As Lialikhova (2014) writes, Cohen distinguished two types of observation: participant, and non-participant. In this case, a non-participant type of observation was used as the researcher simply observed the class. Students were not disturbed while performing activities and their involvement was minor. Cohen distinguishes between structured and

unstructured observation. Structured observation enables the researcher to generate numerical data from the observations (Cohen, et al., 2010) and the data is completed systematically, while in unstructured observation data collection is rather unsystematic and unplanned. During this study, structured observation was used, as the main goal was the completion of the journal. The journal was being completed after each session and it contained the teacher's thoughts about students' abilities and process of improvement of their skills (especially speaking and listening).

### **3.6 Procedure and data collection**

The experiment lasted for 3 weeks (from March 1-21) and it was divided into 2 parts. Each part lasted for 1,5 week. The participants attended 6 online lessons during the first part, and each class lasted for an hour. Topics that were discussed were motivation, success, hobbies, job, sleep & social media, and globalism & different concepts of personal space according to cultural differences. The sessions took a question-answer form where the questions were asked according to the topics of the discussed worksheets.

During the last 20 minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> class there was a training conducted for the participants to know how to use *HelloTalk*. They were explained different features and functions of the application: posting, commenting and sharing posts on Moments, chatting, possibility of recording voice messages, calling other users, looking for language partners, or learning new vocabulary. They also created their accounts. Native speakers of Spanish chose Spanish as their native language, and native speakers of Polish chose Polish as their native language. All of the students chose English as their target language.

The regular classes were conducted via Skype. Students could decide whether they preferred one-to-one classes or work in groups of 2. Finally, 6 students decided to work in groups of 2 (3 groups of 2), and 9 students decided on one-to-one classes with the researcher. The classes were adjusted to the time slots according to the students' need (because of the fact that the students were adults and they worked at different times,, some classes were conducted in the mornings, and the rest of them in the afternoons or in the evenings).

During the first part of the study (first 1,5 week) 6 classes were conducted. Each of them lasted for 60 minutes. The first class began with a reminder of the aim of the study. After this short introduction, the students had to complete the pre-questionnaire. For the rest of the first class, the first worksheet was discussed. Accordingly, the following worksheets were discussed: "Motivation" during the second class, "Hobby" during the third class, "Job"- 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, "Sleep & Social media"- 5<sup>th</sup> class, and "Globalism & Personal space" during the last- 6<sup>th</sup> session. All of the classes had conversational style and were prepared to make students get used to having conversations in English while using the application in the second part of the study. Few students asked for the revision of the most basic grammar rules to make them feel more confident while speaking. A few grammar exercises were prepared according to their needs; however, conversations still remained the main part of the meetings. Most of the students did not have opportunity to use English in conversations on a daily basis, and that is why such classes were needed to increase their self-confidence while speaking in English. At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> class, the mobile app *HelloTalk* was introduced to the students. All the important parts of the application were presented and their functions were explained. Students created their accounts and also their short personal introductions on their accounts. Additional questions were answered.

Throughout the second part of the study (1,5 week), students were supposed to use the app *HelloTalk* on their own for at least 30 minutes a day. They were to use it outside of the classroom at the chosen by them time slots. No more classes were conducted during this part of the study. Students were encouraged to use the app especially to talk or chat with English native speakers. Because all of the students were adults, no additional system of motivation was needed. Besides, during the second part of the study, 3 meetings with students were organized. Each of them lasted for 20-25 minutes. The aim of those meetings was to check on students' progress about their perception about *HelloTalk*. All of the students used chats, however, not all of them decided to phone call their language partners. During this part of the study there were 3 synchronous meetings and each meeting lasted for 20 minutes. During the two first meetings, students were asked the following questions: How much time did you spend using the application daily? Do you enjoy using it? What are the pros and cons of using *HelloTalk*? Have you tried phone calling other users? What do you think about the other users? Are they helpful? Are you chatting with any English native speakers at the moment? Do you enjoy talking with him/her? Those questions were asked to measure students' satisfaction with the usage of *HelloTalk*. The participants were also encouraged to give their opinion about it apart from answering the questions. Each meeting was described in the teacher's journal at the end of the session.

On the last session of the study, students were sent the post-questionnaire for completion. Additional explanatory questions were asked if needed. They answered all of the questions giving their opinion both about the general use of the language learning applications and about the *HelloTalk* itself. Thanks to the fact that the questionnaire was translated into students' native languages, they did not have problems with understanding the questions. After completing the questionnaire, the participants also



completed an interview which consisted of 9 questions about *HelloTalk* only. Students were asked 9 open-ended questions about their satisfaction with the application and the data were collected orally via Skype. Students were asked whether they wished to continue using *HelloTalk* after completion of the study, which language abilities they have improved because of the application, or if their confidence in writing and speaking in English has improved because of *HelloTalk*. They could also specify what they considered strong and weak points of the application. They could answer freely using their native languages, but their answers were immediately written down in their native languages and then translated into English. All of the answers were transcribed in the exact form the students produced them orally. They were encouraged to answer extensively; nevertheless, short answers were also accepted.

### **3.6.1 Variables**

For this particular experiment, the repeated measures method was chosen. According to Singh, et al. (2013), this method is especially useful when dealing with one group of experimental unit and its outcomes are being measured over time. Moreover, in repeated-measures design it is possible to concentrate on treatment effects much more precisely (Singh, et al., 2013). In this experiment, the study dealt with only one group of participants.

The independent variable of this study was the use of the mobile application *HelloTalk*. The dependent variable considered was students' perception on the use of *HelloTalk* to improve writing and speaking. The variables that appeared inductively were the gender and the age of the participants.

## **3.7 Data analysis**

This section presents the analysis of the quantitative data (resulting from the pre- and post-questionnaire) and of the qualitative data (resulting from the interview and the teacher's observations in a journal).

### **3.7.1 Quantitative data: pre- and post-questionnaire**

Both the pre- and post-questionnaires contained the same questions. In the pre-questionnaire students were asked only questions from 1-8 as they pertained about the students' general opinion about language learning applications. The questionnaire consisted of questions about students' feeling of improvement (question 2), enjoyment (questions 3 and 4), difficulties with speaking and writing, (questions 6 and 7) and anxiety connected with using English (questions 5 and 8). To analyze the data, a T-test was applied. The results of the pre- and post-questionnaire from questions 1-8 were analyzed using descriptive statistics. These results were then entered into an Excel spreadsheet and organized into three columns (student, pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire), and saved in .csv format before importing them into JASP

In the post-questionnaire, students had to complete all 25 questions (questions 9-25 pertained strictly about *HelloTalk*). The questions 9 and 11 concentrated on students' motivation, questions 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 20 pertained about enjoyment, and 12, 13, 21, and 22 about self-confidence. The questions 15, 24, and 25 were about the students' feeling about the *HelloTalk* features. Questions 19 and 23 were about participants' feeling of self-improvement. For the questions 9-25, the students' answers were grouped according to the different types of topics in the questions mentioned above (students' motivation, enjoyment, self-confidence, students' feelings about *HelloTalk* features, and feelings about self-improvement using *HelloTalk*). Afterwards, there was a table used showing students' responses with percentages (the participants could decide between 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree) in all

five categories. Then, the results were transferred to a bar chart showing students' perception on the use of *HelloTalk*.

### **3.7.2 Qualitative data: interview and teacher's journal**

The interview was conducted online during the last meeting as well. The questions were asked to students orally (in their native languages) and their answers were translated and written down. The questions in the interview were about the confidence (3, 4, 7), the feeling of improvement (2 and 6), or opinions about the features of the application (8). The qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed following the conventional procedures. The researcher revised students' answers in the interview several times to identify salient and recurring ideas or perceptions on the use of *HelloTalk* that could emerge from the data.

The ideas that were identified were then coded in order to put similar codes together and then to create major findings. The codes that were chosen are frequency of use, level of English, and language partners. Once the data were analyzed, the researcher summarized them and selected excerpts that reflected the findings and the categories that were previously established. Afterwards, the data was interpreted. The coding for the different topics that emerged was prepared inductively. In this particular research, descriptive coding was used. Once the codes were set, the answers from the interviews were analyzed.

The teacher's journal contained the researcher's thoughts about the students' improvement. The researcher analyzed her own observations in the journal. Codes were also established: level of English, time spent on using the application, and students' determination.

## CHAPTER 4 – Results

In this section the findings from the study are presented. The results from the pre- and post-questionnaires are introduced along with the students' answers in the conducted interviews considering the RQ1 and RQ2.

### 4.1 Quantitative data: pre- and post-questionnaire

The pre- and post-questionnaires were completed by the students in order to answer the RQ1- *“What are students' perceptions of using HelloTalk for language learning in the ESL classroom?”* and to confirm the main hypothesis: *The use of HelloTalk will have a positive impact on students' productive skills (speaking and writing)*. The, specific hypothesis of the study are (1): *Students' perception of the use of HelloTalk in the ESL classroom will be positive*; and (2): *The use of the mobile app HelloTalk will increase their confidence to write and speak in English with native speakers*. In the pre-questionnaire students answered only questions 1-8, which pertained about their general opinion on language learning and their attitude towards using mobile apps or communicating online with unknown people. Questions 9-25 in the post-questionnaire concern strictly about students' opinion on *HelloTalk*..

#### 4.1.1 Pre- and post-questionnaire: Results from questions 1-8

Although only one group of participants was tested, a T-test was used to measure the level of significance between the answers from the pre- and post-questionnaire. The results in students' answers to these first eight questions tried to show if there had been

any change in students' perception of language learning before and after using *HelloTalk*. The results of the t-tests may be seen on the chart 1 below:

### Paired Samples T-Test

Measure 1	Measure 2	t	df	p
Ans 2 PRE - Ans 2 POST		-9.727	14	< .001
Ans 4 PRE - Ans 4 POST		-6.439	14	< .001
Ans 5 PRE - Ans 5 POST		3.523	14	0.003
Ans 6 PRE - Ans 6 POST		1.705	14	0.110
Ans 7 PRE - Ans 7 POST		2.955	14	0.010
Ans 8 PRE - Ans 8 POST		3.523	14	0.003

*Note.* Student's t-test.

*Chart 1. Results of the T-test for the questions 1-8 from the pre- and post- questionnaires*

The results in the pre- and post-questionnaire for question 2 *s*) showed that 79% of students changed their opinion on language learning in the ESL classroom after using *HelloTalk* and considered the use of mobile applications beneficial. The results of both the pre- and post-test for question 4, (*I enjoy using mobile applications to learn languages*) indicated that 87% of students enjoyed using mobile applications to learn languages at the end the study (see Table 1 below).

"4. I enjoy using mobile applications to learn languages."							
	Participants	Answers pre questionnaire	Answers post questionnaire	Measurement difference	Measurement difference minus average measurement difference	Squared differential	
1	Kinga	3	5	-2	-0,066666667	0,004444444	
2	Aleksandra	3	4	-1	0,933333333	0,871111111	
3	Mateusz	3	4	-1	0,933333333	0,871111111	
4	Kornelia	2	4	-2	-0,066666667	0,004444444	
5	Klaudia	1	5	-4	-2,066666667	4,271111111	
6	Daria	3	5	-2	-0,066666667	0,004444444	
7	Mateusz	1	4	-3	-1,066666667	1,137777778	
8	Hubert	3	4	-1	0,933333333	0,871111111	
9	Julia	4	4	0	1,933333333	3,737777778	
10	Roksolana	3	4	-1	0,933333333	0,871111111	
11	Karina	3	4	-1	0,933333333	0,871111111	
12	Andres	3	5	-2	-0,066666667	0,004444444	
13	Romina	2	4	-2	-0,066666667	0,004444444	
14	Andrea	2	5	-3	-1,066666667	1,137777778	
15	Sofia	1	5	-4	-2,066666667	4,271111111	
				-1,933333333		18,93333333	Sum of all squared differentials
	N- 15			Average difference		1,352380952	
						Sum of squared differencials divided by n-1	Root from sum of squared differenced divided by n-1
			difference/x	Significance level	T-test		
	Root from number of observation	3,87298335	0,30026443	0,132	-6,438769019		

Table1. Question 4 (I enjoy using mobile applications to learn languages)

Therefore, the results from the questions 2 and 4 helped to verify the specific hypothesis 1, as they indicated that students' perception of *HelloTalk* in the ESL classroom had been positive.

The results from questions 5, 6, 7, and 8 helped to confirm the specific hypothesis 2. The results of the pre- and post-questionnaire for question 5 (*I always feel anxious when I have to speak in English*) indicated that, 96% of participants felt less anxious while speaking in English after using *HelloTalk*. With the question 6 (*Speaking is the most difficult language skill for me*), the results showed that 96% of students found speaking in English easier after the treatment with *HelloTalk* (see Table 2):

6. Speaking is the most difficult language skill for me.							
	Students	Answers pre questionnaire	Answers post questionnaire	Measurement difference	Measurement difference minus average measurement difference	Squared differential	
1	Kinga	5	2	3	2,533333333	6,417777778	
2	Aleksandra	5	4	1	0,533333333	0,284444444	
3	Mateusz	5	4	1	0,533333333	0,284444444	
4	Kornelia	1	1	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
5	Klaudia	1	1	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
6	Daria	2	2	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
7	Mateusz	1	1	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
8	Hubert	4	2	2	1,533333333	2,351111111	
9	Julia	4	4	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
10	Roksolana	1	2	-1	-1,466666667	2,151111111	
11	Karina	5	4	1	0,533333333	0,284444444	
12	Andres	3	3	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
13	Romina	4	3	1	0,533333333	0,284444444	
14	Andrea	1	2	-1	-1,466666667	2,151111111	
15	Sofia	2	2	0	-0,466666667	0,217777778	
				0,466666667		15,73333333	Sum of all squared differentials
	N- 15			Average difference		1,123809524	Sum of squared differecials divided by n-1
	Root from sum of squared differenced divided by n-1	1,060098827	Difference/x	Significance level		T-test	
	Root from number of observations	3,872983346	0,27371634	0,039		1,704928051	

Table 2. Question 6 (*Speaking is the most difficult language skill for me*)

The results of the answers to question 7 (*Writing is the most difficult language skill for me*) indicated that 90,5% students found writing in English less difficult after using *HelloTalk*. The results of the answers to question 8 (*I am afraid of speaking with strangers online*) showed that 94% of students were less afraid of speaking in English with strangers online after the treatment with *HelloTalk*.

The results of the questions 6 (*Speaking is the most difficult skill for me*) and 7 (*Writing is the most difficult skill for me*) were compared in reference to the participants' levels of English. The answers from the pre- and post-questionnaire were compared and the results are presented in charts 2 and 3 below where 1 means strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- no opinion, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

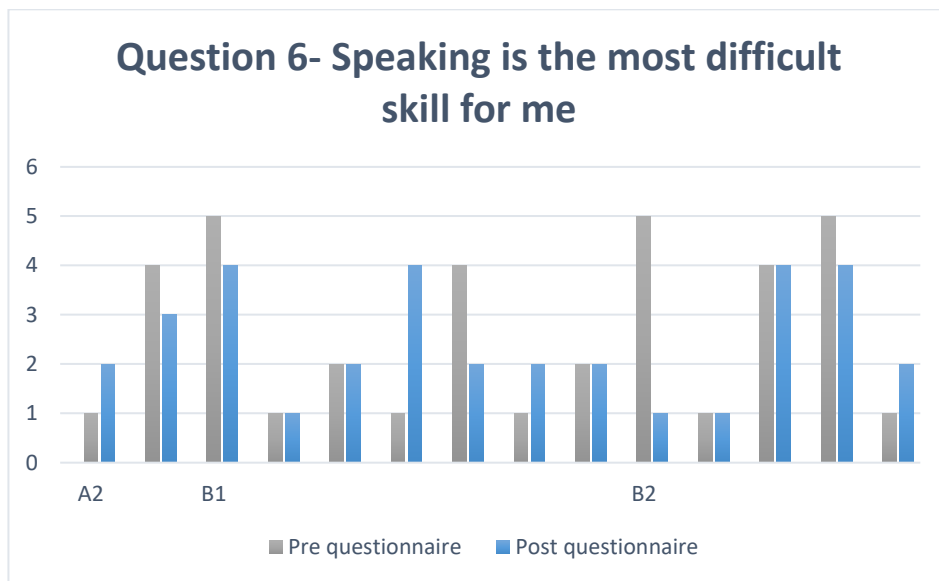


Chart 2. Question 6- comparison of students' answers considering their level of English

As shown in the chart above, the biggest improvement of the speaking skills is reflected in the students with the B2 level of English. However, the difference between participants with other levels is not outstanding. It means that students with higher level of English enjoyed *HelloTalk*'s feature to make phone calls more than those with lower level of English. Beginner learners of English did not feel confident enough to call other users.

The results of question 7 (*Writing is the most difficult skill for me*) and students' answers according to their level of English are presented below:



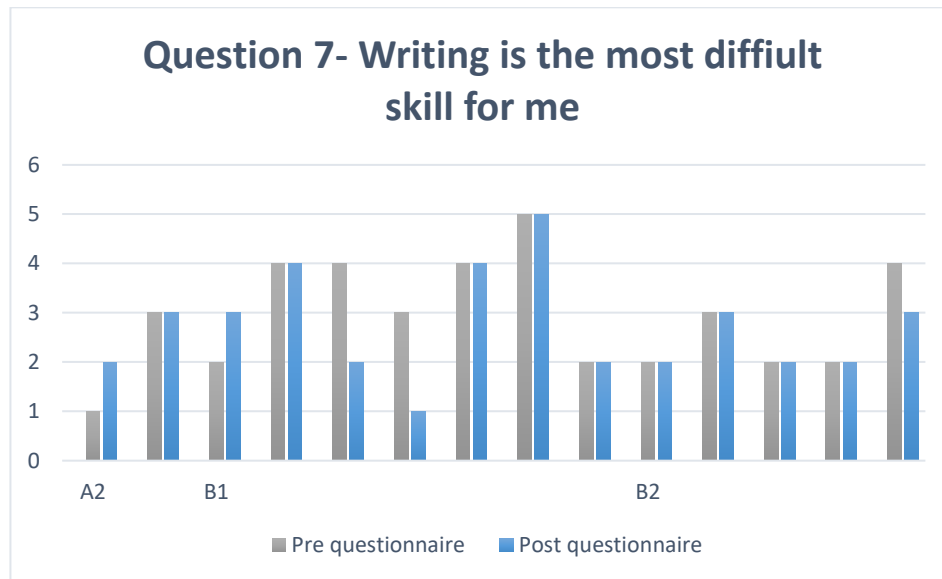


Chart 3. Question 7- comparison of the students' answers considering their level of English

As shown in chart 3, the biggest difference in participants' opinions may be seen with the group of students with B1 level of English. It may be understood that students with the level of B1 found the application the most useful and efficient in terms of improving their writing skills. Analysis of the questions 6 and 7 helped to answer RQ2 and it might be concluded that the application helped students improve their speaking and writing skills. To sum up, 10 students out of 15 noticed an increase of their motivation in terms of communication in English. Therefore, it can be said that their perception of *HelloTalk* is rather positive. Therefore, the Specific Hypothesis 1 was confirmed.

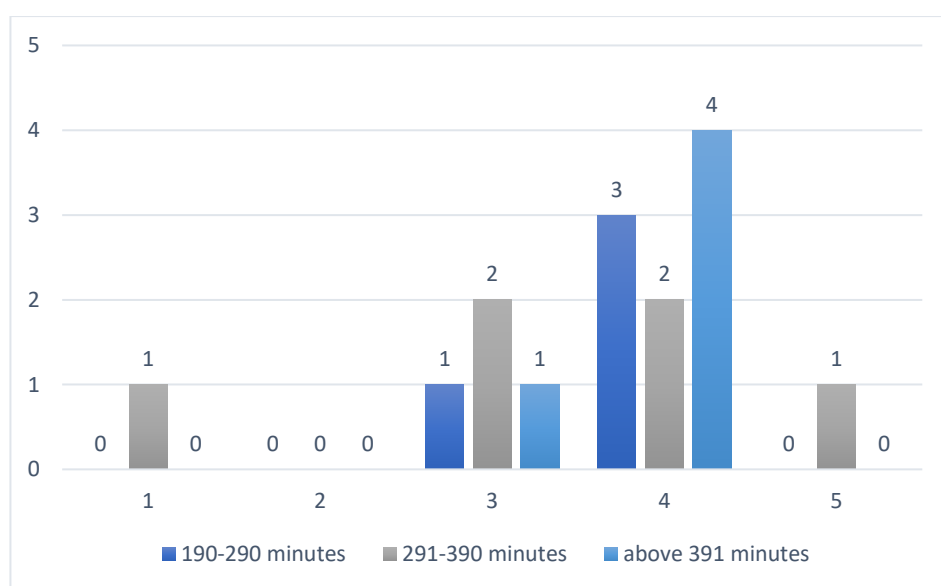
#### 4.1.2 Post-questionnaire: Results from questions 9-25

The results from questions 9-25 that students had to complete in the post-questionnaire only, which reflect their opinion on *HelloTalk* after using it, are presented here.

The results about questions on students' motivation after using the application showed that 66,7% of students in the question 9 and 60% for students in the question 11

answered that their motivation to study English increased after using the application. Students shared also their opinion about enjoyment of the application.

A comparison between the amount of time spent using *HelloTalk* and students' motivation using question number 9 (*With HelloTalk, my motivation to communicate in English has increased*) was analyzed. The results may be seen on chart 4 below, where 1 means strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- no opinion, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.



*Chart 4. Time spent using HelloTalk and its relationship with an increase of students' motivation to communicate in English.*

The data about the amount of time that the students spent using *HelloTalk* was taken from the teacher's journal. As shown in the chart, the students who were using the application the longest noticed the biggest increase of their motivation to communicate in English.

In the question 10, 86,6% of students and in the question 14, 73,3% of students said that they enjoyed using the application to learn English and that the study was fun. In the question 18, 80% students said that they enjoyed talking with their language partners. Nevertheless, the answers to the questions 16, 17, and 20 showed that students did not like reading (only 33,4% of students enjoyed it whereas 46,7% did not have

opinion) or writing comments (66,7% of students did not like it) under other learners' posts. They also did not enjoy correcting mistakes of other users (40% of students did not like it, 33,3% did not have any opinion about it).

Questions 12, 13, 21, and 22 were about students' self-confidence. According to the participants' answers, 60% of students felt more confident while speaking because of *HelloTalk*, and 73,4% of students were not so afraid of speaking English after using *HelloTalk*. Additionally, 80% of students found it easier to speak in English in general after using the application. Moreover, 86,7% of students felt more confident of their writing and speaking skills, too. Therefore, hypothesis 2 on the increase of confidence to write and speak in English with native speakers after using *HelloTalk* is confirmed.

In the questions 15, 24, and 25 students gave their opinions about the features of *HelloTalk*. The results indicated that 53,4% of students preferred chatting with their language partners instead of calling them (26,7% of students did not have their opinion). 66,7% of students enjoyed the feature of automatic translations and 60% liked in-text corrections.

Questions 19 and 23 examined students' feelings of self-improvement. The results indicated that 60% of students felt that their reading skills had improved thanks to *HelloTalk*. However, students were not sure if the application was more helpful to improve their writing or speaking skills (46,6% of students answered that they improved writing more than speaking, 40% of students did not have any opinion, and 13,3% answered that they improved their speaking skills more significantly than writing).

## **4.2 Qualitative data: interview**

The qualitative data in this particular design were based on the interview conducted via Skype at the end of the study (during the last meeting with the researcher). Students' answers helped to answer RQ2- *"To what extent does the use of HelloTalk help students improve their confidence to use productive skills (speaking and writing)?"*.

Students' answers from the interviews were analyzed and they are presented below using the codes established. The codes were chosen according to the memos written down on the printed versions of the interviews translated into English. The codes established were frequency of use, level of English, and language partners as the most important factors affecting students' confidence to improve speaking and writing:

**-Frequency of use:** The question number 3 (*Do you feel more confident to speak and to write in English after using HelloTalk?*) from the interview allowed to check whether students' confidence improved because of the application after using it frequently. The interview showed that nor the participants' level of English neither their gender mattered, and 14 out of 15 students said that they felt more confident while speaking and writing in English after using *HelloTalk*. Everybody, apart from one student, answered straight away without any hesitation that the application helped them improve their confidence in terms of writing and speaking skills. One of the participants, Roksolana, specifically said:

*"Definitely, it [the application] helped me to break my language barrier. "*

Another example may be Andrés:

*" Yes, I do. I was able to improve my writing and speaking. "*

However, as mentioned above, one student (Andrea) said that she did not feel more confident; but still, because of *HelloTalk*, she realized that her English is more understandable. In the conclusion, she mentioned that the application was rather useful:

*“I don’t feel really confident, but I found out that my English is understandable to natives.”*

**-Level of English:** 12 out of 15 students answered that the skill that they improved the most while using the application was writing. An example here may be Ola (her level of English is B1). She said:

*“I feel so happy, because I finally started writing in English without prior checking everything in translator.”*

However, it is important to add that the level of English of those 12 students was either B1 or B2. It seems then, that the students with higher level of English enjoy using the application more to improve their speaking and writing skills rather than less advanced students. Those with A2 level of English used it to improve their grammar and vocabulary instead. This fact was confirmed by the answers of 2 students, Karina (B2) and Romina (A2). Karina answered the second question (*What skills have you improved the most while using HelloTalk?*) this way:

*“Mostly writing and speaking. The app gave me the possibility of chatting with native speakers and I have improved my speaking skills by sending voice messages to the other users.”*

However, Romina says:

*“I haven’t noticed too big difference in my writing and speaking skills. I realized that my grammar has improved as the native speakers could correct my messages instantly”*

The reason for not noticing improvement of those productive skills with the students of lower level may be their lack of confidence connected to the low cross-section of the learned vocabulary. The same student (Romina) answered the question about the improvement of confidence says “yes”, but afterwards she added that:

*“It was difficult for me to open up sometimes as I couldn’t find the correct words.”*

**-Language partners:** 12 out of 15 students answered that they were willing to continue using the application after completion of the study (question number 1). They gave different reasons for such a decision; for instance, Andrea or Mateusz, who met many interesting people and are willing to keep in touch with them:

Andrea: *“Yes, I have begun several fun talks with different people around the world and I’d like to hear from them time to time.”*

Mateusz: *“Whenever I have time. This application provides the possibility of talking with interesting people so I’ll try to use it.”*

Nevertheless, 1 student (Klaudia) said that she may be using it in the future, however, she was not enthusiast about it. She would use it mostly to talk with other users using phone calls but not for chatting.

*“In terms of video calls and phone calls, maybe yes, I’ll think about it because it allows me to have live contact with the language.”*

2 participants said straight away that they were not willing to continue using HelloTalk. One of them (Mateusz) said that it consumes too much time:

*“Probably not because of the lack of time (job). It takes ages to get answers from some people.”*

Another one (Sofia) said that the application was unclear and difficult to use:

*“Definitely not. It was hard for me to find some options or to contact other users. Nobody answered my posts on “Moments”. Nice to use for some time, but there are better applications.”*

Gender, age, or cultural background did not influence participants’ answers. Their answers were varied and different.

To sum up, the answers of participants to the RQ2 (*To what extent does the use of HelloTalk help students improve their confidence to use productive skills (speaking and*

*writing?*) showed that in terms of improving students' speaking and writing skills student with the higher level of English seemed to feel more confident with their productive skills than the students with the lower of English. Therefore, the specific hypothesis 2 (*The use of the mobile app HelloTalk will increase their confidence to write and speak in English with native speakers*) can be partially confirmed as *HelloTalk* did help students with their productive skills, but mainly those whose level of English is above intermediate.

Moreover, the specific hypothesis 1 (*Students' perception of the use of HelloTalk in the ESL classroom will be positive*) can be definitely confirmed as most of the participants enjoyed using the application to learn English.

### **4.3. Qualitative data: teacher's journal**

The information in the teacher's journal was collected throughout the whole study. Immediately after every class or a meeting with the participants, the journal was updated. The journal consisted of the researcher's feelings, observations, and comments about students' level of English, their improvement, their opinions about the classes, or about *HelloTalk* itself. The information included in the teacher's journal supplements the results obtained from the pre- and post- questionnaire and the interview.. The following codes were established: level of English, features of the application, and time spent using the application.

**-Level of English:** In terms of improvement of writing and speaking skills (RQ2) and the way it depended on the participants' level of English, the researcher's comments on Roksolana, the student with a lower level of English (A2), were as follows:

*“Student’s 3<sup>rd</sup> day of using HelloTalk. The first meeting with the researcher. The student uses the application for 40 minutes each day. She thinks that the structure of the app makes it easy to use. She chats with 1 native speaker from the USA. She was too shy to make a phone call but she plans to do so. Sometimes she admitted she is afraid of making mistakes while chatting or calling other users. She said that she enjoyed the “Moments” wall and “Learn” section the most.”*

Below is another comment about Mateusz , whose level of English is B2:

*“7<sup>th</sup> day of using HelloTalk and 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with the researcher. The student uses the application for around 45 minutes every day. He talks with a native speaker from Australia. He said that his language is very neat but informal. The student enjoys using the application and finds it useful. He didn’t like the amount of advertisements. He plans on doing more phone calls within the next days.”*

It is possible to conclude from those comments that students with lower level of English were rather afraid of conducting phone calls or even chatting sometimes. Thus, students with higher level of English (B1 or B2) could improve their speaking or writing skills much more than those with lower levels of English.

**-Features of the application:** At the end of the study another A2 student (Romina) added that the possibility of in-text corrections made by the other users made her improve her grammar the most:

*“ The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting with student. She said that she tried to phone call another user, but it made her extremely nervous so she gave up on doing so. She concentrated on chatting and improving her vocabulary instead. She enjoyed the corrections made by the other users especially.”*

**-Time spent using the application:** The researcher’s journal also reflected the relationship between the students’ improvement of productive skills and their



determination to learn. The examples here correspond to Mateusz (B2) and Huber (B1). Firstly, Hubert spent much more time (650 minutes) using *HelloTalk* than Mateusz (190 minutes). Secondly, Hubert, from the very beginning of the study, was enthusiast to improve his productive skills. One of the comments made by the researcher about him after one of the first classes was:

*“The student is eager to start the study. He keeps saying that he wants to improve his level of English and keeps asking many additional questions during the class.”*

Even though Mateusz’s level of English was higher, he saw this study as a duty. He was sometimes late for classes and was never enthusiast about them. He said he wanted to improve his English; however, he kept repeating that the application was not necessary as his level of English was rather high:

*“The student is late for the classes sometimes. He is usually in a hurry because of the other duties. He seems not to pay too much attention to the study.”*

*“The student said that he doesn’t like using HelloTalk and he will not continue on using it. He didn’t spend too much time although he found the app useful to some extent. He said that “It was OK but it wasn’t extremely interesting to use”.”*

Later, in the questionnaires and interviews Hubert claimed that his writing and speaking skills did not improve too significantly, but he saw the difference and he was encouraged by it to keep improving and using the application. Whereas Mateusz was not content with the application and was rather negative about its features, he wrote that his English improved but not too significantly as his level of English was already high. Thus, it can be concluded that students who are highly motivated will improve their productive skills using *HelloTalk* more than those who are not motivated at all.

In fact, an important factor worth considering is the relationship between the time spent using *HelloTalk* and the increase (or decrease) of students’ motivation to

communicate in English. The data about the amount of time that the students spent using *HelloTalk* was taken from the teacher's journal to explore this relationship, and they showed that the students who had used the application the longest experienced a significant increase of their motivation to communicate in English.

## CHAPTER 5 – Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the pre- and post-questionnaire, the interview and the teacher's journal will be integrated and interpreted to discuss students' perceptions of using *HelloTalk*. The findings of this study will also be compared to previous studies to see if they are corroborated or refuted.

### 5.1. Students' perceptions after using HelloTalk

Specific hypothesis 1 in the study was that students' perception of the use of *HelloTalk* would be positive. According to the students' answers in the pre- and post-questionnaire (question 2), majority of the participants changed their opinion about the usefulness of mobile applications to improve their language skills. It could have happened because the students enjoyed using *HelloTalk* and therefore they changed their opinions about other mobile language applications as well.

The results of the interview also confirm students' positive perception of *HelloTalk* in the questionnaire, as most of the participants enjoyed using the app to improve their English. They mostly felt the app had helped them improve somehow, and most of them were willing to continue using the app after completing the experiment. Most of the students (66 %) also enjoyed automatic translation and saw it a very positive feature of the app, while others (60%) liked in-text corrections because they helped them improve their grammar. Generally, they all felt they had improved either reading, writing, speaking or grammar, and that perceived feeling of self-improvement is what makes them have a positive opinion on *HelloTalk*.

The level of English of the participants (A1, B1 and B2) seems to have been an important factor on their perception of self-improvement thanks to the app. The higher

level of English of the participants was, the more they enjoyed using *HelloTalk*. As the application bases mainly on the real life conversations and the constant contact with the language partners (either written or spoken), the students must be able to communicate freely. Those who are beginners felt afraid of making too many mistakes or felt the anxiety connected with misunderstandings. According to the information collected in the teacher's journal the users with lower level of English enjoyed the parts of the application that helped them to enhance their vocabulary or improve their grammar more than talking with other users.

Enjoyment to use the app seems to have affected students' motivation to learn and therefore their positive perception of *HelloTalk*. The results of the pre- and post-questionnaire on motivation and engagement (question 9 and 11) suggest that the students who spent more time using HelloTalk felt more motivated to communicate using English. Users might need some time to get to know the application before starting to enjoy it. After getting familiar with all the features only then such functions may be appreciated fully. After some time the participants had a chance of finding their language partners with who they simply enjoyed chatting.

Students' willingness to continue using the app is another factor that indicates a positive perception of *HelloTalk*. According to the students' answers in the interviews, the participants were willing to continue the study depending on the users that had a chance to talk with. Therefore, the friendlier the conversation was, the more motivation to continue using the application participants felt. It is not a surprise because as Klimova (2018) points out, if the topic of a chat or a talk is interesting for the students, it is easier and more pleasant for them to use their target language. It may be concluded that they were interested in the conversations because *HelloTalk* let them choose their language partners according to their needs, wants, and interests, which Nushi, and

Makiabadi (2018) view as important factors in the success of an app. Notes from the teacher's journal also reaffirm that students who were determined to improve their productive skills were seeking the contact with the new language partners. McEown and Oga-Baldwin (2019) in their work confirm the theory that the more students are motivated and determined to reach particular language goals, the harder they will work to accomplish it.

Overall, students' perception of *HelloTalk* is fairly positive. Still, there are some features that students did not enjoy in particular. For example, they did not like their role as teachers correcting other users or commenting their posts. What is interesting, according to the teacher's journal, is that the students liked it when other users were correcting them, but the results of the post-questionnaire showed that they did not like to correct others. Information obtained from the teacher's journal showed that the students enjoyed practicing their English in chats or phone calls in general, but they found the "Moments" section rather boring and useless.

To sum up, the students' perception of the application was very positive and therefore the specific hypothesis 1 may be confirmed..

## **5.2. Improvement of students' confidence to speak and write**

The results of the pre- and post-questionnaire provided important information on students' confidence to improve their productive skills, speaking and writing. Questions 12, 13, 21 and 22 were directly related to students' feeling of self-confidence to speak and write after using *HelloTalk*. Students' answer in the post-questionnaire that they agreed on the most frequently was the one about improvement of their confidence because of the *HelloTalk* (question 12). It might have happened because of the

*HelloTalk's* features which let students contact other language partners by chatting or talking using phone calls. Students might have had the opportunity to practice their language skills with native speakers from all around the world and it could make them more confident about their speaking skills. According to the answers obtained from the question 5 (pre- and post-questionnaire), majority of participants felt less anxious while speaking in English after using *HelloTalk*. Such drop of students' anxiety and increase of their self-confidence was also verified by the interviews.

A factor that may have contributed to students' general feeling of self-improvement to use their productive skills is that they noticed that they were writing and talking to native speakers. Most of the students have never had any contact with native speakers, and after the study they might have understood that such exposure will not harm them but help them learn real life English in a friendly environment. According to the notes from the teacher's journal, it may be also concluded that the longer the participants talked with native speakers, the more their self-confidence grew as most of the native speakers were quite helpful and did not pay negative attention to the minor mistakes made during the calls or chats. Thus, the part of Specific Hypothesis 2 about improvement of students' self-confidence in terms of speaking may be proven, but only partially because of the following observation.

According to students' interviews, it was possible to conclude that in terms of improving students' speaking and writing skills students with the higher level of English (B1 and B2) seemed to feel more confident with their productive skills than the students with the lower of English (A2). Thus, *HelloTalk* did help students with their productive skills, but mainly those whose level of English is above intermediate. This means that *HelloTalk* may be effective as an exchange app only with students who can communicate orally and in written form to a certain extent.

As to students' feelings of self-improvement about their writing skills in the post-questionnaire, the students' answers to the question number 7 showed that the participants found writing less difficult after using *HelloTalk* than before. The possibility of constant contact with the English language (having many chatting opportunities) definitely made writing practice less stressful and therefore less difficult for the students. Results from the interview also showed that students with the level of B1 found the application the most useful and efficient to improve their writing skills. According to the results from the questionnaires, interviews, and teacher's journal, the features of the application are extremely helpful for the improvement of writing skills. Therefore, this study confirms Wibowo & Raihani's (2019) conclusions on the usefulness of *HelloTalk* to improve students' writing skills.

Students' feelings of improvement about their speaking skills, according to the results from the pre- and post-questionnaire (question 8) showed that they were less afraid of speaking with strangers online after using *HelloTalk* than before it.

The feeling of having fun and enjoyment seems to have contributed to make students feel they have improved their productive skills. Their answers in the post questionnaire (questions 9-25) showed that the students found the application fun and the study enjoyable. The app made them feel that language learning could resemble a conversation with a friend, making it more interesting than conventional classes in which users are encouraged to write basic information about themselves such as hobbies, places travelled to, etc.

Analysis of the questionnaires and interviews helped to answer RQ2, and it might be concluded that *HelloTalk* helped students with levels B1 and B2 improve their speaking and writing skills, but it was not so effective with students with Level A2.

Therefore, the Main Hypothesis and the Specific Hypothesis 2 can be confirmed only for students whose level of English is at least Intermediate.



## CHAPTER 6 - Conclusion

This case study attempted to explore whether the mobile language application *HelloTalk* could help students to interact and improve their English both inside and outside the classroom. It also tried to investigate whether *HelloTalk* could have a positive impact on students' speaking and writing skills. The main objective of the study has been achieved as the results of the pre- and post-questionnaires, the interview and the teacher's journal showed that the use of *HelloTalk* can have a positive impact on students' productive skills and enhance their learning experience. The participants' perception toward this application showed an important increase in their self-confidence, enjoyment, and motivation to learn, particularly in those students with a higher level of English.. The app also helped them lower their anxiety to communicate in English with native speakers.

Like Wibowo & Raihani (2019) did before, the study validated the effectiveness of *HelloTalk* to improve the writing skills of the students who participated in the research. However, the positive results of this study about the usefulness of the app to improve students' speaking skill cannot be compared to previous studies as there are not any.

Students who participated in the study confirmed that the application definitely motivated them to use English not only inside but also outside the classroom. Such perception was conditioned by a few factors such as frequency of use, level of English, and language partners. For instance, the longer the students used *HelloTalk* daily, the better and more positive was their perception of it. What is more, they felt more confident with their productive skills than the students who used the application occasionally or for a short period of time daily. It was also concluded that the students with B1 or B2 level of English felt the bigger improvement of the confidence with their

writing and speaking skills. Less advanced students (with their A2 level of English) preferred to use the application to improve their grammar or vocabulary (Nugruho, et al., 2021).

Not surprisingly, the students who used the language in a real life conversations could improve their productive skills more than those who preferred to stay in their comfort zone. Also, students' engagement was conditioned by the language users they had a chance to talk with. The students who met the languages partners with similar interests were willing to spend more time using the application than those who did not meet interesting people.

Finally, many interesting features of the application efficiently encouraged the participants of the study to start or continue conversations with native English speakers, confirming Vollmer Rivera's belief (2017).

## **6.1. Limitations of the study**

Despite the attempt to minimize any limitations in the study, there are some aspects that could have been improved. The study lasted 3 weeks but it would have been helpful to extend this period of time to check the longitudinal effects of using *HelloTalk* for a much longer period of time. Another limitation was having only one group of students. It would have been interesting to have two different groups of students and compare the effectiveness of using HelloTalk with the experimental group and then compare the results with a control group. Additionally, there were only 15 students who participated in the study and their levels of English varied. Conclusions on the usefulness of the app can only be generalized with a larger sample of participants. Despite those limitations, this case study still offers a valuable insight into the use of the mobile language

application *HelloTalk* to learn English as not many studies has been conducted about it before.

To sum up, because of the rapidly changing ways of teaching English, mobile learning applications are still not fully appreciated nowadays. It is a wide field with a lot to offer to language learners of all languages and a lot of research is required. There are not too many studies about *HelloTalk* available although the potential of such application is great because of its compactness and the ubiquity of technology in the modern world.

## **6.2. Future recommendations**

More research into the usefulness of exchange applications for language learning like *HelloTalk* is necessary. Future studies could be performed but using a semi-experimental research design instead, with an experimental and a control group. This study was performed in a form of a case study due to the only group of participants available, but a different approach could help to refute or corroborate findings of this case study. Besides, it would also be useful to find out whether the results would be similar or the same with bigger groups of students (control and experimental groups).

It would be interesting to carry out a similar study with participants whose level is the same or similar as well, as Wibowo & Raihani (2019) or Nugruho, et al. (2021) did in their studies.



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*Vol. 6, Issue 1, 117-127*

# Appendixes:

## Appendix A:

1. Try to answer the questions below. Use your own words.
  - What does a motivation mean for you? How would you define it?
  - What motivational techniques do you know? Have you ever tried any of them? Did they work?
  - What keeps you motivated on a daily basis?
  - Is motivation important for you? Why/why not?
2. Describe one thing that made you motivated this week. Explain why you chose this one.
3. Do you feel more motivated when somebody encourages you to do something, or you prefer self-motivation? Why?
4. Read those two short texts about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Next, prepare a short oral summary of it. Use your own words.

**Intrinsic motivation** is motivation that comes from inside the learner himself or herself. He or she may be motivated to learn something for the pure enjoyment of learning, for example people who are motivated to learn a language because they love the language and the experience of learning it.

**Extrinsic motivation** comes from an outside source to motivate the learner. This could be some kind of reward or a punishment. For example, people might be motivated to learn a language because they want good results in an exam, or because they will lose their job if they don't.

Resource: <https://www.onestopenglish.com/download?ac=2671>

5. Think of a time, when you had intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and describe it.
6. What kind of activities do you find DEmotivating? Make a list. Think of minimum 5 activities.
7. Watch the video about self-motivation below and answer some questions afterward.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVB\\_FgVidWk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVB_FgVidWk)

- What were the key points of this talk?
  - Is self-motivation important to you? Why/ why not?
  - Do you motivate yourself? Is it difficult for you?
8. Try to think of definitions of the following expressions.
    - 8.1. Try to give examples of the sentences with them.
    - 8.2. Do you think that those words may be useful? If so- in what kind of contexts? If no- why?

- set a goal,
- achieve your goal,
- personal satisfaction,
- overcome obstacles,
- to be determined to finish something,
- day in and day out,
- stay accountable,
- start small,
- get overwhelmed;

Resource: <http://www.onlinelanguageacademy.com/en/blog/advanced-english-conversation-motivation.htm>

## Appendix B

1. Is success important for you? Why/ why not?
2. Do you think that you have to be successful to be happy? Why?
3. Do you think that famous people, especially when successful, are happy? Why?
4. Do you consider yourself a successful person? Why/why not? Would you like to change it? If so- how would you do it?
5. Read the text below. Try to summarize each point using your own words.

### "7 Ways to be Successful"

Many people want to be successful in life, but it's easier said than done. There are so many **distractions** in life that it can be challenging to accomplish our goals. By **keeping the following** advice in mind, however, you can dramatically increase your chances of becoming successful in whatever you choose to pursue.

1. *Imagine yourself being successful.* Einstein said that the **imagination** is more important than knowledge. The more vividly and accurately you **imagine** your success, the easier it will be to be successful.

2. *Surround yourself with other people who are successful.* When you're surrounded with people who are **highly-driven**, it's encouraging.

3. *Stay away from distractions.* There are so many distractions in this world that you really don't need. Whenever you are doing something which is not useful or productive, **imagine** yourself as a **loser** with **shattered** dreams and push yourself away.

4. *Set a time* for when you want to achieve your goal. If you don't know when you will achieve your dream then you will never know when you will achieve it

5. *Take risks.* Step out of your **comfort zone**. Successful people think big and act big. It can be a scary thing to do, but if you don't, **then** will you ever be successful? Successful people make **big investments** (in their careers, in their businesses, in their education) and **all investments** involve risk. But don't be **reckless**. Study your risks, make sure the odds are in your favor, **then take a leap**.

6. *Be persistent.* Don't give up. If your **first attempt** didn't work, don't quit. Always keep in mind the following sentence: "If you don't give up, you **cannot fail**".

7. *Remove fear and doubt* from your way of thinking, and **focus** on keeping positive in every situation. You will be more effective if you keep a positive mind and stay focused on your goal. Remember, you can be your own best friend or your own worst enemy.

Resource: <https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/vocabulary/emotions/conversation-lesson-success/28423>

6. Do you agree with this **advice**? Why/ why not? How would you change them?
7. Connect vocabulary with their definitions.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 1. Distraction   | A. to try to achieve something over a long period of time                     |
| 2. Pursue        | B. to completely destroy someone's hopes, beliefs, or confidence              |
| 3. Vivid         | C. when you spend a large amount of time, energy, emotion on something        |
| 4. Highly-driven | D. not caring or worrying about the bad or dangerous results                  |
| 5. Loser         | E. trying to do something, especially something difficult                     |
| 6. Shattered     | F. someone who is never successful in life, work, or relationships            |
| 7. Comfort Zone  | G. something that stops you paying attention to what you are doing            |
| 8. Investment    | H. to give special attention to one particular person or thing                |
| 9. Reckless      | I. to have a lot of motivation  |
| 10. Take a leap  | J. very clear, seeming real   |
| 11. Attempt      | K. go for something, take a chance  |
| 12. Focus        | L. the range of activities or situations that you feel happy and confident in |

Resource: <https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/vocabulary/emotions/conversation-lesson-success/28423>

8. Do you think it's a success if somebody who didn't see you for a long time, doesn't recognize you anymore? Why/why not?

9. Listen to the audio below and complete the exercise about it afterward.

<https://www.esl-lounge.com/student/listening/3L1-youve-changed.php>

10. Describe the difference between TERRIFIC and TERRIBLE.

11. Watch this short TED talk. How does it make you feel?

[https://www.ted.com/talks/richard\\_st\\_john\\_8\\_secrets\\_of\\_success?language=en#t-84224](https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_st_john_8_secrets_of_success?language=en#t-84224)

12. Prepare your own list of advice for somebody who wants to be successful.



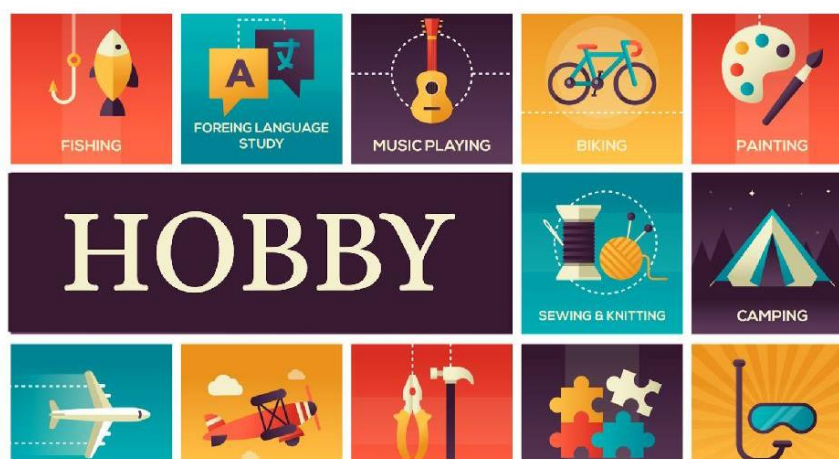
## Appendix C

1. Try to answer the questions below.

- Do you think that hobby is an essential part of your life? Why/ why not?
- Do you need a hobby to be happy? Can you be happy without it?
- Do you have any hobby/passion? What is it?

2. Look at the picture below.

- Discuss with your partner things that you can see on it.
- Are you interested in any of them? If yes- why? If no- which are the things that you're interested in?
- Would you recommend your hobby to your friends? Why/why not?



Resource: <https://www.quizony.com/what-is-your-favorite-hobby/index.html>

3. How did you find your hobby?

- If you could- would you like to give up your job and concentrate on your hobby instead? Why/why not?

4. Do you like to spend time outdoors? Why/why not?

- Which are the activities that you enjoy doing outdoors? Why?
- What is an outdoor activity that you've always wanted to try?

5. Listen to the audio available in the link below and answer some questions about it.

<https://www.highlevellistening.com/free-time-vocabulary-part-3/>

- Does the man enjoy outdoors activities?
- What are the activities that the woman likes?
- What does nature mean to you? How would you define it?

6. Look at the cards below. Decide, whether you prefer to be Student A, or Student B. Perform a short role play according to the described situations below.

<p>1A</p> <p>You have a model plane that you want to sell. You'd like £120 for all the items, but you are willing to accept a little bit less. You need to arrange when and where to meet the buyer and how they are going to pay you.</p>	<p>1B</p> <p>You have seen the following advert on a noticeboard:</p> <p><i>For sale! Radio controlled model plane (almost new). Includes remote, instructions and warranty. £120 ONO. Phone Tony on 090548211.</i></p> <p>You are interested, but don't want to pay as much as £120. Try to negotiate the price down.</p>
<p>2A</p> <p>You organise yoga and pilates classes in the gym. You always want to encourage people to come along. You have some questions you always ask; for example, has the person ever done Yoga or Pilates before? How fit are they? Will they come every week? Etc.</p>	<p>2B</p> <p>You have seen the following advert on a noticeboard:</p> <p><i>Feeling stressed? Come and join our yoga and pilates classes. Tues and Fri from 19:30 in the gym. Get fit, stay fit and have fun being healthy. It's a lifestyle thing ☺</i></p> <p>You are interested, but you want to find out how much it costs and you'd like to know more about the classes.</p>

Resource: <https://www.onestopenglish.com/general-english/topics-hobbies/552212.article>

7. Choose 4 questions and ask your partner about them. Answer the questions that are asked to you.

- What do you usually do in your free time?
- How often do you do this hobby?
- Who do you usually spend your free time with?
- Do you like visiting art galleries? (Why/ not?)
- How often do you go to the cinema?
- Do you like watching films?
- What kinds of films do you like?
- What is your all-time favorite film?
- Do you like classical music?
- Can you play a musical instrument? If yes, how well do you play?



Resource: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/555561304010152678/>

8. Write a short note on a blog. Describe your last weekend. Include information about the activities that you performed.

## Appendix D

### 1. Watch the video below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-uM8GUFhSA>

### 2. Answer the questions below:

- What do you think about the video? Do you agree with given advice?
- What are the steps that you can take to start doing your dream job?
- What does a 'dream job' mean to you? Is it just a fairytale or a real possibility? Why?
- Do you do your dream job? If so- describe it. If no- what job would it be? What is the way you would have to take to get this job?
- Do you hate your job?
- Do you think that the main purpose of a job is earning money? Why/why not?
- Did COVID resolutions affect your job? If so- how?

### 3. Perform those 2 role plays.

(1a) You are a manager. You are in your office. Your best employee knocks on your door. He/she wants to talk with you.

(1b) You are at work. Please tell your boss that you have accepted a position at another company, so you will be leaving the company in 2 weeks.

(2a) You are a boss. Tell your employees that because of the economic crisis, they will be taking a 20% pay cut. This pay cut actually started last month, but you forgot to tell them. Also, you will need them to come in on the weekends for the next few months, until things get better.

(2b) You are at work. Your lovely boss has an announcement.

Resource: <https://www.englishcurrent.com/roleplays/esl-roleplay-cards-upperintermediateadvanced-set-1/>

4. Do you think that you need to be a decisive person to be a good worker/boss? Why/ why not?
5. If you could choose between being a boss and working under somebody- which one would you prefer and why?
6. Listen to the short audio below and complete the exercises about it.

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/intermediate-b1/making-a-decision>

7. Read the ads below and decide which statements are true or false.



**Call Now!**

Do you like to fix sinks? If your answer is "YES", then we have a job for you! Call 457-9082 and ask for Bob.

**Speedy Plumbers**



**Time Is Money**

Would you like to work at home, and still make a lot of money in your free time? We can show you how! Don't do anything. Just send us a check for \$5,504 and we will help you become rich! Hurry!

P.O. Box 1234 Sometown, USA

**ACTORS & ACTRESSES**

A big Hollywood movie company is now in town filming a new movie. We are looking for anyone with acting experience. Are you interested? Call us at:

**0967638974**

**'Mars Attacks' Space Agency**

The Mars Attacks Space Agency (MASA) is looking for two monkeys and one person to become **ASTRONAUTS!** Phone us for an interview. 807-5192

**WANTED WAITERS & WAITRESSES**

**ALI'S RESTAURANT**

Ali is looking for waiters and waitresses to work in his new downtown restaurant on Main St. Call Mr. Ali and start work tomorrow. 050-3449995

1. If you like to work at your home, you can call Speedy Plumbers. **TRUE / FALSE**
2. If you like to fix sinks, you can call Bob. **TRUE / FALSE**
3. You don't need an interview if you want to become an astronaut. **TRUE / FALSE**
4. Ali has a new restaurant. **TRUE / FALSE**
5. You might have to work with animals at the Space Agency. **TRUE / FALSE**
6. The Hollywood movie company is looking for people with acting experience. **TRUE / FALSE**
7. You can start work next week at the restaurant. **TRUE / FALSE**
8. You must go to Sometown, U.S.A. if you want to become rich. **TRUE / FALSE**
9. Ali's Restaurant is located on Main Street. **TRUE / FALSE**
10. You should call tomorrow if you want to work at Speedy Plumbers. **TRUE / FALSE**

Permission granted to reproduce for classroom use. © www.allthingstopics.com

Resource: <https://www.allthingstopics.com/jobs-and-work.html>

8. Do you think that a successful job is a key to happiness? Why/ why not?
9. Let's play Kahoot! Go for <https://kahoot.it/> and complete the quiz about job vocabulary!

<https://create.kahoot.it/details/0d4ce6ab-ff47-41eb-abdf-371a39c986de>

10. Do you think that it's important to keep balance between private life and work? Why/why not?
11. What can you do to be a good worker?
  - Do you consider yourself a good worker? Why/why not?

## Appendix E

**1. Answer the following questions:**

- Do you think that sleep is important?
- How much sleep do you usually get?
- What do you do when you have trouble sleeping?
- What time do you usually go to sleep? What time do you usually get up?
- Have you ever slept in a strange place that was not a bed?
- What do you think about the sleep diary?

**2. Read the short text from the link below. How would you summarize it?**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210227-video-conferencing.html>

**3. How would you rank these websites? Which one do you find the easiest to cooperate with?**

- Zoom
- Skype
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Messenger
- YouTube

**4. Connect vocabulary from the first paragraph with their definitions on the right.**

extended	A person who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge of or skill in a particular area.
spell	Limited in extent, number, scope, or action.
expert	Lasting longer than is usual or expected.
dubbed	A short period of time.
phenomenon	Gave an unofficial name or nickname to someone or something.
restricted	A remarkable person, thing, or event.
array	A range of a particular type of thing.



**5. Fill in the blanks with the words listed below.**

expert	extended	way	effects	platform	heavily	fatigue	platforms
--------	----------	-----	---------	----------	---------	---------	-----------

A new study from Stanford University has investigated the (1) \_\_\_\_\_ on our health of extended spells of video-conferencing. Researcher and communications (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Jeremy Bailenson dubbed the phenomenon "Zoom (3) \_\_\_\_\_," but acknowledged the condition is not restricted to just that (4) \_\_\_\_\_. In the past year, most of us have spent (5) \_\_\_\_\_ periods of time online using an array of video-conferencing (6) \_\_\_\_\_. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tools like Zoom, FaceTime, Skype and Google Hangouts have been the only (7) \_\_\_\_\_ we have been able to see and chat to loved ones. Many companies have relied (8) \_\_\_\_\_ on video-conferencing for meetings, and educators have used them to teach their lessons online.

**6. What do you think about teaching online? Are you a fan or enemy of it? Why?**

**7. How would you improve video classes?**

**8. Do you think that online work will become more popular in the future? Why/why not?**

**9. Answer the questions below:**

- Are you addicted to social media? Why do you think that way?
- How long do you use your computer/phone daily?
- Do you think it would be difficult for you to give up technology? Would you be able to live without it?
- Do you think that technology causes anxiety? Why?
- Do you think that the world would change if the technology never existed? If so- how?
- Are you for or against implementing technology in every aspect of life? Why?

**10. Complete the reading comprehension below. Find out what FOMO is.**

<https://learnenglishteensof.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/upper-intermediate-b2-reading/fomo>

**11. Have you ever heard of FOMO before? Have you experienced it yourself?**

**12. Watch this short video and answer a few questions afterward.**

<https://app.fluentize.com/lesson/social-media-fomo>

- Which are the key points of this video that should be highlighted?
- Do you think that it is common to feel FOMO nowadays? Why?
- Which groups of people are especially vulnerable in terms of Fear Of Missing Out?

- How can we fight with it?

**13. HOMEWORK: Try to find a video that inspires you and prepare a short summary of it.**

## Appendix F

1. What does globalisation mean for you? Is it a positive or negative phenomenon in your opinion?
2. Watch the video and try to sum it up using your own words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLNp3kgBuuQ>

3. What is the impact of globalisation on an individual? Does it have any impact at all?
4. What do you think the world would look like without globalisation? Was it possible to avoid globalisation?
5. Prepare a short dialogue. Choose, whether you're for or against the globalisation. Using the argument described below (or your own ones) discuss the effects of this phenomenon.

<https://www.debatingeurope.eu/focus/arguments-for-and-against-globalization/#.YEUdCdzdg2w>

6. What may be far-reaching effects of globalisation? Will they be rather positive or negative? Why?
7. What is diversity for you? How do you understand this word?
8. Listen to the audio in the link below and complete the exercises about it.

<https://www.debatingeurope.eu/focus/arguments-for-and-against-globalization/#.YEUdCdzdg2w>

9. Try to answer the following question:

- What does a personal space mean for you?
- Do you think that concept of personal space is the same in all cultures? If not, how can it differ? Give examples.
- In what kind of situations you may hear this term? Business meetings, school, work place?
- Do you think that it's important to learn about other cultures in terms of personal space? Why/why not?
- Have you ever learned about it?
- Have you ever experienced the situation when you felt uncomfortable because of social distance?

10. According to the personal space on the picture below- in which culture this picture could be taken? Why?



source: <https://companionsforseniors.com/2020/05/conversation-starters-with-elderly/>

11. Is physical distancing and social distancing the same thing? Why/why not?



Source: [https://www.tbdhu.com/blog\\_socialdistancing](https://www.tbdhu.com/blog_socialdistancing)



## Appendix G

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Name:**

**Age:**

**This questionnaire was designed to check your perception on the use of mobile applications like *HelloTalk* to learn English. Please, read the following statements carefully and choose only one option using an X. There are no right or wrong answers. Thank you!**

1. I use mobile applications to learn languages.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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2. I think that I can improve my language skills by using mobile applications

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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3. In general, I enjoy learning English.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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4. I enjoy using mobile applications to learn languages.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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5. I always feel anxious when I have to speak in English..

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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6. Speaking is the most difficult language skill for me.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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7. Writing is the most difficult language skill for me

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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8. I am afraid of speaking with strangers online .

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

9. With HelloTalk, my motivation to communicate in English has increased.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

10. With HelloTalk, communication in English is fun.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

11. With HelloTalk, learning English is more engaging and motivating

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

12. With HelloTalk, my self-confidence to speak in English has improved.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

13. With HelloTalk, my self-confidence to write in English has improved.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

14. I enjoy using HelloTalk to learn English.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

15. With HelloTalk, I prefer engaging with other language learners using the video-call rather than using text.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

16. I enjoy reading other learners' posts in HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

17. I enjoy writing comments on other learners' post in HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

18. I enjoy speaking with language partners using HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

19. My reading has also improved thanks to HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

20. I enjoy correcting other learners' mistakes when I use HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

21. I am not so afraid of speaking in English when I use HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

22. I find it hard to speak in English with other language partners using HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

23. I think my writing has improved more than my speaking with HelloTalk.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

24. The automatic translation feature in HelloTalk really helps in my conversations with language partners.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

25. The on-the-text correction feature has really helped me improve my use of English.

STRONGLY  
DISAGREE

DISAGREE

NEUTRAL

AGREE

STRONGLY  
AGREE

## Appendix H

### INTERVIEW

Name:

Age:

1. Are you going to keep on using HelloTalk after the study?

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2. What skills have you improved the most while using HelloTalk?

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3. Do you feel more confident to speak and to write in English after using HelloTalk?

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4. In what ways has HelloTalk helped you increase your confidence to use the English language?

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5. Do you think that HelloTalk is a useful tool for language learning?

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6. Do you feel that your ability to speak and write in English has improved because of HelloTalk?

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7. Do you think that your confidence to speak and to write in English will improve if you keep on using HelloTalk?

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8. What features of HelloTalk did you like most? Which did you dislike most and why?

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9. With HelloTalk, did you enjoy acting as a teacher and correcting other language learners' postings and comments?

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