

Light It Up With LINE: Increasing Student Participation Using LINE Messaging APP

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Abstract: “Light It Up With LINE” is an action research implementation designed for short-term Intensive English and Hawaiian Culture Program international students studying at Kapi’olani Community College. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing a messaging app to increase student participation inside and outside the classroom. The following formative evaluation report focuses on the implementation and assessment of the messaging app LINE, as designed to help students become more educationally engaged, vocal, and communicative during the duration of the participants’ study-abroad studies. The action research was designed after program coordinators evaluated the planning and content analysis of the instruction. Program coordinators, instructor, and student feedback were incorporated at various stages of the development and implementation process of this action research. The overall implementation was continually revised and modified based on feedback from all involved parties. This report will discuss the implementation process and the results of incorporating LINE in the classroom to increase student engagement.

Keywords: Action Research, LINE, Messaging App, Increasing Student Participation

INTRODUCTION

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this action research was to evaluate the impact of using LINE to increase student participation inside and outside the classroom for short-term Japanese ESL exchange students taking Intensive English and Hawaiian Culture course at Kapi’olani Community College, Hawai’i, USA.

Research Questions: 1. How will the use of LINE impact student participation inside the classroom?
2. How will the use of LINE impact student participation outside the classroom?

Context: Due to cultural differences, language barrier, and lower confidence to speak up in class from the fear of making a mistake, short-term international students usually need extra motivation in order to be vocal and actively participate inside and outside the classroom. There is also a lack of motivation for students to contact the instructor if they have questions and/or having difficulty completing an assignment.

Intervention: LINE was introduced as a platform to increase student participation inside and outside the classroom. Students were given in-class activities that required the use of LINE. Students were also given

tasks that required the use of LINE to actively communicate with the instructor, work with their classmates, and complete assignments outside of the classroom.

Participants: Short-term Japanese international students from Miyazaki Municipal University (MMU), Japan, that participated in a three week English intensive course at Kapi’olani Community College (KCC) from March 1, 2018, to March 21, 2018. Participant age ranged from 18 to 20 years-old. It was the first time studying abroad in Hawai’i for all of the nine students that participated in the course. A lite implementation of LINE was conducted for previous MMU students that took the same course in March 2017. Having existing student feedback from their previous cohort made this group the ideal participants for the action research.

INSTRUMENTATION

LINE Class Participation Observation Tool

Observer: _____ Course: _____
Dates: _____

Class Dates:	TIME <i>In Class Observation Hours</i>	TIME <i>Outside Class Observation Hours</i>	Teacher Comments

	T1 0:00 HR	T2 0:30 HR	T3 1:00 HR	T1 1:30 HR	D1 4:30 PM	D2 11:59 PM	

- 4) Talkative
- 5) Very talkative

Outside of Class LINE Assignment Observation. Observed time intervals were set between students' last class of the day at 4:30 p.m. and the due date of their LINE assignments at 11:59 p.m. before the next class meeting.

<u>T1 to T5 Observation Scale:</u>	<u>D1 to D2 Observation Scale:</u>	<u>Observations:</u>
1. Very quiet	1. Very unengaged	
2. Quiet	2. Unengaged	
3. Neutral	3. Neutral	
4. Talkative	4. Engaged	
5. Very talkative	5. Very engaged	

D1: From 4:30 p.m. on the day of the current class session meeting

D2: 11:59 p.m. of when the current assignment is due

Outside of Class Observation Scale

- 1) Very unengaged
- 2) Unengaged
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Engaged
- 5) Very engaged

Figure 1. Class Observation Tool

Students have high participation level when

- 1) Able to engage in in-class activities
- 2) Able to pay attention to instruction
- 3) Able to discuss current discussion topic
- 4) Able to post LINE assignment on time
- 5) Able to reply classmate with quality and relative feedback for an online assignment

Students have low participation level when

- 1) Does not show interest/lost during in-class activities
- 2) Fall asleep, play with mobile devices, or chat with a classmate during instruction
- 3) Not paying attention to the current discussion topic
- 4) Post LINE assignment late
- 5) Don't reply or reply is not adequate to complete the assignment

Definition of terms and codes

English Workshop Course

- Three week course
- Two hours per class
- Eight class meetings

T1: First Class Observation Time Interval. Class time minute 0:00 to 0:30 minutes

T2: Second Class Observation Time Interval. Class time minute 0:30 to 1:00 hour

T3: Third Class Observation Time Interval. Class time hour 1:00 to 1:30 hour/minutes

T4: Fourth Class Observation Time Interval. Class time hour 1:30 to 2:00 hour

In-Class Observation Scale

- 1) Very quiet
- 2) Quiet
- 3) Neutral

IMPLEMENTATION

The observation tool and the following observation procedures were implemented during the eight in-class meeting sessions and the time interval between in-class meetings for the three-week-long Intensive English and Hawaiian Culture program.

1. In-Class Procedure: LINE was observed and integrated into four different intervals throughout the English Workshop Course.

- T1: Student presents their LINE homework at the beginning of each class
- T2: No LINE integration. Course lecture session
- T3: Integrate LINE to complete the class activity of the day
- T4: Remind students to complete their assigned LINE homework at the end of each class

Observation Method: From a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very quiet, 3 being neutral, and 5 being very talkative, the instructor observed and rated the students' participation level using the observation protocol. LINE was not actively integrated into T2 and for the majority of T4 in order to observe the difference in behavior when LINE was used/not used during the class period.

2. Outside of Class Procedure: Instructor integrated LINE in time intervals between class meetings for the English Workshop Course.

- D1: Teacher posts a question on LINE's "Notes" section
- D2: Due date for each student to complete the assignment by responding to the discussion question and/or posting a photo/video.

Observation Method: From a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very unengaged, 3 being neutral, and 5 very engaged, the instructor observed and rated the students' participation level by assessing the quality, promptness, and relatedness of their online assignment posts using the observation protocol.

Implementation table:

Phase of Study	Approximate duration	Action
1) Planning	1 week	Developed plan, protocol, and lesson. Received feedback from program coordinators.
2) Implementation	3 weeks	Observed class using protocol. Data entry with the observation.
3) Analysis	1 week	Data analysis.
4) Reflection	1 week	Conclusion/Discussion. Develop a prioritized list of recommendations for change/improvement.

Figure 2.Implementation Table

DATA ANALYSIS

After the implementation period, data were analyzed by individually evaluating the results of the observation scales in each designated observation hours. The gathered data was used to determine the positive/negative impact of the use/absence of LINE from T1-T4 and D1-D2. If the average scores per time period were higher than 4.0, it translated to the success of using LINE to increase student participation. If the score is lower than 3.0, it translated to the implementation of LINE needing more improvement and exploration of different techniques to increase student participation. Average scores between 3.0 to 4.0 were considered a neutral result.

The action research was completed in 6 weeks: 4 weeks of planning and implementation and 2 weeks of data analysis and suggested revisions. For this to be a successful data analysis, multiple implementations and data iterations must be completed with future courses. Program revisions and improvements will be incorporated per new action research implementation.

Results:

Class Dates	TIME <i>In-Class Observation</i>	TIME <i>Outside Class</i>	Teacher Comments

	Hours				Observation Hours		
	T1 0:00 HR	T2 0:30 HR	T3 1:00 HR	T4 1:30 HR	D1 4:30 PM	D2 11:59 PM	
3/2 10am - 12pm	2	4	2	2	1	5	Students were adamant about using LINE for in-class and homework activities.
3/5 2pm - 4pm	5	1	5	3	2	5	Students were not responsive and focused less during T2.
3/14 10am - 12pm	5	2	5	3	3	5	Some students asked for Hawai'i recommendations outside of class time.
3/16 9am - 11am	5	4	5	5	4	4	Students started submitting homework early (D1). Some students submitted homework late (D2).
3/19 10am - 12pm	5	3	4	2	5	5	Students used lunchtime to continue LINE in-class activities.
3/20 9am - 11am	5	3	4	3	N/A	N/A	Students enjoys presenting their LINE homeworks at the beginning of each class period.
3/20 11am - 1pm	5	3	5	5	5	5	Students incorporated LINE in their Mini Expo presentations. Students asked suggestions to improve final presentation.
3/21 9am - 11am	5	N/A	N/A	5	5	N/A	Students used components of their LINE assignments to prepare and present outstanding presentations. Students sent messages even after program was completed.
Avg.	4.62	2.85	4.28	3.50	3.57	4.83	

Figure 2.Implementation Table

After 3 weeks of observation and data collection, the observation protocol result showed that students have the highest in-class participation rate at T1 and

T3. The students were always asked to present their LINE homework at the beginning of the class (T1). Students were hesitant and felt shy at the beginning of the program, however, they always gave their full effort and attention when presenting, listening to their peers, and providing personal comments and suggestions. Some students commented that presenting their homework at T1 forces them to wake up at the beginning of the class. T3 had the second highest rate of student participation averages. T3 required the use of LINE for students to complete their in-class activities. Sample in-class LINE activities included capturing photos/videos, sharing cultural drawings, and responding to discussion posts. Students found it convenient sharing and presenting their classwork using LINE. T4 had a neutral result in increasing student participation. LINE was only incorporated in the last 10 minute of the class where the students' LINE homework was explained. Students were more open to asking questions, talking to their classmates for advice, and checking their LINE's Note section to read and discuss the description of the homework. Students had the lowest averages at T2, where the actual use of LINE was not incorporated at all. LINE homework and reflections were brought up for T2 in hopes of encouraging students to be more vocal in the course, however, the results were not as successful as T3 when students can use their LINE to actively participate in class. Students were asked to raise their hand if they have any questions/comments/concerns during T2 with a very minimal result of students responding to speak up in class. During T3, students were allowed to type a question and send it through LINE before vocally explaining any questions/comments/concerns that they had just shared on the class' group chat. Compare to T3, students were more open in sharing their thoughts in class if they were able to send it as an SMS first instead of the traditional way of raising their hands to voice their opinions in T2.

After 3 weeks of observation and data collection, the observation protocol results showed that students had a steady increase of student participation rate outside the classroom at D1 and students had the highest overall participation rate at D2. After each class sessions, students started to ask more questions and initiated their own conversations on LINE. During D1, students sent messages to their fellow classmates and the instructor in regard to classwork discussions, homework help, and personal questions; shopping, transportation, food, Hawaiian songs, scenic spots, etc. The steady improvement showed that students started to feel more comfortable engaging with one another outside the classroom after each class sessions. D2 is the day when homework is due so it was normal to witness the most LINE traffic during this observation period. Students always submitted their homework during D2; three students

had a bad internet connection during one iteration so they submitted their homework 15 minutes late, however, they individually initiated a discussion post on LINE to take responsibility and explain their situation to the class. D2 offered the most consistent student engagement and collaboration with the use of LINE outside classroom hours.

CONCLUSION/DISCUSSION

The messaging app, LINE, was introduced as an intervention to increase student participation inside and outside the classroom for short-term ESL students. The class participation observation tool results showed that students were more engaged and vocal when the use of LINE was required/incorporated into the course lessons and assignments. With proper planning and academic design, a messaging app with SMS and discussion posting capabilities can be used to enhance student participation. However, an instructor should not include the use of a messaging app, such as LINE, just for the sake of incorporating a technology in the classroom. The tool must coincide with the goals, learning objectives, and target audience of the course. The use of LINE was a success in this action research because extensive planning and revisions were conducted with the program coordinators to refine the content and usability of LINE within each lesson and assignments. Usability testing and research were also conducted to identify the most common messaging app used by the target audience (all of the students that participated in this study already used LINE in their daily lives in their home country). The goal of the Intensive English and Hawaiian Culture program was to provide these students the most engaging and educationally enhancing learning experience during the length of their study abroad program. Based on the results of this research, LINE contributed a significant role in encouraging and inspiring students to become more participative during and outside of their class sessions. LINE provided a platform for students to become more communicative and vocal with their own questions/opinions/suggestions that would not have been possible otherwise if the class was conducted in a traditional fashion without any technological intervention. Thus, the action research was successful in incorporating a messaging app to increase student participation and enhancing the study-abroad learning experience.

APPENDIX

[LINE Class Participation Observation Protocol](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pny60sIRgelyiEgWdbAfA9wqohWLzr5kbEr1SpfLy18/edit?usp=sharing)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pny60sIRgelyiEgWdbAfA9wqohWLzr5kbEr1SpfLy18/edit?usp=sharing>

[LINE Assignment Guidelines](#)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HFcGsTOboGCSaNpitT5ugu8V1LUywc_AxqOltycI0Zc/edit?usp=sharing