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**Article**

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✉ Boon Yih Mah [mahboonyih@gmail.com](mailto:mahboonyih@gmail.com)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9505-6610>

## **Investigating IELTS Speaking Instructional Needs and the Acceptance of WeChat as a WeCWI-Enabled Instructional Tool**

**Yu Jiashun**

Akademi Pengajian Bahasa,  
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Pulau Pinang  
Malaysia

**Suo Changbao**

Akademi Pengajian Bahasa,  
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Pulau Pinang  
Malaysia

**Boon Yih Mah**

Akademi Pengajian Bahasa,  
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Pulau Pinang  
Malaysia

### **ABSTRACT**

IELTS Speaking has long been the weakest skill among Chinese IELTS test-takers due to three underlying factors: traditional teaching methods, psychological factors, and limited exposure to oral English. To address these issues, mobile-assisted language learning, specifically via accessible chat platforms such as WeChat, has emerged as a potential intervention. However, to improve Chinese undergraduates' IELTS Speaking performance via WeChat, it is essential to clarify their specific instructional needs and WeChat acceptance before implementation. To guide the design of WeChat-based IELTS Speaking instruction, Web-based Cognitive Writing Instruction (WeCWI), although originally developed for writing instruction, serves as a robust hybrid e-framework. To this end, this study developed the INAIS-WeAS Questionnaire to measure both constructs. A sample of 50 Chinese undergraduates was recruited to validate the questionnaire, examine students' relevant instructional needs, and assess their acceptance of WeChat, with the aim of developing a WeCWI-enabled WeChat Application to address these needs in the future. The INAIS-WeAS Questionnaire demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.8$ ) and satisfactory construct validity via EFA. Students demonstrated a strong need for interactive teaching methods, increased exposure to spoken English, and reduced speaking anxiety. Their willingness to use WeChat for IELTS Speaking was only moderate, possibly due to a reluctance to curate test-specific content. This study addresses two research gaps by developing a specific assessment tool to evaluate IELTS Speaking instructional needs and WeChat acceptance, and, in doing so, lays the foundation for future research on this understudied topic.

**KEYWORDS:** IELTS Speaking, WeCWI, WeChat, Instructional needs, Acceptance