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The use of Cake application in improving English speaking skills of students SMPN 2 Kulo

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Abstrak

Dengan menggunakan program aplikasi Cake, penelitian ini berupaya untuk mengetahui apakah siswa kelas VIII B di SMPN 2 Kulo mengalami peningkatan dalam ketepatan berbicara mereka, khususnya dalam pelafalan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode pra-eksperimen dengan desain kuantitatif untuk menganalisis data. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes berbicara yang terdiri dari pre-test, perlakuan (treatment), dan post-test. Populasi penelitian ini adalah seluruh siswa SMPN 2 Kulo, dan yang dijadikan sampel adalah kelas VIII B yang dipilih melalui seleksi tertentu. Jumlah siswa dalam sampel ini sebanyak dua belas orang. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan aplikasi Cake memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan berbicara siswa, khususnya dalam hal pelafalan. Hal ini ditunjukkan oleh peningkatan skor rata-rata ketepatan berbicara siswa, khususnya dalam pelafalan, dari 66,08 pada pre-test menjadi 80,92 pada post-test. Selain itu, nilai t-hitung (14,791 > 2,144) lebih besar daripada t-tabel. Ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat peningkatan dalam penggunaan aplikasi Cake untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa, khususnya dalam aspek pelafalan.

Kata kunci: keterampilan berbicara, aplikasi Cake, pelafalan

Abstract

Using the Cake application program, this study attempts to ascertain whether class VIII B students at SMPN 2 Kulo have improved their speaking correctness, particularly in their pronunciation. Pre-experimental research using a quantitative design was employed in this study to analyze data. A speaking exam with a pre-, treatment-, and post-test was the tool utilized. All SMPN 2 Kulo pupils made up the population, and class VIII B, which was chosen through selective selection, was the sample. Twelve pupils were enrolled in total.The results of the study demonstrated that students' speaking abilities were significantly impacted by the usage of cake applications to enhance speaking abilities, particularly in the area of pronunciation.

This is demonstrated by the fact that students' average speaking accuracy score, particularly in pronunciation, was 66.08 on the pre-test and rose to 80.92 on the post-test. Furthermore, the t-test value (14.791 > 2.144) is greater than the t-table. This indicates that there is a rise in the use of cake applications to enhance pupils' speaking abilities, particularly with regard to pronunciation.

Keyword: speaking skills,cake application,pronunciation

Introduction

Many aspects of life, including education, have undergone significant changes due to the rapid development of information technology. In the Indonesian Dictionary, language is defined as a communication tool that takes the form of a system of symbols produced through human speech.In this digital era, numerous language learning applications have emerged, one of which is the Cake application. This application offers an interactive learning method that enables users to learn English independently and enjoyably through videos, dialogues, and speaking exercises. This aligns with Herry's (2021) view that language learning which includes direct practice greatly influences one's speaking ability. Applications such as Cake are expected to serve as alternatives for students in overcoming the challenges they face in improving their English speaking skills.

The Cake application is a recommended tool for learning speaking, particularly English. It displays pronunciation examples of words through videos and prompts users to repeat after them. While some learning apps require supporting programs, others like Cake are designed to operate independently and are user-friendly.Maruli Pangabean (1981) emphasized the importance of language, stating that it is a spiritual means of communication essential for social coexistence. According to various experts, language serves as a medium for information exchange among individuals.

Foreign language learning, especially English, is an area significantly impacted by technological advancements. English is an international language that is essential to master in academic, professional, and social contexts. At the primary and secondary school levels, learning English as a foreign language (Teaching English as a Foreign Language—TEFL) often focuses on language knowledge, discourse comprehension, and exam results, as stated by Ratnadewi (2016). Mastery of speaking skills is often not the main focus, while grammar tends to receive more attention.

People around the world learn English as a second language because of its international status. This is the primary rationale behind English instruction in classrooms everywhere. Students are expected to master four English language skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. However, speaking is often the most challenging skill for students. Speaking involves the use of both verbal and nonverbal symbols to convey and construct meaning. It is a critical component in acquiring and teaching a second language.Many studies indicate that speaking is one of the essential skills students must acquire. However, it is also one of the most difficult, particularly in English. Many students prefer to remain silent rather than speak because they have limited vocabulary or lack confidence in their pronunciation. Thus, mastering English is crucial for all students, including those at SMPN 2 Kulo.

This is especially true for students at SMPN 2 Kulo who may have limited access to intensive language programs outside the classroom. Speaking skills are challenging for many learners, particularly those without a supportive English-speaking environment. While formal education provides foundational understanding, students often struggle to apply what they've learned in everyday life. The Cake application provides engaging features such as pronunciation correction, contextual learning, and everyday dialogue practice. These features are expected to help students feel more comfortable and confident when practicing speaking. Suratno (2021) emphasizes that context-based learning significantly improves students' comprehension and speaking skills. This is highly relevant for SMPN 2 Kulo students so they can not only master theoretical

knowledge but also apply it with confidence.

Moreover, the Cake application allows users to study anytime and anywhere. This flexibility is important for students who often have busy schedules. They can use their free time—while waiting for class or commuting—to improve their speaking skills (Prasetyo, 2022). With the proper use of technology, English learning can become more effective and engaging.At SMPN 2 Kulo, challenges in learning English stem not only from teaching methods but also from student motivation. Studies on learning motivation highlight its crucial role in the learning process. With interactive apps like Cake, fun and engaging methods are expected to enhance students' attention and encourage more active participation, thus motivating them to practice speaking more frequently.English speaking skills are one of the main challenges faced by students in Indonesia, including those at SMPN 2 Kulo. While writing and reading often receive more emphasis in formal education, speaking ability plays a critical role in language proficiency. Therefore, this research is highly relevant in identifying new and effective methods to improve students' English speaking skills, helping them become more confident and proficient communicators.

Based on initial observations conducted by the researcher at SMPN 2 Kulo in collaboration with teachers, it was found that students still struggle with speaking English. This is evident from their lack of confidence and difficulty in constructing correct and fluent sentences. Several factors contribute to this, including limited speaking practice in daily situations, a lack of supportive learning media, and students' anxiety about making mistakes when speaking English.

Therefore, this study aims to explore The Use of the Cake Application in Improving the English Speaking Skills of Students at SMPN 2 Kulo. This study is expected to provide further insights into the effectiveness of the application and offer valuable input for improving English language teaching strategies in academic settings

METHOD

This study utilized a pre-experimental research design, focusing on a one-group pre-test and post-test approach to measure the improvement in students' speaking skills, particularly in pronunciation, after using the Cake application. This design allows for the assessment of the intervention's impact on the sample group without the need for a control group. The key steps involved are pre-testing, treatment (using the Cake application), and post-testing, which helped in evaluating any significant changes in students' speaking skills.

3.2 Variables of the Research

Independent Variable: The use of the Cake application in improving students' English speaking skills.

Dependent Variable: The students' speaking skills, especially in pronunciation.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all students at SMPN 2 Kulo. However, due to time constraints and the specific focus of this study, a sample from Class VIII B was selected. This class was chosen based on their observed challenges in speaking English, particularly in pronunciation. The total sample size was 12 students from Class VIII B.

3.4 Research Instrument

The instruments used in this study included:

Speaking Test: This test consisted of a pre-test and a post-test, where students were asked to speak about selected topics, and their performance was recorded for evaluation. The tests measured the accuracy of their pronunciation, fluency, and overall speaking performance.

Observation: The researcher observed students' participation and interaction with the Cake application during the treatment period to assess engagement levels and overall experience.

Student Feedback: At the end of the treatment, students were asked to provide feedback on their experiences with the Cake application and its impact on their speaking skills.

3.5 Procedure of Data Collection

The data collection process was divided into three main stages:

Pre-test: The first step involved administering a speaking pre-test to assess students' baseline speaking abilities. Students were asked to speak on a chosen topic for 2-3 minutes, and their performance was recorded for analysis.

Treatment: Over a 1-month period, students used the Cake application as part of their English learning routine. During this time, they engaged in various activities such as watching instructional videos, mimicking sentences, and participating in speaking exercises focused on pronunciation.

Post-test: After the treatment period, students took a post-test identical to the pre-test to assess any improvements in their speaking skills. Their performances were also recorded for further analysis.

3.6 Technique of Data Analysis

The data collected from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods:

Quantitative Analysis: The speaking test scores from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed to determine the improvement in students' pronunciation skills. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to check for statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test results.

Qualitative Analysis: The feedback from students about their experiences with the Cake application was analyzed thematically to identify recurring themes related to the effectiveness of the application in improving their speaking skills.

3.7 Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis of the study was tested using the following null and alternative hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant improvement in students' speaking skills, specifically in pronunciation, after using the Cake application.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant improvement in students' speaking skills, specifically in pronunciation, after using the Cake application.

The data were analyzed using a paired-sample t-test with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. If the p-value obtained from the test was less than or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the Cake application significantly improved students' speaking skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of using the Cake application

in enhancing the speaking skills of class VIII B students at SMPN 2 Kulo, particularly in terms of pronunciation. To evaluate this, the researcher administered a pre-test and post-test and analyzed the results using statistical tools. In addition to test results, students' perceptions were also collected through questionnaires to understand their engagement and opinions regarding the use of the Cake application as a learning tool.

Based on the results of the pre-test, students' pronunciation accuracy averaged 66.08, which falls into the "good" classification. After being exposed to regular practice through the Cake application, the post-test average score increased to 80.92, categorized as "very good". This indicates a 21% improvement in students' speaking performance, especially in pronunciation. The increased scores confirm that the use of interactive and video-based applications like Cake can significantly improve speaking ability, especially when students receive visual and auditory cues through native speaker models.Furthermore, this improvement also points to a gain in student confidence. Before the treatment, several students were reluctant to speak, exhibited hesitation, and mispronounced words. However, post-treatment observations revealed that most students were more willing to speak, and they did so more fluently and clearly.

The classification of students' pronunciation scores also demonstrates a positive shift. In the pre-test, only 25% of the students were in the "very good" category, while 50% were in the "good" and the remaining 25% in "average". However, in the post-test, 83% of students moved to the "very good" classification, and only 17% remained in the "good" category. No students were classified as "average" or below in the post-test.This upward movement across categories clearly demonstrates that using the Cake application contributed to not just minor improvements, but also substantial progress in speaking performance.

To support the findings, a perception survey was conducted. The results showed 100% of students agreed that the Cake application helped them improve their English speaking, especially in pronunciation. This unanimous response reflects the relevance and appeal of the application for students who often face difficulties in practicing English in traditional classroom settings.

When asked which features they found most helpful, all 12 students selected the short video feature. This feature contains daily conversation scenarios with real-time pronunciation, subtitles, and repetition. These aspects allowed students to imitate native speakers, learn proper intonation, and practice pronunciation in a context that mirrors real-life usage.Despite their positive responses, students also provided constructive feedback. 75% of the students suggested that the videos be made longer and include more grammar explanations. They felt that longer videos would allow for deeper learning and help them understand sentence structures and grammar usage in context.

Meanwhile, 25% of students recommended adding interactive speaking quizzes. These would allow them to receive immediate feedback on their pronunciation and fluency. Some even suggested integrating AI-powered evaluations that can detect and correct mispronunciations, similar to language learning software like Duolingo or Elsa Speak.To determine the significance of the improvement between the pre-test and post-test, a paired sample t-test was conducted. The results showed a t-value of 14.120, which is greater than the t-table value of 2.144. This means there is a statistically significant difference between students' speaking abilities before and after the treatment. The p-value was 0.000, which is lower than the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$.

Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

This confirms that the Cake application has a significant effect on improving students' speaking abilities, especially in pronunciation. The statistical evidence supports the qualitative feedback from the students and validates the research objective.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study align with those of several previous studies. For instance, Rachmawati (2023) also confirmed that the use of the Cake application significantly enhanced students' speaking performance during online learning. Similarly, Dearestiani (2023) found that Duolingo – another language learning application – helped students improve not only pronunciation but also fluency and confidence.This research provides new insights, particularly into the impact of Cake's pronunciation-focused features. Unlike conventional methods that rely heavily on teacher feedback and textbook examples, Cake offers an autonomous learning experience where students can practice, make mistakes, and self-correct in a low-pressure environment.

One of the key features that contributed to improvement was the "repeat after me" segment, which allowed students to rehearse sentences multiple times. This constant repetition, paired with immediate auditory feedback, is effective in developing muscle memory for accurate pronunciation. As Brown (2001) asserts, pronunciation practice must include feedback and repetition to be effective, and the Cake application meets both of these needs.

The study also revealed that students were more motivated to learn because the application was fun and accessible. They could learn anytime and anywhere, unlike in traditional classroom settings. The gamified learning elements—such as earning stars or tracking daily progress—also helped sustain motivation.This finding supports the view of Suratno (2021), who emphasized that contextual and engaging learning tools significantly impact students' interest and learning outcomes. Cake successfully transformed learning from a passive to an active experience, allowing students to take charge of their own learning pace and progress.

The results of this study offer practical implications for both teachers and curriculum developers. Teachers should consider integrating interactive applications like Cake into their speaking lessons to complement traditional teaching methods. Not only does it reduce teacher workload in pronunciation drills, but it also empowers students to practice independently.Curriculum developers could also explore blended learning models where applications like Cake are included in lesson plans. This approach could be particularly useful in schools with limited access to native English speakers or restricted classroom hours for speaking practice.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of the Cake application significantly enhances students' English speaking skills, particularly in the aspect of pronunciation. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed a notable improvement, with the average pronunciation score increasing from 66.08 to 80.92. The statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test also confirmed a significant difference between the two tests, which validates the effectiveness of the Cake application as a learning tool in developing speaking abilities.

The students responded very positively to the application. All participants agreed that

the features in Cake—especially short videos with native speaker models, repetition functions, and pronunciation feedback—helped them practice speaking in a more enjoyable and flexible way. Many students also reported that they felt more confident and motivated to speak English after using the application regularly, which highlights the importance of engaging, interactive digital tools in modern language learning.

Overall, the Cake application proves to be a practical and effective supplementary resource for improving speaking proficiency in an EFL classroom setting. It not only supports learning outcomes but also increases students' autonomy and interest in language learning. These findings suggest that integrating technology like the Cake application into English instruction can be a powerful way to enhance students' language skills, especially when direct speaking practice is limited in conventional classroom settings

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