

Enhancing Undergraduate Students' Speaking Performance through Mobile-Assisted Learning Language

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Abstract

A speaking activity is a communicative event that includes the use of verbal and non-verbal language to convey meaning. The study adopted an action research approach proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart to investigate mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) teaching and learning processes in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) speaking course at a university of Muhammadiyah Jakarta. The study participants were 24 students majoring in English class. The research was conducted in two cycles using the MALL. The data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and pre- and post-study proficiency tests. The results of two action research cycles revealed that students' speaking skills increased from cycle I to cycle II. There is a significant difference in learning to improve English speaking skills through MALL before using the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) method and after using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). This study, therefore, has pedagogical implications for the use of MALL in facilitating EFL speaking education.

Keywords: EFL, Language, MALL, Speaking.

INTRODUCTION

A speaking activity is a type of communication that involves the use of both verbal and nonverbal communication to convey information. As stated by Chaney, speaking is a process of constructing and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in various contexts (Zineb, 2021). This opinion, speaking activities aim to exchange meaning. To achieve this goal, everyone must use their articulator to produce language to express every meaning to others. In addition. They also make use of non-linguistic symbols such as facial expressions and body language to clarify their meaning.

Speaking skill is necessary for students to master a language. Pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary were covered by students (Kuliahana & Marzuki, 2020). Less of pronunciation will feel less confident (Uchida & Sugimoto, 2020), and poor grammar is hard to understand (Kamaliah, 2018), lack of

vocabulary rarely to practice speaking and they got nervous (Rahayu et al., 2021) however, since good pronunciation enhances speaking skills and also helps learners become

better listeners (Mahdi & Al Khateeb, 2019). Because English is the international language, students must learn good speaking skills in order to communicate effectively in an English as a foreign language class. Kuning (2020) add that learning speaking need to learn vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and others. It was also revealed that speaking in the target language requires more elements to be considered, such as word choice, pronunciation, and grammar. The most challenging aspects students face when speaking English are pronunciation and the fear of making mistakes. Meanwhile, pronunciation and speaking speed are the most challenging problems when they try to listen to the information in English (Gonzalez et al., 2015). Then Nurullayevna (2020) stated that the pronunciation is the most important and difficult

problem that non-native speakers have to face when studying a foreign language.

Mobile-assisted language learning is a general approach and is considered one of the 21st-century skills. Researchers have documented the effect of MALL on speaking skills (Hwang et al., 2016). The need to have new methods of teaching, which apply the latest technologies, has made the recent literature full of studies on the effectiveness of MALL in teaching English as a foreign language. Only a few existing MALL studies have examined its effect on the speaking skills of EFL learners (Sun et al., 2017). The proliferation of MALL devices (e.g. smartphones and tablets) has facilitated the development and implementation of applications for educational purposes. The literature on MALL shows two main trends: the first consists of a core descriptive study of experimental conduct, the second, examination of learning outcomes (Castañeda & Cho, 2016). The MALL program designed to improve speaking skills is still very limited, and this requires further research on the application of mobile technology for the development of oral skills (Ahn & Lee, 2016).

It is beneficial for lecturers and students in big cities with acute mobility and transportation problems. In addition, by using MALL, lecturers can create interactive learning that is very interesting for students by utilizing various features that MALL has provided. Most MALL studies focus on human interactions, mobile devices, or individual practices (Pei & Wu, 2019). A further reason is that, by using MALL, teachers and students can maximize information technology for learning purposes and search for the learning resources needed because interpersonal information is one of the essential aspects of language learning. Using technology has the positive impact to improve learning and a number of researchers have argue use it (Elmahdi et al., 2018), (Johns, 2015). Participants, in this case, our students and lecturers, agree that MALL is a potential tool for constructivism in EFL learning (Su & Cheng, 2013). Implementing mobile learning has gained increasing popularity in educational contexts because of the facilitative role of mobile learning in improving the quality of learning and teaching (Ahmad et al., 2020), become an essential instruction platform in teaching at schools (Akour et al., 2021), facilitated in

explaining factors that determine learners' intentions in learning (Buabeng-Andoh, 2021), a positive effect on the interest, attitude, and initiative (Yang et al., 2021) and become more important for the new generation (Zhang & Yu, 2021).

One model of learning that can help learners learn to speak English as a language student at the University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta is Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Model distance learning is the development of a learning model through blended learning. Learning Blended learning is a learning model that utilizes technology in the learning process.

Research Method

This research is action (action research) conducted in semester III in Islamic Religious Education classes featured in the course of speaking, University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta. The reason for the selection is that the Islamic Education Study Program is one of the developing study programs and is one of the leading study programs.

The method of data collection and interpretation of data carried out by researchers in this study is guided by the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart, with Cycle I using the Duolingo application and Cycle II using the MALL application. The explanation of each stage in two cycles; 1) preparing for implementing the action (2) preparing lecture materials that will be used for the Speaking course, (3) preparing aids such as media tools, namely recorders and cameras (4) preparing observation tools and questionnaires (5) prepare a test to see the improvement of each student's speaking skills by using Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

The study subjects were 24 students in the speaking class of the Department of English in their third semester in a private university in Jakarta, Indonesia. They were taught to use MALL in the speaking class. The instruments to collect data were an open-ended questionnaire followed by an in-depth with an interview and a writing test to answer the research questions, some data was needed to deal with students' speaking performance in terms of grammar, vocabulary, smoothness, and style..

Results and Discussion

Figure 2 shows the development of EFL speaking performance. The percentages of the 24 students who scored in the very poor category (67%) and the unsatisfactory category (33%) were 16 (67%) and 8 (33%). The highest score that the students got was 50, while the lowest score was 29. The mean value by 44,2%, including the unsatisfactory natural category. The pre-action stage's quantitative descriptive analysis bar chart on students' speaking skills.

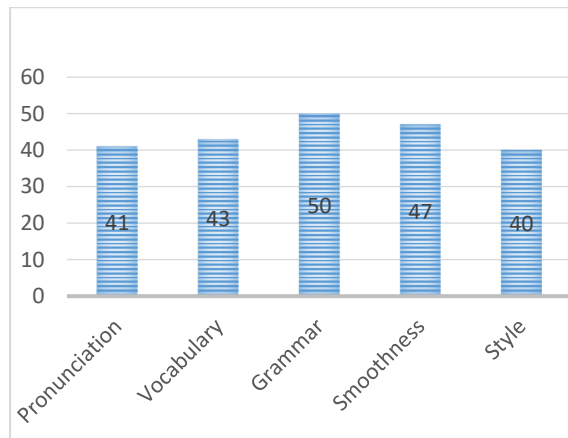


Figure 1. *Pre-Action Student's English-Speaking Skills*

The students' speaking scores, taken before the treatment of MALL, were unsatisfactory. It is very urgent to implement a mall to improve student speaking.

Cycle I

The results of the actions taken in the first cycle of 24 students obtained scores that show an increase in English-speaking skill test scores. The first cycle test results showed an increase from 44.2% pre-action to 55.6% in the first cycle test. The test results on English speaking skills can be seen in table 3:

Table 3. *The Value of Student' Speaking Skills In Cycle I*

No	College student	Indicator					Total	Score	%	Category
		1	2	3	4	5				
1	M I K	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	29%	Less satisfactory
2	A S M	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	33%	Less satisfactory
3	B B	3	2	2	2	2	11	46	33%	Less satisfactory
4	PS	2	3	2	3	2	12	50	46%	Less satisfactory
5	H A	3	4	2	3	3	15	63	50%	Good enough
6	MP	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	42%	Less satisfactory
7	E N M	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	33%	Less satisfactory
8	P F	2	3	3	3	3	14	58	50%	Good enough
9	M R	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	29%	Less satisfactory
10	A S I	2	3	3	3	3	14	58	50%	Good enough
11	A A	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	29%	Less satisfactory
12	I F	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	33%	Less satisfactory
13	A N	2	3	3	3	3	14	58	50%	Good enough
14	A R	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	33%	Less satisfactory

15	A S D C	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	38%	Less satisfactory
16	A R	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	33%	Less satisfactory
17	A R Y	2	3	2	2	3	12	50	38%	Less satisfactory
18	F A	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	38%	Less satisfactory
19	M F A	2	4	3	2	3	14	58	50%	Good enough
20	S	2	3	3	2	3	13	54	46%	Less satisfactory
21	M I A	2	3	2	2	3	12	50	38%	Less satisfactory
22	M H M	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	38%	Less satisfactory
23	N H	2	3	2	2	2	11	46	33%	Less satisfactory
24	S S R	2	2	2	2	2	10	42	38%	Less satisfactory
	Average	2,1	2,8	2,2	2,2	2,3			1.161	
	Score	50	66	53	53	56			55,6%	Satisfying Enough

The table above shows that the score obtained by students in English-speaking skills in cycle I with an average percentage of 55.6% is actually already in the satisfactory category, but this percentage is very minimal if it is categorized as satisfactory because it is only 0.6%. The standard is entirely satisfactory, and that means very little excess. However, there was an increase in the first cycle results after the pre-action test; the percentage of students reached 44.2%.

The results of the quantitative descriptive analysis in the first cycle can be seen in the diagram below as the data of English-speaking skills in the first cycle, as shown in figure 2:

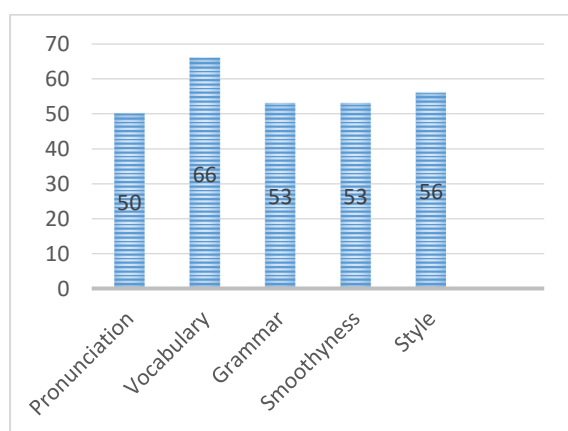


Figure 2. *Students' English-speaking skills in cycle I*

Cycle II

Based on the action results in the second cycle with a total of 24 students, an increase in English-speaking skills test scores appeared. Scores in the second cycle reach 68.8%, up from the score on the actions of the first cycle of 55.6%, so there is a difference in the increase in value by 13.2%. The results of the quantitative descriptive analysis in cycle II are shown in the following diagram as data on English-speaking skills:

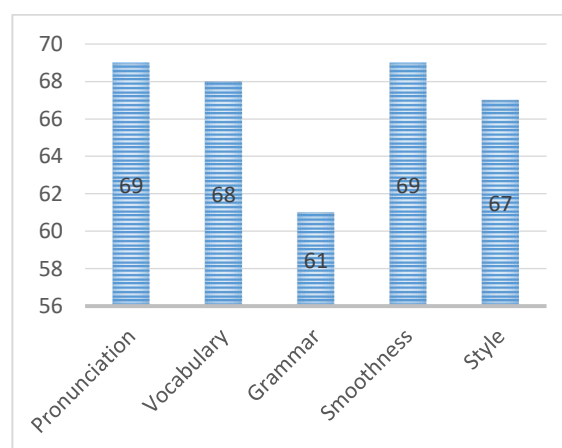


Figure 4. *Students' English-Speaking Skills in Cycle II*

Table 5. *Improving English Speaking Skills Cycle I and II*

No	Student name	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	MIK	46	58
2	AS M	46	58
3	BB	46	63
4	PS	50	71
5	HA	63	71
6	MP	46	71
7	EN M	42	54
8	PF	58	71
9	MR	42	50
10	AS I	58	71
11	AA	42	54
12	IF	42	54
13	AN	58	63
14	AR	42	50
15	AS DC	46	58
16	AR	46	54
17	AR Y	50	54
18	FA	42	54
19	MFA	58	63
20	S	54	63
21	MIA	50	58
22	MHM	46	58
23	NH	46	54
24	SS R	42	54
	amount	1.161	1.429
	average	55,6	59,5

The result showed that the students' average speaking scores increased from 55.6 % to 68.8 %. They indicated that the students' speaking ability increased from cycle 1 to cycle two. In addition, Students' average scores improve in terms of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary,

smoothness and style. Speaking performance are commonly measured based on linguistic criteria: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency (Frost et al., 2012).

The result of the present study suggests some insight dealing with the benefit of MALL in speaking activities. Several previous studies proved that MALL was beneficial to improve speaking skills. For instance, Rajendran & Yunus (2021) found that MALL is a potential instructional approach in helping learners gain speaking proficiency; it spreads the concepts of constructivism theory, promotes stress--free environment, supports situated learning, and provides ease of use in teaching speaking.

From the table above, it can be seen that there are significant results related to improve students' English-speaking skills using the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) learning model. In the second cycle, the students' total score was obtained with a value that had reached the standard and could increase significantly. In addition, MALL has some benefits, such as a new multidisciplinary field of educational technology (Saidouni & Bahloul, 2016), MALL make an academic field more measurable and viable for students (Liu, 2016), it might have a high degree of autonomy (Gonulal, 2019). Meanwhile, MALL has been a popular research area in recent years in the SLA field, as it has been considered able to facilitate language learning by offering an authentic, socially connective, contextually sensitive, and personalized mobile-mediated language learning environment (Lin & Lin, 2019), and online learning is effective in this pandemic era (Syarifuni et al., 2021)

In line with the findings above, (Ahn & Lee, 2016) also found that the implementation of MALL highlights the potential for learning to speak in the EFL context, and he recommended future research based on the results of this study. Facilitating communication and affording learners greater motivation to engage in independent learning (Tayan, 2017). Somehow (Machmud & Abdulah, 2017) also revealed that the students are anxious when they are taught by using smartphones; however, using a Smartphone integrated model of teaching can overcome the students' anxiety in speaking. Şad et al., (2020) added that the students hamper using smartphones for language learning according to the types of Internet connection.

Then Darsih & Asikin (2020) the students and the teacher are easy to use of MALL and helpful and helped their learning procession the classroom.

Conclusion

The findings show that students improved their speaking performance in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, smoothness, and style after being treated using MALL in integration with a process speaking approach. MALL allows students to accomplish their tasks within and beyond the classroom with flexibility in speaking activities. After the students were trained to use MALL, the class became more focused on student-centered learning because they became more active and independent. This condition motivates them to work harder in practice speaking with their classmates. They have a chance to practice with their classmates by sharing and giving comments. This result score of English-speaking skills improved in the second CAR cycle to 68.8%. And then, for the speaking skill evaluation result, it was only reached 56.50%. This means that the student achievement of speaking skills is still not reaching the maximum target of 75%, but in the second CAR cycle, it improved to 68.8%. From the evaluation, it can be concluded that the English instructional process using MALL can improve the university students' speaking skills.

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