



Implementation of Duolingo Application as Learning Media to Improve Student's Speaking Skill at SMK Pariwisata Aisyiyah Sumbar

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Abstract

The teaching and learning process is closely related to the use of gamification. Many English teachers use gamification as a medium to help them in teaching. For teachers, the use of gamification in the teaching and learning process can make students have fun and interesting learning. For some students, gamification may be beneficial for them in learning English. Therefore, researchers want to know students' perceptions of using the Duolingo application as a speaking learning medium. This study was a Classroom Action Research. A classroom Action Research (CAR). This research was conducted at Aisyiyah Tourism Vocational School, West Sumatra. Participants, 20 students from second grade, gave positive perceptions about the Duolingo application. This research shows that most students prefer to learn to speak English using the Duolingo application as a medium. There are several advantages that can be taken from using the Duolingo application as a medium for learning to speak English, such as it is easy for them to understand the material, they are more enthusiastic and motivated in learning to speak English, Duolingo can eliminate boredom in learning and also encourage them from new ideas in learning.

Keywords: Speaking, Duolingo, ICT, Media

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking becomes an important part of our daily activities. The ability to communicate in a foreign language is considered to be the most significant part of learning that language for the majority of individuals (Nunan, 1991). Patel and Jain (2008) also assert that the fundamental functions of language are communication, self-expression, and thinking. Leong and Ahmadi (2017) along with Goh (2007) believe that speaking must be developed and enhanced by language learners as it represents ones' language ability.

In spite of the fact that speaking is very crucial, it is not an easy skill to be mastered. Speaking a foreign language is difficult as the students cannot understand the meaning due to their lack of English vocabulary (Heriansyah, 2012; Gani, et al., 2015). Another reason is because students are afraid of making mistakes (Al Nakhala, 2016). Additionally, this subject proves to be more challenging than others due to various obstacles students face while speaking. These include a limited vocabulary, problems with pronunciation, challenges in word order, and a fear of making mistakes. Several factors contribute to these difficulties, including the teaching methods, curriculum design, and the surrounding environment (Putri, et al., 2020).

Based on the observation conducted at the Aisyiyah Tourism Vocational School on March 13 2023 in class XI PH (Hospitality), several problems in learning speaking were identified. The students cannot understand the meanings of English words and lack vocabulary, lack of pronunciation, lack of fluency. Moreover, the learning processes still focus on the teacher center causing students to have limited practice. It is also noted that the learning media used is not varied and attractive which make learners bored and reluctant to learn. As a consequence, the learners are unmotivated to learn English and cannot use proper words to communicate in English.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Speaking

Speaking is a dynamic activity in which meaning is created through the exchange and interpretation of information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). The way it is expressed and understood is shaped by the context, which encompasses the people involved, their shared histories, the environment around them, and the purposes for their communication. It is frequently impromptu, open ended, and developing.

Teaching Speaking

Mufidah (2019) said teaching speaking is a process that helps students acquire knowledge about environmental systems, which is useful for informing, persuading goals, expressing ideas, communicating and interacting with a human being in daily activities. Sabina (2018) asserts that it is essential for teachers to design classroom scenarios that involve real-life communication, activities connected to students' everyday experiences, and significant tasks that enable the practice of spoken language. Given that teaching speaking skills often presents challenges, it is crucial for teachers to continuously seek ways to enhance their teaching methodologies.

ICT Based Learning

ICT (Information, Communication, and Technology) learning is learning that is based on computer learning and multimedia (Hafeez, 2021). ICT-based learning can make meaningful learning more fascinating and enjoyable, as well as increase learning results (Hussain, 2018). This ICT-based learning becomes an urgent necessity to achieve quality learning that keeps pace with the modern age and to produce a higher quality education system (Amrullah, et.al.,2023). As a result, teachers should devise several strategies to motivate students to study English. Teachers can use ICT to help them with their lessons. It is evident that ICT is considered as effective tool to support teachers in the classroom (Wicaksono et al., 2016).

Duolingo

Duolingo is one of the most popular applications of technology. Everyone who needs assistance with teaching and learning can use Duolingo. According to Hafifah (2020), on the Duolingo program, users may see their mistakes, which are automatically assessed by the machine. Duolingo is being as a future in learning language. Duolingo offers extensive language learning resources, making it highly beneficial for those looking to learn a new language. It features daily vocabulary lists, opportunities for discussion with fellow learners, a Lingot store for purchasing learning aids, and advanced immersion tools, all designed to facilitate easy and effective language learning (Muddin, A. 2018).

METHOD

This study was conducted as a Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2013), CAR is a form of collaborative self-reflective inquiry undertaken by individuals in social settings aimed at enhancing the objectivity and rationality of their social or educational actions, as well as deepening their understanding of these practices and the environments in which they operate. The researcher conducted the research in the classroom because the researcher believed that speaking problems that occur in the Vocational School environment, particularly among second-year students at Aisyiyah Tourism Vocational School, could be overcome in the classroom setting. A collaborator would assist the researcher. Aisyiyah Tourism Vocational School's partner was an English instructor. The collaborator would act as an observer, observing the effectiveness of the researcher's technique for teaching and learning in the classroom, as well as students' activeness and self-confidence during the learning process.

Data Analysis

This study employed a descriptive approach, focusing on presenting findings from interviews, observations, and questionnaires. Researchers conducted data analysis to condense and interpret the gathered information, ultimately deriving insights. This process involved breaking down extensive data into more manageable segments to understand it better. The data collected pertained to students' speaking grades before and after utilizing the Duolingo application, aiming to assess any improvements in their speaking skills. Additionally, the study investigated whether using Duolingo led to overall academic improvement among students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

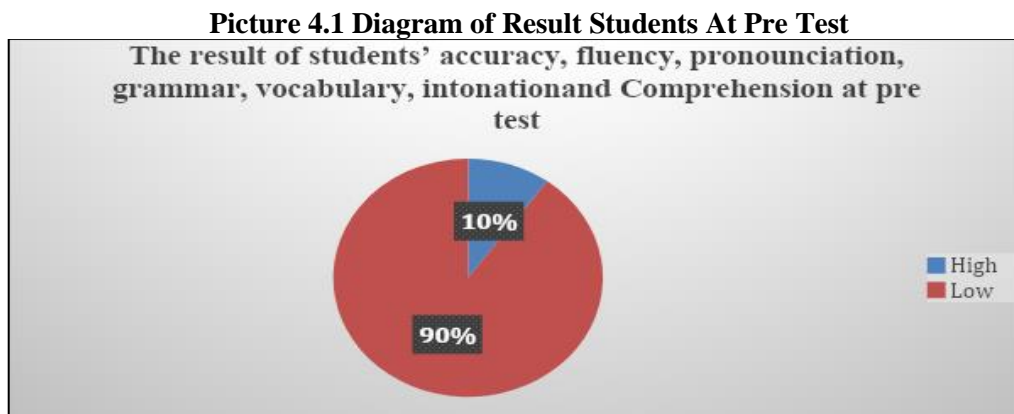
Based on prior research and student interviews before this Duolingo study, the researcher collected data regarding the students' classroom conditions, specifically the challenges they encountered in learning to speak English. The findings revealed that students often struggled with speaking; they frequently wanted to express themselves but did not know what to say or how to convey their intended messages in English.

Research Finding

In this research there are two cycles, where cycle one discusses learning to speak English before implementing the Duolingo application. And cycle two discusses the results after implementing the Duolingo application in learning to speak English

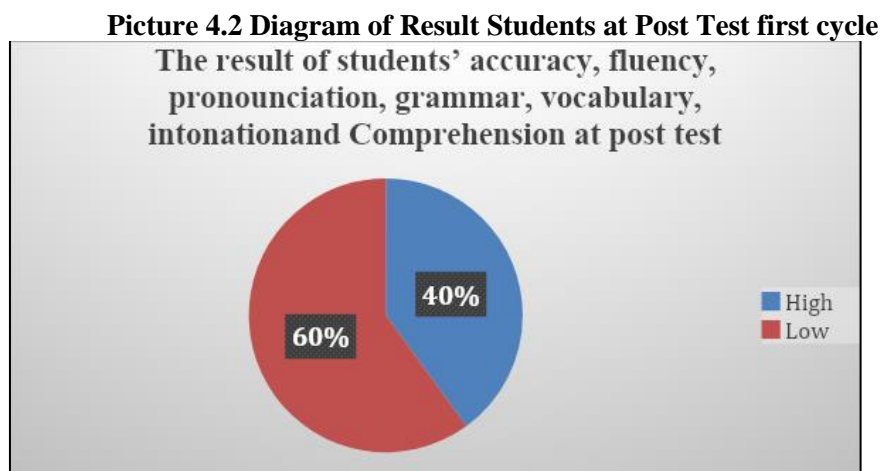
Cycle 1

At the first cycle of learning, there were many students still confused about what they should do in the class, and still lack of speaking. The result of students' scores before and after using duollingo at pre-cycle test and first cycle can be seen from the diagram bellow:



The above data shows students' speaking accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, intonation, and comprehension at pre test. The purpose of the pre-cycle test is to measure the degree of natural knowledge of the students in relation to the speaking ability of the data, and if it found that there are no students who are "good" or "very good", which meant that the student's performance before the behavior was performed was too low.

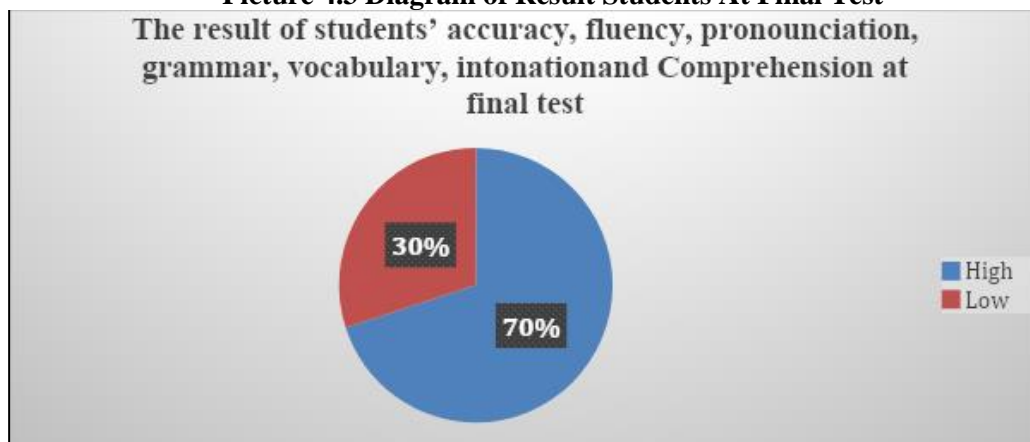
After seeing the results of pre-test cycle one, the researcher continued to carry out a post-test using the Duolingo application as a medium for learning to speak English. The result of students' scores after using duollingo at post test first cycle can be seen from the diagram bellow:



The above data shows students' speaking accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, intonation, and comprehension at post-test first cycle. After learning to use the Duolingo application for 3 sessions, it can be seen from the results of the post-test there was a pretty good change that initially passed only 10% during the pre-test, to 40% during the post-test. However, this study has not met the standard of success. The table indicated that out of 20 students in the class, only 40% were successful in all aspects of speaking, while the majority, which is 60%, did not pass the post-cycle test. So the researcher continued to cycle 2 which aimed to improve the results of cycle 1.

Cycle 2

Picture 4.3 Diagram of Result Students At Final Test



The above data shows students' speaking accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, intonation, and comprehension at final test cycle 2. After learning from the duolingo application for 6 sessions. It can be seen from the results of the final test that there is quite a good change from initially only passing 10% in the pre-test and 40% in the post-test, to 70% in the final test. therefore, this research has met the standards of success.

Discussion

Some people believe that mastery in English, particularly in speaking well with correct pronunciation and grammar, is an indicator of proficiency. Evidence from a second cycle of assessment shows significant enhancements in students' accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, intonation, and comprehension. After learning to use the duolingo application for 6 sessions, this research has met the standards of success. In essence, the researcher used media to enhance the students' speaking skills, focusing on both the accuracy aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, and on increasing their fluency, ensuring they could speak smoothly. It is in line with the studies done by Riani (2013) along with Hafifah (2021) that reveal improvement to students' pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and smoothness.

The findings also underline that several more prominent values such as aspects of pronunciation, fluency and comprehension. Mahmudah (2015) also noted the significant improvement on students' pronunciation after learning from Duolingo App. While Alfuhaid's (2021) study figured out Duolingo helps students to speak more

confidently and fluently. Furthermore, the results of the current study are in agreement with Utami (2018) who revealed the students learning using Duolingo tend to use their comprehension ability during speaking better. Apart from that, students seem to be more enthusiastic in learning as the learning media used when carrying out learning activities is not boring. Jaelani (2023) asserts they were interested in learning using Duolingo because it was easy to use and gave them the opportunity to study English more actively. Duolingo keeps them excited and motivated during the learning process. They can learn English using applications at home easily, making them better at understanding the material.

However, in this research there are values that are less prominent, such as vocabulary, grammar, accuracy, intonation. Rohmatillah (2017) identified vocabulary tends to be a difficult aspect for learning foreign language and requires extra effort to master it. Regarding grammar, students face difficulty in learning grammar to speak correctly as they believe learning grammar is something that is not very important for speaking (Kontogeorgou & Zafiri, 2016; Fitri, 2020). Consequently, when they speak in front of the class, listeners cannot understand their talks due to bad accuracy. Intonation also becomes the concern and it is in line with the study done by Purba (2020) who underline students' difficulties in using English intonation, particularly in using level tone, rising intonation, falling intonation. Therefore, both teacher and students need to take responsibility in overcoming those difficulties.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that while the activity did not meet all its intended targets and outcomes, it demonstrates that utilizing mobile-based learning applications like Duolingo can enhance the effectiveness and diversity of teaching and learning activities. This suggests that mobile application-based teaching tools offer viable alternatives for improving students' English speaking skills.

After learning to use the Duolingo application for 6 sessions. It can be seen from the results of the final test that there is quite a good change from beginning. This research has met the standards of success. The implementation of Duolingo application as learning media can improve student's speaking skill at Smk Pariwisata Aisyiyah Sumbar especially for the XI PH. The data indicated a notable enhancement from the first cycle to the second cycle, with the second cycle showing greater improvement than the first.

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