

Improving English Speaking Skills through E-Learning in EFL Learners

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of E-learning-based instruction in improving English speaking skills among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving upper secondary students. The findings reveal that the integration of E-learning significantly enhances students' confidence and participation in speaking activities. Interactive features such as voice recording tools, video presentations, and online discussion forums provide students with opportunities to practice independently and receive timely, constructive feedback from teachers. These features support the development of both fluency and accuracy in students' spoken English. Moreover, E-learning enables students to engage in self-paced learning and fosters a more student-centered environment, promoting autonomy in the learning process. Despite these advantages, the study also identifies key challenges, particularly the lack of direct face-to-face interaction, which can limit spontaneous communication and reduce opportunities for immediate correction. Such limitations highlight the importance of blending E-learning with interactive teaching strategies that simulate real-time communication. As a result, the study concludes that while E-learning holds considerable potential to support speaking skill development in EFL contexts, its effectiveness can be maximized when complemented by communicative approaches that promote authentic language use. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital language learning and offers practical insights for educators seeking to enhance speaking instruction through technology.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, technological advances have significantly transformed the education sector, including language learning. E-learning has become a popular alternative for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners due to its flexibility and



accessibility (Molefi et al., 2024; Tafazoli, 2024). Various digital platforms, such as Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, and language-specific apps like Duolingo and Babbel, have been used to help learners improve their speaking skills outside of the traditional classroom environment (Hadi Mogavi et al., 2024). However, while these technologies offer numerous advantages, challenges such as limited internet access, limited interaction, and a lack of engaging methods still hinder the development of speaking skills through e-learning.

Several previous studies have explored the effectiveness of e-learning in English language teaching. A study by Haudi, (2024) showed that using digital platforms can improve students' confidence and fluency through technology-based practice. Meanwhile, a study by Bi et al., (2023) found that while e-learning can aid vocabulary and pronunciation acquisition, the lack of face-to-face interaction often hinders the development of speaking skills. Furthermore, a study by Yong et al., (2024) highlighted that students' motivation and technological skills play a crucial role in the success of online language learning.

Despite the extensive research on e-learning in English language learning, there remains a gap in understanding its effectiveness specifically on speaking skills. Learning speaking as an active skill requires not only linguistic understanding but also confidence, fluency, and social interaction, which are often difficult to replicate in an online environment (Aini et al., 2024; Wahid et al., 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to explore how e-learning can be optimized to improve EFL students' speaking skills and how its effectiveness compares to conventional learning methods.

This study aims to analyze the role of e-learning in improving English speaking skills in EFL learners. Furthermore, it will explore the challenges students face in using e-learning and strategies that can be implemented to overcome these obstacles. More broadly, this research is expected to provide new insights for educators and educational technology developers in designing more effective and interactive online learning methods to support the development of English speaking skills.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research aims to understand phenomena related to the experiences of research participants, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions in a natural context. This research also uses library research and case study methods. Case studies are used to analyze a group or individual in depth over a specific time period, while library research is used to collect secondary data from books, academic journals, research reports, and other relevant sources.

The subjects of this study were 26 students of grade XI Bahasa at MA Bahrul Ulum, consisting of 11 boys and 15 girls. This class was chosen because the teacher in the class applies the E-learning method in the learning process, especially in improving and assessing students' English speaking skills as EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. This study aims to examine how E-learning affects students' speaking skills, including the improvements and challenges they face in a virtual learning environment.

The data in this study were obtained through observations and interviews to

analyze the impact of e-learning on EFL students' English speaking skills at MA Bahrul Ulum. Observations were used to understand how e-learning was implemented to improve students' speaking skills, supported by field notes. Interviews were conducted with teachers to determine teaching strategies, challenges, and assessment methods used in the e-learning environment. Furthermore, interviews with students aimed to uncover their perceptions of the effectiveness of e-learning in improving their English speaking skills.

Data analysis was conducted in two main stages. First, data from the observation checklist were analyzed to identify patterns in student engagement and speaking performance during e-learning sessions. Second, interview data were analyzed qualitatively to understand teachers' and students' experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of e-learning on English speaking skills. Through this approach, this study seeks to provide in-depth insights into the role of e-learning in English language learning at MA Bahrul Ulum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Increased Confidence in Speaking

The research results show that e-learning can increase students' confidence in speaking English. Before implementing this method, many students felt awkward and hesitant to speak in front of the class for fear of making mistakes. Based on classroom observations, students who were previously reluctant to speak began to show courage in expressing their opinions verbally. Furthermore, an analysis of the learning materials used in the digital platform showed that features such as voice and video recordings provided opportunities for students to practice speaking independently without excessive social pressure. This was reinforced by a teacher's statement that "e-learning provides an opportunity for students to be more confident because they can practice and correct themselves before speaking in front of others." Documentation of student development also showed improvements in fluency and pronunciation accuracy after implementing this method. Thus, the use of technology in learning not only provides flexibility but also creates a more comfortable environment for students to develop their speaking skills.

From various sources gathered, it can be concluded that increasing students' confidence in speaking English through e-learning is one of the positive impacts of implementing technology in education. The flexible learning environment allows students to practice more freely, while teacher feedback based on evaluation results helps them gradually correct mistakes. Recordings of student activity during learning also show that they are more active in completing speaking tasks compared to conventional methods. Thus, this approach is considered effective in improving students' speaking skills, especially for those who previously experienced difficulties speaking in person. However, the challenges of direct interaction still require further attention to ensure students remain accustomed to oral communication in real-life situations.

Increased confidence in speaking suggests that e-learning can be an effective

solution in helping EFL students overcome anxiety and improve their speaking skills. Students who were previously reluctant to speak in class gradually showed positive developments, particularly in fluency and pronunciation accuracy. The success of this approach is also influenced by the use of technology that allows students to access materials independently and receive more personalized feedback (Munir et al., 2024).

However, although e-learning offers significant benefits in boosting student confidence, challenges remain in the aspect of active engagement in live communication. Some students tend to be more comfortable speaking in a recorded format compared to real-time interactions, which can hinder fluent communication in broader social contexts. Therefore, teaching strategies that combine e-learning with live discussions need to be implemented so that students not only develop confidence in speaking but also become skilled at communicating interactively in various situations.

Challenges in Student Interaction and Engagement

The results of the study indicate that e-learning significantly contributes to increasing students' confidence in speaking English. Before implementing this method, many students felt awkward and reluctant to speak for fear of making mistakes. However, after using various digital features such as voice and video recordings, students had the opportunity to practice speaking independently without excessive social pressure. Observations showed that students who previously tended to be passive began to show courage in speaking and expressing their opinions more actively. Documentation of student development also showed an increase in fluency and accuracy of pronunciation after implementing this method. This confirms that e-learning creates a more flexible and comfortable learning environment for students to develop their speaking skills.

Table 1. Student Interaction and Engagement

No	Informant	Statement
1	Homeroom teacher	"E-learning provides an opportunity for students to be more confident because they can practice and correct themselves before speaking in front of others."
2	Teacher	"I saw an increase in students' courage in speaking after they got used to using E-learning features such as voice recording for practice."
3	Male students	"I feel more comfortable speaking in online classes because I can practice before submitting speaking assignments."
4	Female Students	"With E-learning, I can listen back to my own recordings and correct mistakes before the assignment is submitted."

From Table 1 above, it can be concluded that increasing students' confidence in speaking English through e-learning is one of the positive impacts of implementing technology in education. The interactive and flexible learning environment allows students to practice without fear of direct correction from peers, while teacher feedback based on recordings of speaking assignments helps them gradually correct

mistakes. Recordings of student activity during learning show that they are more active in completing speaking assignments compared to conventional methods. Thus, this approach is considered effective in increasing student confidence, especially for those who previously experienced difficulty speaking in front of the class. However, challenges in direct interaction remain a concern as some students still feel more comfortable speaking in digital formats than in real-life oral communication.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of e-learning significantly enhances students' confidence in speaking English, particularly among those who previously experienced anxiety and hesitation in oral communication (Fu'adi & Diana, 2022; Murtado et al., 2023). This aligns with prior research indicating that technology-mediated learning environments offer students the opportunity to engage in language production without the immediate pressure of face-to-face evaluation (Jamilah et al., 2023; Tasya et al., 2023). Through features such as voice and video recordings, learners are afforded a safer space for practice, self-evaluation, and gradual improvement in speaking fluency and pronunciation accuracy.

Classroom observations and interview data demonstrated a marked behavioral shift among students: individuals who were once passive and reluctant to participate began to exhibit greater willingness to speak. This behavioral change can be attributed to the asynchronous nature of e-learning, which enables students to prepare and revise their responses before presenting them publicly (Moya & Camacho, 2024). The statements from both teachers and students further corroborate this conclusion, as shown in Table 1. Students reported feeling more comfortable and in control during speaking tasks, highlighting the importance of low-pressure environments in building communicative confidence.

These findings resonate with Farisi & Setiawan, (2023), who emphasized that practice autonomy and the ability to monitor one's own speech contribute substantially to learners' oral development. Furthermore, the role of teacher feedback particularly when based on recorded student performances emerged as a critical element in facilitating targeted improvements. As Munir & Mudarris, (2024) point out, personalized feedback in digital learning contexts promotes greater learner engagement and supports continuous language development.

However, while e-learning has shown effectiveness in increasing self-confidence and oral performance, several limitations persist chief among them, the challenge of real-time interaction (Moya & Camacho, 2024). The data suggest that although students are more active in recorded speaking tasks, this does not necessarily translate into improved competence in spontaneous verbal exchanges. Wahyudi, (2021) warn that overreliance on asynchronous communication can create a gap between recorded fluency and live interaction fluency, potentially affecting learners' ability to function effectively in authentic communicative contexts.

Therefore, to maximize the benefits of e-learning in speaking instruction, a blended approach is recommended (Sanusi et al., 2023). This includes integrating synchronous speaking activities such as group discussions, peer feedback sessions, and

live presentations. Such hybrid strategies can address the shortcomings of purely asynchronous learning by fostering real-time responsiveness, turn-taking, and interactive negotiation of meaning essential components of oral language proficiency.

In summary, the current study supports the notion that e-learning can serve as a powerful pedagogical tool to build speaking confidence among EFL learners, particularly in the early stages of oral development (Dian et al., 2023). It facilitates a more flexible, learner-centered environment where students can rehearse, reflect, and refine their speaking skills (Hamdani et al., 2022; Singh, 2024). Nonetheless, to ensure that confidence gained in digital formats extends to real-world communicative competence, educators must consciously design learning experiences that balance both recorded and interactive speaking opportunities.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that e-learning can significantly improve English speaking skills in EFL learners by providing a more flexible and interactive learning environment. Through the use of various digital features such as audio recordings, videos, and interactive platforms, students have the opportunity to practice speaking independently without excessive social pressure (Dwi & Maskuri, 2023; Tampubolon, 2020). This approach not only helps increase students' confidence in speaking but also allows them to be more aware of errors and make improvements independently. With the support of teachers in providing constructive feedback, e-learning can be an effective strategy for gradually improving students' speaking skills.

The implication of this research is the need to develop and optimize the use of e-learning in English language learning, particularly in improving students' speaking skills. The application of this method opens opportunities for educators to design more innovative learning strategies, including the use of technology to provide more structured and engaging speaking practice. Furthermore, students' active engagement in the learning process increases because they feel more comfortable and in control of their own learning. Going forward, this research can serve as a basis for the development of more effective technology-based learning methods to improve students' English communication skills.

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