

**LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL INTELEGENCE TECHNOLOGY: INTRODUCING
SPEAK.GOOGLE AS A DIGITAL SPEAKING ASISSTANT FOR EFL STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

Major contributions have been made by Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in the development of society. AI-powered assistants become popular among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in recent years. AI provides EFL students with more alternatives for customizing their learning experiences. Speak.google is a new tool of Google Search that helps students in learning English by enabling them to practice speaking interactively. The purpose of this study of is to provide an overview of how Speak.google may be used to help EFL students learn English speaking. This study performs descriptive qualitative research. The study shows that Speak.Google is able to help ESL students in learning language by helping them learn and practice English speaking. This AI is providing students with instant feedback and a range of alternate answers. Students can learn to pronounce a sentence and the meaning of each word in sentences. For EFL students who want to improve their English language skills, especially speaking skill, Speak.google is a promising artificial intelligence for them.

Kata Kunci: Artificial intelligence; AI-powered Speaking Assistant ; English Speaking; English as a Foreign Language learner

ABSTRAK

Kontribusi besar telah diberikan oleh teknologi kecerdasan buatan (AI) dalam perkembangan masyarakat. Asisten yang didukung AI menjadi populer di kalangan siswa pembelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) di beberapa tahun terakhir . AI memberi lebih banyak alternatif kepada siswa EFL untuk menyesuaikan pengalaman belajar mereka. Speak.google adalah fitur baru di penelusuran Google yang membantu siswa belajar bahasa Inggris dengan memungkinkan mereka berlatih berbicara secara interaktif. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memberikan gambaran tentang bagaimana Speak.google dapat digunakan untuk membantu siswa EFL belajar berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Speak.Google dapat membantu siswa ESL mempelajari bahasa dengan membantu mereka belajar dan berlatih berbicara bahasa Inggris. AI ini memberikan siswa umpan balik instan dan berbagai jawaban alternatif. Siswa dapat belajar mengucapkan kalimat dan arti setiap kata dalam kalimat. Bagi pelajar EFL yang ingin meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris khususnya kemampuan berbicara, Speak.google merupakan kecerdasan buatan yang menjanjikan bagi mereka.

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan; Asisten Berbicara yang didukung AI; Berbahasa Inggris; Bahasa Inggris sebagai pembelajar Bahasa Asing

INTRODUCTION

Speaking proficiency can be difficult for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students who frequently overcome language challenges (Santosa et al. 2022). Students are fearful of making mistakes, have a limited vocabulary, and are unmotivated to study. Recently, there has been an increasing interest in using AI technologies for educational purposes, particularly language learning. AI-powered speaking tools have evolved to support and improve EFL students' speaking skills while promoting self-directed learning (Pokrivcakova, 2019).

The use of artificial intelligence can bring about personalised and interactive learning in students. In a study conducted by Suleman et al. in 2019, students who used an AI-based language learning platform revealed higher levels of engagement and motivation than those who implemented traditional approaches. Artificial intelligence, driven by individual learning, has revolutionized the way students learn. By using AI technology, personalized learning may create more customized learning paths for students, resulting in more effective and efficient learning. A study by Wang and Chen (2018) suggests that AI algorithms might modify an exercise's difficulty level in response to a student's performance. Apart from customization, AI can make learning English easier. A requirement for learning a second language is awareness of input at the level of noticing, especially for EFL students (Schmidt,1990).

Zhou Li (2023) also provides evidence that artificial intelligence (AI) can enhance students' motivation to learn. When incorporated into the educational setting, it can promote great motivation, strong self-confidence, and a change in attitude in students. This is explained by its capacity to offer dynamic, individualized support, which elevates and personalizes the learning process. In the context of language acquisition, students' eagerness to study and their belief in the availability of support are critical. AI can be a valuable tool for language learners by providing quick translations, language practice, and conversation partner.

METHOD

Qualitative descriptive research is used in this study. The researcher outlines the information related to using Speak.google, a digital speaking assistant. One of the most important methods of gathering data for qualitative research is documentation. It is a method of gathering data that entails getting details from numerous printed sources or documents. The researcher used online resources for this study, which can be accessed at <https://speak.google.com>. These are nonprinted documents. The information is displayed as pictures (screenshots). The researcher attempts to draw conclusions from the results.

FINDING & DISCUSSION

Speak.google is a new feature of Google Search that allows users to practice speaking and enhance their language skills. Android users in Argentina, Colombia, India (Hindi), Indonesia, Mexico, and Venezuela can utilize this feature. This AI is simple to use because students do not have to download and install it on their smartphones. As shown in figure 1, this AI can be accessed online in Google search or directly through the web browser (<https://speak.google.com>).

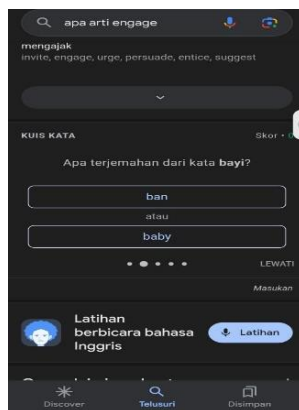


Figure 1. Speak.google on google search

Speak google provides interactive English speaking practice along with personalized feedback. After receiving real-life prompt, students formulate their own spoken responses based on provided vocabulary words. They practice for three to five minutes, receive individualized feedback, and have the opportunity to sign up for daily reminders to practice. Students can practice at their own pace, anywhere, at any time, with just a smartphone and some planned practice time.



Figure 2. an example of the question & a set of answer option

Students can hear how to pronounce a sentence by tapping on the speaker symbol. Additionally, there is a help button that allows students to see a list of sample replies at different linguistic complexity levels, providing them with specific recommendations for different ways to reply in this situation (figure 2). Students respond to questions using a microphone so they can practice vocabulary in real-world settings. To improve memory, the material is repeated at dynamic intervals. It is well known that these methods work well in assisting pupils in developing their speaking confidence. This AI gives real-time and personalized feedback which is essential to good practice for speaking. In order to offer beneficial, real-time recommendations and corrections, responses are examined. In practice sessions, students can tap on any word that they are unfamiliar to see the definition of the word in context (Figure 2).

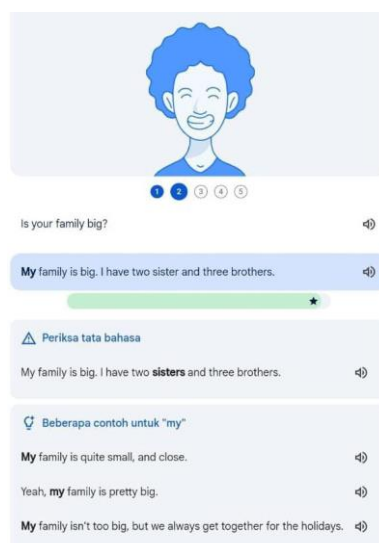


Figure 3. An example of Grammar feedback

Students can also receive grammar feedback on their response. Feedback on grammar offers insights into potential grammatical enhancements (figure 3).



Figure 4. Feedback of the answer

Students can receive semantic feedback after answering a question, which indicates how effectively their response can be understood (Figure 4). The best response is marked as "very clear". Students can select the "try again" button to repeat the response if it is unclear or inappropriate in the given situation.

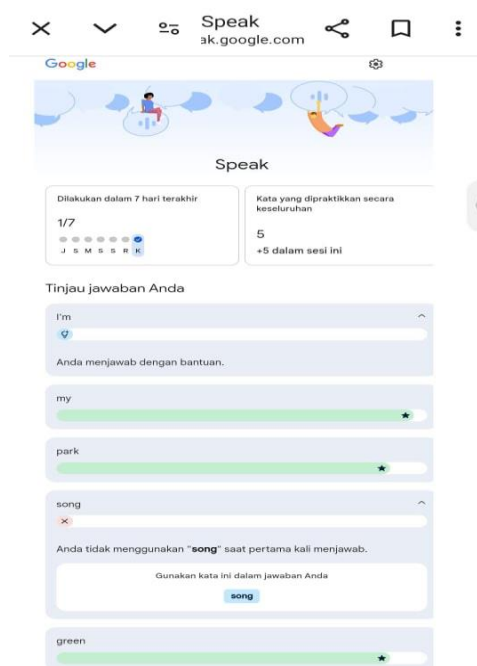


Figure 5. Speak.google's evaluation

At the end of the session, students can consider what they have learned, including vocabularies, and the reasons behind their incorrect answers. Additionally, it offers a summary of the vocabulary they have learnt during the session. Within a week, the students can monitor their speaking practice (Figure 5).

CONCLUSION

An AI-powered speaking assistant called Speak.google assists students by providing a list of possible answers to the question. This AI can assist EFL students in learning how to translate words and pronounce the sentence correctly. It also facilitates the improvement of their speaking grammar. Additionally, it encourages students and keep them from getting stuck by difficult English vocabulary or expressions. Speak.google provides options for EFL students in their self-directed study. Speak.google is a promising artificial intelligence technology for EFL students who are interested in improving their English speaking. With just a smartphone and some scheduled practice time, students may learn at their own pace, anywhere, at any time.

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