

Utilizing Authentic Literature and Oral Application in Improving Students' Literature Comprehension and Speaking Skills

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The rapid development of technology has brought a significant change in English classrooms. Nowadays, the use of technology plays a significant role in teaching and learning activities as students are more driven and enthusiastic when technology is utilized to facilitate learning. Orai application is proposed to improve students' ability to comprehend authentic literature and speaking skills. The findings were classified into the students' score improvement and the steps of teaching literature using Orai application. The improvement of students' literature comprehension and speaking skills can be seen in the presentation delivered by the students and the increased score after the implementation of the teaching of speaking using Orai application in the first Cycle. The average score in the preliminary study was 61 while the average score at the end of implementation was 73. The overall result shows that Orai application was effective and beneficial to improve students' comprehension of authentic literature and speaking skills.

Key words: authentic literature, ORAI application, comprehension, speaking skills

Pesatnya perkembangan teknologi telah membawa perubahan yang signifikan di dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Saat ini, penggunaan teknologi memegang peranan penting dalam kegiatan belajar mengajar karena mahasiswa lebih termotivasi dan antusias ketika dosen mengintegrasikan teknologi dalam memfasilitasi pembelajaran. Penggunaan aplikasi Orai disarankan untuk membantu meningkatkan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam memahami karya sastra dan ketrampilan berbicara. Temuan diklasifikasikan menjadi dua yaitu peningkatan nilai mahasiswa dan langkah-langkah pengajaran sastra dengan menggunakan aplikasi Orai. Peningkatan pemahaman literature dan ketrampilan berbicara mahasiswa dapat dilihat dalam presentasi yang disampaikan mahasiswa dan peningkatan nilai setelah menggunakan aplikasi Orai dalam kegiatan pembelajaran pada siklus pertama. Nilai rata-rata pada studi pendahuluan adalah 61 sedangkan nilai rata-rata pada akhir implementasi adalah 73. Hasil keseluruhan menunjukkan bahwa aplikasi Orai efektif dan bermanfaat untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mahasiswa tentang karya sastra dan ketrampilan berbicara.

INTRODUCTION

English classrooms have been transformed to a higher level along with the rapid development of technology. Students are required to master not only the language but also to cope with the rapidly growing technology applied in assisting the teaching and learning process. Teachers around the world have been exploring the best ways to integrate technology to facilitate learning and improve students' English skills especially speaking as a way to communicate feelings, express thoughts, share ideas, convey information, and present facts. Given the context that students have limited opportunities to practice the language, speaking English can be very challenging and frightening for students. The importance of having authentic language learning situations needs to be addressed to advance students' English communication skills both inside and outside the classroom (Alharbi, 2015; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

Studies in this respective field have shown some students' problems in learning to speak English fluently and accurately such as their lack of knowledge of the discussed topic, limited vocabulary, pronunciation, and speaking anxiety which have influenced their study achievement and progress in learning English (Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel, 2013; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Salim, 2015).

Other issues experienced in classrooms are when students have difficulties in expressing their ideas and do not know what to say because they are not interested in the subject matters, in this case is literature. Some students think that literature is "old school" and need to get familiar with authentic literature as it presents enchanting stories (narrative texts) and various kind of information (expository texts). Authentic literature can also be used as sources for developing various points of view towards text's comprehension (Gareis, Allard, & Saindon, 2009).

Furthermore, to address the above-mentioned issues teacher could assist students in learning the content material more efficiently and effectively by utilizing authentic literature (Ciecierski & Bintz, 2015). Yet, authentic literature will also improve students' higher-order thinking skills and their comprehension of the reading material (Bean, 2003; Gareis et al., 2009).

The use of authentic literature and the use of appropriate technology can improve students' comprehension and speaking skills as well as their motivation for autonomous learning. When the teacher can bridge the gap and bring awareness to students about the importance of learning literature, students will be more confident to perform what they have learned and reap the benefit of having the independent speaking practice.

Orai is a very popular educational mobile application developed by Danish Dhamani and it is downloadable for both Android and iOS users who are working on their public speaking skills. As Orai aims to help people improving their confidence and polishing skills to speak in various situations, Orai gives direct, personalized feedback on students' public speaking proficiency. Yet,

some studies also highlight the benefit of utilizing Orai as it also offers a quick solution to speaking problems by becoming your personal speaking coach which assists you in adding fewer filler words, speak clearly, and sustain at a good pace. (Fidan & Oztürk, 2015; Halimah, 2018; Helmie & Susilawati, 2018). To add up the features, Orai will also give feedback on how fast you speak, your energy level, vocal clarity as well as give micro-lessons on public speaking, detailed performance tracking, audio recording and playback, accurate transcript of what you say, and freestyle mode to practice anytime, anywhere (Takahashi, 2017)

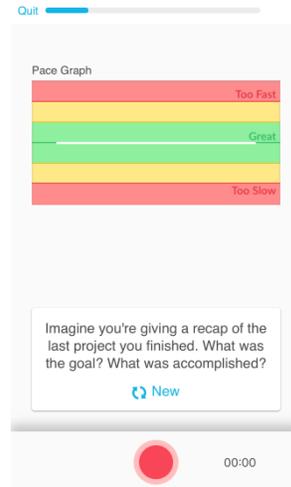
This study aims to explore the use of Orai application in addressing both challenge in improving students' literature comprehension and speaking skills, as to encourage students' practice speaking English inside and outside the classrooms using the Orai application installed in their mobile phones during their most convenient time as to prepare for their project presentation.

METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the study aims to improve students' speaking ability and solving classroom's problem on literature comprehension. The 21 participants of the study were in their third semester studying in the English Language Education Department (ELED) at Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana (UKDW) Yogyakarta. As adapted from the cycle model by Ferrance (2000), CAR applied here is the type of classroom research carried out to reveal students' difficulties in learning, assess and address their problems, as to improve students' performance and achievement.

The steps of the first cycle of the study are (1) identifying the problem (2) data gathering (3) data interpreting (4) planning a change (5) acting and observing (6) evaluating. The cycle will be stopped when the students have reached the criteria of success and will be continued if the students have not met the expectation. Preliminary research has been conducted to gather initial data on students' presentations skill. The action in the first cycle was completed in three meetings to introduce the material, collect data and prepare the presentation, and present the project. After students were introduced to authentic literature material, background and context were provided to assist students in understanding the assignment, objective, and expected outcome. Then, students were asked to download the free trial of Orai application to help them practicing their speech.

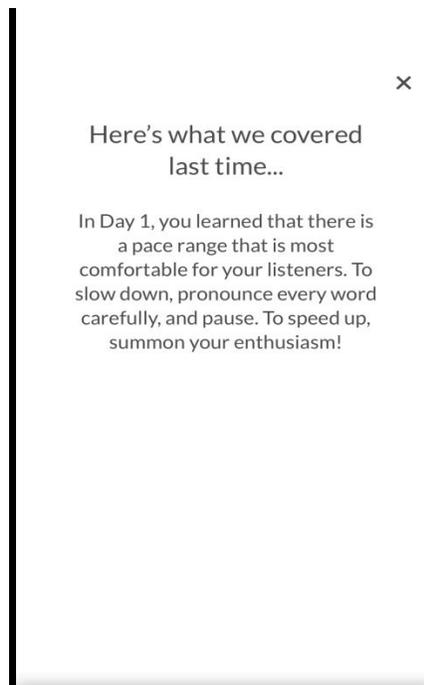
Picture 1. Prompter from Orai Application



After downloading Orai application, students were asked to follow the instruction and practice their speech on the project they have done for the pre-test and got immediate feedback. Students were also encouraged to practice regularly upon receiving personalized feedbacks from Orai.

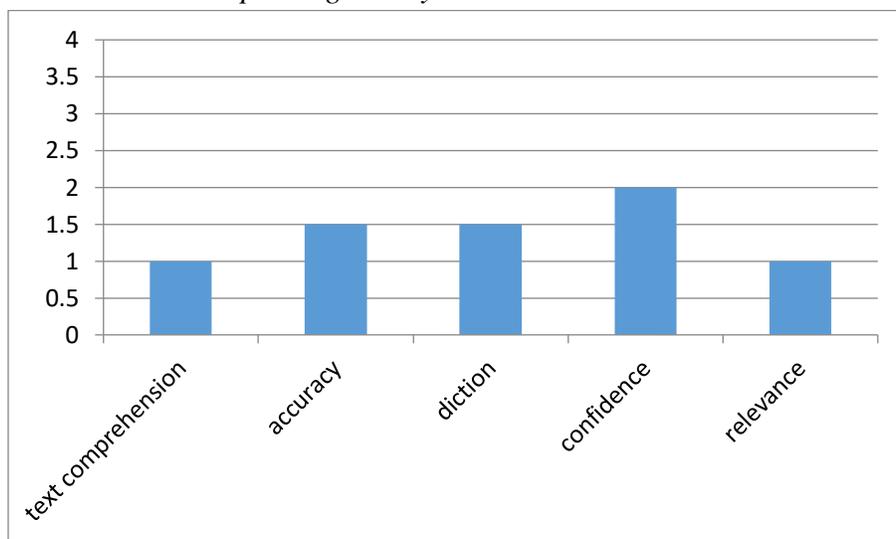
During the discussion, it can be seen students' comprehension of the topic discussed. Language expressions, vocabularies, and pronunciation were also observed and revised when necessary by the teacher.

Picture 2. Feedback Sample from Orai



The preliminary research conducted at the beginning of the semester as a pre-test has shown some major problems encountered by students in speaking activity as the outcome of the reading project. Interviews and class observation were also done to validate the result. Students have low motivation to read authentic literature and have a problem in connecting the relevance between authentic work of literature with today's situation as shown in the table below:

Figure 1: Students' Perceived Speaking Ability



To determine students' success, students' presentations are observed based on their achieved score. Based on the pre-test result, 43% of the students got the score below 60 meaning that these students did not fulfill the requirement for the minimum passing score which is $C \geq 60$, while the average score was 61 with score range 0-100. Thus, this study is conducted to assist students in improving their grades by having a score of 60 (C) at least or above to be administered as a success.

Another challenge is the different standard of scoring applied in the ELED that is 5 points higher than other departments in this university which contribute to bigger pressure faced by ELED students.

Table 1. Standard of Scoring

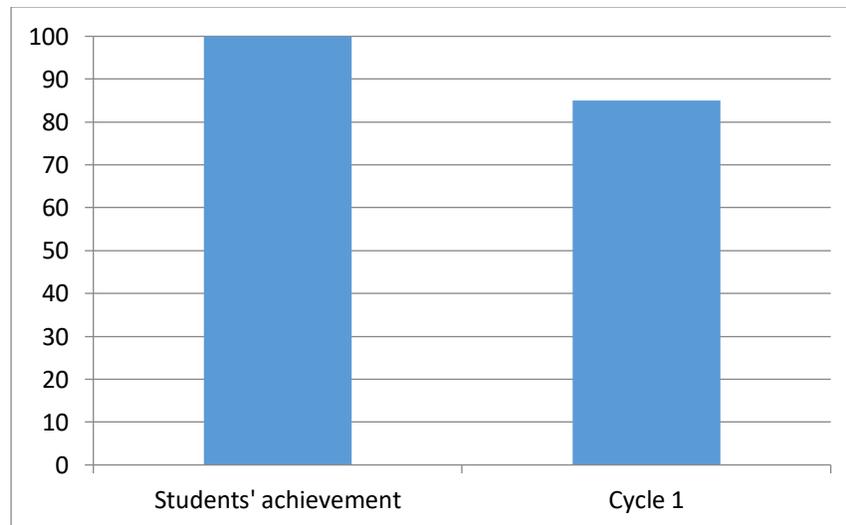
Standard of Scoring	Range of Score in ELED	Range of Score in other departments
A	≥ 90	≥ 85
A-	≥ 85	≥ 80
B+	≥ 80	≥ 75

B	≥ 75	≥ 70
B-	≥ 70	≥ 65
C+	≥ 65	≥ 60
C	≥ 60	≥ 55
D	≥ 55	≥ 50
E	0	0

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to data collection in the first cycle, it is shown how students' speaking skills have increased as targeted by observing students' achievement from the criteria of success. The positive impact of utilizing authentic literature and Orai application was shown through the improved students' average score of 73. All of the 21 students got 60 or above in the first cycle with the range of score 60-85 (out of 100).

Figure 2: Students' Achievement



After the implementation of Orai application in comprehending authentic literature to facilitate students' autonomous learning beyond the classroom, students are required to complete a questionnaire. The result of students' responses to the questionnaire can be observed in Table 2.

Table 2. Responses to Questionnaire (in %)

Students' responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students are more interested in improving speaking skills by using Orai application.	57	43	0	0
Students are more capable of comprehending literature after teaching-learning using Orai application.	57	34	9	0
Students are more confident in expressing their ideas during the discussion on authentic literature after teaching-learning using Orai application.	52	34	14	0
Students find it easy to give and to respond to literature discussion after teaching-learning using Orai application	62	24	14	0
Students are motivated after using Orai application to get used to speaking English and to comprehend authentic literature.	71	24	5	0

It is revealed that all of the students in the class are more interested in improving their speaking skills by using Orai application, while more than half of the class population claimed that they are more capable of comprehending literature after the implementation of Orai application in the teaching and learning activities. More than 80% of the students stated that not only they are more confident in expressing their thoughts and responding to a discussion on literature but they are also feeling more motivated to continue using Orai application to practice more and improving their speaking skills to improve their reading comprehension.

The students' responses are validated with their score improvement. The mean score in the pre-test was 61 and improved 12 points after the implementation in the first cycle. The improvement can also be observed from the students' passing scores. The pre-test result showed that more than 40% of the students did not reach the passing score but at the end of the first cycle, all students reached the passing score. The detailed information on students' improved scores can be observed below:

Table 3. The Improvement in Students' Score

Scores	Pre-test	Test
Total	1281	1530
Mean scores	61	73
Improvement of mean scores		12

Percentage (%) of class reaching the passing score	57	100
Improvement (%) from Pre-test to Test		43

CONCLUSIONS

This study showed that utilizing Orai Application as a means of learning activities in the literature class could improve students' literature comprehension and speaking skills as validated with the students' score improvement and percentage of students who reach the passing score. Yet, students are more interested and motivated to read authentic literature, find the joy in reading such materials, more confident in expressing their ideas, participating in discussion and presenting their project. It is also recommended to explore and extend the use of Orai application to improve students' engagement in learning English.

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