

IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION ABILITY IN SPEAKING USING "*HELLO ENGLISH*" APPLICATION

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Abstract

This Collaborative Classroom Action Research was conducted to know the use of "Hello English" (HE) application to improve the students' pronunciation ability in speaking. The subject and setting of the research were Speaking 2 students of English Education Study Program, University of Palangka Raya. The data were collected in form qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained from the result of questionnaire on the use of HE application, and the quantitative data were taken from the test results to know the students' pronunciation ability in speaking. The result shows that the mean score of Pre-Action Test of 52.3 was lower than the minimum mean score 70. The data of cycle 1 show that the students' mean score was higher than minimum mean score (92.0) but there were some students who still had "fair" interest, activities, and ability when using HE application, which means one of the criteria of success was not passed and need some improvement in cycle 2. The results in cycle 2 show that the students' mean score was higher than minimum mean score (94.3) and all the students had "good" and "excellent" interest, activities and ability when using HE application. It can be concluded that "Hello English" application can improve the students' pronunciation ability by practicing it several times.

Key words: "Hello English" application, pronunciation

INTRODUCTION

In this globalization era, English is an international language which plays an important role in human life. English can be found in many things, anywhere and anytime. There are four skills that must be taught by the teacher at school, they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. To make sure the students have good skills in English, they are expected can communicate in interpersonal, transactional, and functional as stated on Permendikbud No. 21 Year 2016. To achieve that goal and make the students able to communicate in interpersonal, transactional, and functional situations, they must master speaking skill. To master speaking skill, having a lot of vocabulary is not enough because having a good pronunciation is also important, as stated by Harmer (2007) that language students need to be aware of pronunciation such as sounds, stress, and intonation. That means each student must have good pronunciation and know how to produce sound and put the stress and intonation correctly.

There are some of the fifth-semester students at the English Education Program of the University of Palangka Raya who still had problems in pronunciation. The researcher found that during the learning process many students did pay attention,

chatted with friends and played their smartphone. When they were asked to speak, it was realized that the students' pronunciation was not as good as expected. Many students cannot pronounce the word in properly and some of them confused how to pronounce the word. In the *Silabus Mata Kuliah Kurikulum 2016*, the students expected to have upper-intermediate level of English ability in speaking which implicitly includes pronunciation. Even though there was no pronunciation put in the indicators, the students need to have good pronunciation to have a good speaking skill, as stated by Brown (2004) that pronunciation is one of some oral proficiency categories besides grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and task. Beside that based on Harmer (2007) the speaker's conditions when speaking also play an important role in determining the level of fluency So, to encourage speaking fluency the speaker also needs to have a lot of vocabulary and good pronunciation too. Pronunciation refers to the process of producing sounds as stated by Harmer (2007) that "the speaking is the way to make sounds of the language, where to place the stress, and to use pitch and intonation to show how the feeling and what to mean. According to Kelly (2000), the main features of pronunciation is

divided into phonemes and suprasegmental features. Phonemes are the different sounds within a language, it consists of two categories; consonant sounds and vowel sounds. Parts of Suprasegmental features include stress, intonation, and how sounds change in relation to speech. EFL students may have problems in pronouncing words, producing accurate phonemes or using accurate supra-segmental elements.

Because students in Speaking 2 class need something to help them practice continuously, improve their ability in pronunciation, and make them interesting to learn in class, the researcher then proposed to use an application on their mobile device named "Hello English (HE)". Learning using it means the students learn through Mobile Learning. According to Crompton, Muilenburg, and Berge's (in Crompton, 2013:4) M-learning is "learning across multiple contexts, through social and content interactions, using personal electronic devices". The word "context" in that definition encompasses m-learning that is formal, self-directed, and spontaneous learning, as well as learning that is context aware and context neutral. According to Tuttle (2013), when the learners use M-Learning it was called Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). In MALL, language learning is assisted or enhanced

through the use of a handheld mobile device such as cell phone or smartphone, tablets and MP players. Using M-Learning in class has a good effect as founded by Tatar et al. (2003) in their research that none of the teachers have complained about disruptive behaviour in classes where students use handheld tools. Crompton (2013) compare M-learning with traditional and conventional tethered e-learning where advantages of M-learning lies on: no time constraints because the mobile device can carry and use in anywhere and anytime; personalization through apps, concepts, and the ownership of the devices modified for the user; private; not limited by the set of location as long the access can be obtained; the learning process can be formal and informal; connections made to those in the direct environment and those networked; sometimes highly spontaneous. Khaddage (2013) stated that mobile apps can offer the students to access to learning content in a university environment, where the first thing that offered by the apps is *speed* because apps are designed to be fast and efficient, the second is *security* because apps are designed to keep user safe and more secure when using their mobile devices, and the last is *simplicity* because apps can be streamlined, clean and simple, efficient, and easy to use.

To improve the students' pronunciation ability, the researcher decided to conduct a Collaborative Classroom Action Research with the lecturer of Speaking 2. This is done based on the opinion of Ferrance (2000) that collaborative action research may include as few as two teachers or a group of several teachers and others interested in addressing a classroom or department issue. CCAR usually focused on a single classroom or several classrooms with a common issue.

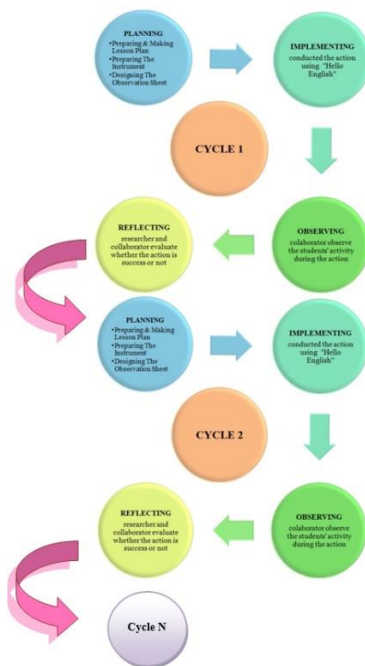
Some previous research resulted the advantages of the use of mobile app in class. Mindong (2016) found that intermediate language learners used apps to access content and communicate on SNS and were not keen on studying parts. Participants believed that using apps helped them with their four-language skill (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. Malasari (2017) found that the apps name e-talk (an English Learning application aimed to improve the students' speaking skill consisted of five main features; vocabulary, grammar, expression, conversation, and project) helped the students improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension through the features and activities provided in the applications. Gangalamaran and

Pasupathi (2017) on their research have found that listening skills were better acquired through apps more than that of other language skills. Hossain (2018) found that Smartphone applications could be remarkably effective for mobile-assisted language learning. Majority of the participants have found Smartphones and apps to be quite easy and comfortable for learning the target language.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

To arrange the research procedure, research design is needed. The research design in this research was in form of Action Research. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) stated that "Action research is conducted by one or more individuals or groups for the purpose of solving a problem or obtaining information in order to inform local practice". It means an action research can be conducted by one researcher or in collaboration with others in order to solve a problem. In this research, the researcher used Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CCAR) collaborated with the lecturer of Speaking 2 class. The design of this research was adapted from Arikunto (2010).

Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Design Adapted from Arikunto (2010)



There would be more than one cycles conducted in this research if the last cycle was unsuccessful, each cycle consisted of two meetings. The procedure for each cycle was almost the same. It contained planning, implementing, observing, and reflect-ing.

In planning step, there were some preparations to be done: (a) preparing the lesson plan, (b) preparing the instrument, (c) designing the observation sheets, and (d) setting the criteria of success. The lesson plan was designed to be the guideline in implementing the action of using "Hello English (HE)". The instrument was chosen by the researcher and collaborator to collect the data during the action. The observation sheet was used to observe the students' and lecturer's activity during the teaching and

learning process. The criteria of success was determined that the students' mean score was at least 70 and the observation result during the action is that all students had "good" to "excellent" interest, activities, and ability when using HE.

The implementing step was done by following the planning which has been arranged by the researcher and collaborator. The observation step was done by the lecturer as the collaborator to observe the students' activity during the process of implementing the action. The reflection step was done by the researcher and collaborator in each cycle to evaluate whether or not the action in that cycle was successful or need some improvement.

Quantitative and qualitative data were taken to answer the research problems. Pre-Action Test was done to know the ability of the research subject in pronunciation. The data on the implementation of HE were in form of students' score and observation result of students' activities. A questionnaire was given to the subjects to know their response and opinion about the implementation of HE.

To get the result of the students' pronunciation the researcher asked the students to send the result of their practice on WhatsApp, then the screenshots of

students' practice were used to analyse the number of students' correct pronunciation. Then, the researcher tabulated and calculated the data to find the mean score to know the improvement of students' pronunciation. The result of students' observation sheet was tabulated without calculated. The result of questionnaire was tabulated and calculated to find the percentage of students' response for each question.

FINDING

This research was conducted to Speaking 2 students at English Education Study Program in Academic year 2018/2019. The quantitative and qualitative data were taken from the students' scores in Pre-Action Test and in each cycle, while qualitative were obtained from the results of observation sheet and questionnaire.

Before Action

Before conducting the action, the researcher conducted an observation and found that many students did not pay attention to the lesson; they chatted with friends and played their smart-phone, and when they were asked to speak many of them could not pronounce the word properly. The researcher gave Pre-Action Test to know and measure their ability in pronunciation. The data of the students' score in Pre-Action Test are as follows:

Table 1. Pre-Action Test

No.	Student Code	Student Score
1.	S1	51
2.	S2	57
3.	S3	51
4.	S4	53
5.	S5	66
6.	S6	53
7.	S7	55
8.	S8	60
9.	S9	66
10.	S10	68
11.	S11	70
12.	S12	57
13.	S13	64
14.	S14	42
15.	S15	55
16.	S16	32
17.	S17	45
18.	S18	60
19.	S19	51
20.	S20	49
21.	S21	55
22.	S22	42
23.	S23	36
24.	S24	42
25.	S25	34
26.	S26	45
TOTAL SCORE		$\Sigma X = 1359$
MEAN SCORE		$X = 52.3$

The data in the above table show that the student's total score is 1359, and the mean score is 52.3. The lowest score is 32, and the highest score is 70. This means many students need to improve their pronunciation ability. Then the researcher and collaborator decided to conduct the action in CCAR.

Cycle 1

The procedure in this cycle consisted of

planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting steps as stated in the previous part. After getting all the data needed, the researcher and lecturer as collaborator did reflection, as shown in the following Table 2.

Table 2. Student Score in Cycle 1

No.	Students' Code	Students' Score		
		Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Average
1.	S1	91	89	90
2.	S2	91	94	93
3.	S3	99	96	98
4.	S4	92	85	89
5.	S5	80	88	84
6.	S6	87	97	92
7.	S7	95	97	96
8.	S8	91	88	90
9.	S9	93	98	96
10.	S10	84	80	82
11.	S11	99	97	98
12.	S12	82	81	82
13.	S13	90	96	93
14.	S14	100	100	100
15.	S15	84	81	83
16.	S16	81	92	87
17.	S17	95	88	92
18.	S18	95	95	95
19.	S19	97	91	94
20.	S20	93	94	94
21.	S21	97	100	99
22.	S22	100	100	100
23.	S23	93	93	93
24.	S24	85	87	86
25.	S25	84	100	92
26.	S26	97	100	99
TOTAL SCORE				$\Sigma X = 2391$
MEAN SCORE				$\bar{X} = 92,00$

The result of observation in cycle 1, shows that in meeting 1 there were 3 students who had fair interest, 20 students

had good interest, and 3 students had excellent interest to practice using HE; there were 3 students who had fair active, 20 students had good active, and 3 students had excellent active to practice pronouncing the words using HE; and there were 2 students' had fair ability, 17 students' had good ability, 7 students' had excellent ability in pronouncing the words. In meeting 2 there were 3 students who had fair interest, 18 students who had good interest, and 5 students had excellent interest to practice using HE. Meanwhile, 2 students were in fair active category, 8 students good active, and 5 other students had excellent active to practice pronouncing the words using HE. There were 3 students' had fair ability, 11 students' had good ability, 12 students' had excellent ability in pronouncing the words.

In this cycle, one of the criteria of success was passed because the students mean score was 92.0. But the other criteria failed, because there were some students still had "fair" interest, activities, and ability when using HE. Based on the observation of lecturer's activities, it happened because students were not motivated and informed about the benefit of using HE for students.

Cycle 2

All steps in this cycle were similar to that of cycle 1 with an addition on implementation step. Before asking the students to practice using HE the lecturer motivated and informed about the benefit of using HE for students. The data of students' score obtained in this cycle were then tabulated and calculated as in the following table

Table 3. Student score in cycle 2

No.	Students' Code	Students' Score		
		Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Average
1.	S1	89	94	92
2.	S2	88	95	92
3.	S3	99	100	100
4.	S4	87	88	88
5.	S5	89	94	92
6.	S6	93	98	96
7.	S7	95	99	97
8.	S8	94	97	96
9.	S9	97	99	98
10	S10	76	98	87
11	S11	100	100	100
12	S12	75	97	86
13	S13	91	97	94
14	S14	100	100	100
15	S15	83	86	85
16	S16	76	94	85
17	S17	92	93	93
18	S18	99	93	96
19	S19	98	94	96
20	S20	98	95	97
21	S21	100	100	100
22	S22	100	100	100
23	S23	94	94	94
24	S24	95	99	97
25	S25	97	96	97
26	S26	100	100	100
TOTAL SCORE				$\Sigma X = 2453$
MEAN SCORE				$\bar{X} = 94,3$

After observing the students'

activities it was found that in meeting 1 there were no students had poor and fair interest, 12 students had good interest, and 14 students had excellent interest to practice using HE. Moreover, no students had poor and fair active, 12 students had good active, and 14 students had excellent active to practice pronouncing the words using HE; and no students had poor and fair ability, 15 students had good ability, 11 students had excellent ability in pronouncing the words. In meeting 2 there were no students had poor and fair interest, 16 students had good interest, and 10 students had excellent interest to practice using HE; no one students had poor and fair active, 16 students had good active, and 10 students had excellent active to practice pronouncing the words using HE; and no one students had poor and fair ability, 17 students had good ability, 9 students had excellent ability in pronouncing the words.

In this cycle, the students' mean score of 94.3 was higher than the minimum mean score and the previous cycle. The students interest, activities, and ability when using HE was "good" and "excellent" with no student had "fair" and "poor" on all of the observation criteria. Ut could be concluded that all the criteria of success was passed in this cycle.

Questionnaire result

At the end of research, the questionnaire was distributed to the students to know their response and opinion about the use of HE. The result could be seen on the table below:

Table 4. Questionnaire result

Question	Student Response			Percentage		
	Y	D	N	Y	D	N
Do you like learning in a new way using Hello English?	23	3	0	88	12	0
Does Hello English make you like English lesson more than before?	23	3	0	88	12	0
Is learning English easier using Hello English?	23	3	0	88	12	0
Is the English learning that you've been following encouraging you to learn English more?	23	3	0	88	12	0
Is the use of Hello English really helpful to practice pronunciation?	26	0	0	100	0	0
Do you have good pronunciation ability after you learn using Hello English?	20	6	0	77	23	0
Can Hello English improve your speaking skill?	23	3	0	88	12	0
Are you sure you can communicate fluently in English if you learn and practice continuously using Hello English?	23	3	0	88	12	0

Note:
 Y = Yes, D = Doubtful, N = No

DISCUSSION

As mentioned before, this research was conducted to know “How can Hello English improve students’ pronun-ciation ability. Pronunciation is a part of internal factor that affect speaking skill. Pronunciation can improve by doing practice continuously.

That is the reason why the researcher implemented HE app in this CCAR and asked the students to practice use the app. The use of HE app could be the speaking partner of the students and if the students mispronounced the word then the HE app could correct it and mark the words that were mispronounced.

In this research, the researcher used collaborative classroom action research. The data in this research were in form students’ score, observation of students’ and lecturer’s activities, and question-naire. As mentioned before, the researcher conducted Pre-Action Test to know the students' ability before the action. The students' mean score on Pre-Action Test was 52.3. It was lower than the minimum main score that must be passed by the students, and it means the students still need something to help them to improve their pronunciation ability. After conducting Pre-Action Test, the researcher then implemented the action in cycle 1 and got the students' mean score 92.0. Even though the result of cycle 1 based on the students' score could fulfill one of the criteria of success but other criteria failed. Because, based on the observation during the implementation there some students that still had "fair" interest, activities, and ability when using HE during the action. The

reason why there are some students that still had “fair” interest, activities, and ability when using HE during the action was because in this cycle the students just asked to use the app but never informed and motivated about why and what is the benefit of using HE. The researcher and collaborator then decided to conduct cycle 2 to see whether the student's that still had "fair" interest, activities, and ability in cycle 1 would change or not. Because, in this cycle the students were informed and motivated about why and what is the benefit of using HE, it was expected no one students that will have “fair” interest as on the previous cycle. Based on the data founded in cycle 2 the students' mean score was 94.3. the students mean score shown that it higher than minimum mean score and the previous cycle mean score. There was some improvement on students' activities, no one students had "fair" interest, activities, and ability when using "Hello English" during the action. That is because in this cycle before their asked to use the app they are informed and motivate about why and what the benefit of use the app, so the students not confuse why the lecturer asked them to practice use the app. Based on, all the data founded it can be concluded that cycle 2 could fulfill all the criteria.

The data finding in this research

showed that the use of Hello English app was effective and can improve the students' pronunciation ability. The improvement was through pronun-ciation practice using the app. In this research, the researcher also found the appropriate way to use the app. If the lecturer wants to use Hello English to test the students' pronunciation, it will be better to ask the students to come in front of the class and test them one by one. Because if used the same way as done by the researcher in this research by asking the students to sends their practice result on WhatsApp, some students may send the same screenshot and in irregular order. It will take more time to the rater to short the test and analyze the result of the test. When applied this app in class, we can ask the students to practice and then ask them to come to in front of the class to test, so the order of the test will be regular.

Even though there are some students in cycle 1 have “fair” interest and activities to use the app as long they still practice using the app, the app still has a good effect on the students' pronunciation and it could be seen in the difference of the students' score in Pre-Action Test and theme 1 on cycle 1. The researcher deliberately uses the same theme in Pre-Action Test and theme 1 on cycle 1 to see how the different of the students' ability when they are not

practicing use the app and when they are practice pronouncing the words in several times using Hello English. This research is proved that the word "practice makes perfect" is correct, which means if you do practice for a long time your ability will be improved and close to perfect.

CONCLUSION

The problem of the research that was formulated is "How can "Hello English" improve the students' pronunciation ability?", so the conclusion is made to answer this question. Based on the data finding in the previous chapter, the implementation of using Hello English could improve the speaking 2 students' ability in pronunciation. The app of Hello English was effective to use by the students to practice and improve their pronunciation. When they are using the app, they are not just practice, but the app also could detect if the students mispronounce the word and corrected it. Because the app always corrected them when they mispronounce the words it gave good effect to their pronunciation, it makes the students could be practice continuously to pronounce the words in correct ways. Even though there are some students just have "fair" interest and activities to use the app as on cycle 1, as long they still practice using the app, the

app still has a good effect on the students' pronunciation. If want to use Hello English to test the students' pronunciation, it will be better to ask the students to come in front of the class and test them one by one. So, the order of the test will be short regular when the tester take the screenshots. It will make the rater easier to analyse the result of the test.

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