

HelloTalk's Role in Enhancing English Speaking Skills: A Lesson from Technology-Assisted Language Learning

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Abstract

The use of technologies in language learning can improve EFL students' learning outcomes. One of them is HelloTalk application. It has great potential to be a useful language learning tool. This is reinforced by the results of another study which found that interacting directly with native speakers is essential for improving language skills. Therefore, this study investigates the effectiveness of the HelloTalk application in improving English-speaking skills among fifth-semester students at State Islamic University of Mataram. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected through observations and semi-structured interviews to explore students' experiences and progress in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency development. The findings indicate that HelloTalk significantly enhances students' lexical range, as frequent exposure to real-time conversations expands their vocabulary. Moreover, students reported improvements in pronunciation, particularly in distinguishing challenging phonemes, due to instant feedback from native speakers. Additionally, fluency increased as students became more confident in engaging in spontaneous dialogue with fewer pauses. However, several challenges were identified, including the high cost of premium features, internet connectivity issues, and complex app functionalities that hindered some students, particularly beginners. Despite these limitations, HelloTalk proves to be an effective tool for technology-assisted language learning, supporting real-world conversational practice. The study suggests that integrating HelloTalk into formal language courses could maximize its benefits while addressing its limitations through institutional support.

Keywords: HelloTalk application; English speaking skills; Language learning; Technology-assisted learning

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INTRODUCTION

HelloTalk's innovative app has changed the way we learn foreign languages. The app has created a global community dedicated to helping fellow users learn different languages, one of which is English. Millions of users from all over the world can now connect through hellotalk. HelloTalk's main concept is live language exchange with native speakers, allowing users to practice writing, reading and speaking in a real-life environment. HelloTalk allows users to interact in their target language and provides a more relaxed learning opportunity, and approaches a real-world experience with features such as voicemail, video chat and voice chat.

The chat feature in this application is very useful in developing writing skills, especially in expanding vocabulary (Arifida et al., 2024). HelloTalk also facilitates proofreading in grammar errors and feedback, with research identifying common grammar errors and proposing strategies for improvement (Arifin et al., 2024). Nova dkk., (2022) argued that digital technology has an important role in education, especially

in English language learning. (Ariawan et al., n.d.) in his study on digital literacy, shared that mastery of digital tools has a significant impact not only on academic success, but also in equipping students with relevant skills for professional and social needs in the digital age.

Language skills are essential, and HelloTalk's approach emphasizes social interaction. With HelloTalk's automatic language correction feature, users can learn languages and understand cultures from other countries by joining in communication-based activities. This feature helps users recognize their grammar and vocabulary errors and provides recommendations for correcting them, making them more accurate and confident in speaking foreign languages (Darmawati, 2018).

The use of technology in language learning can improve student motivation and learning outcomes, according to previous research. With its worldwide community and interactive features, HelloTalk has great potential to be a useful language learning tool. This is reinforced by the results of another study which found that interacting directly with native speakers is essential for improving language skills (Godwin-Jones, 2019).

By understanding the various issues that may arise while using HelloTalk and how to address them, users can maximize their experience in learning languages and building international connections through this app (Budiyono et al., 2024). The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) in apps such as HelloTalk has significantly changed the way language learning. HelloTalk serves as a communication and social platform that allows users to interact with native speakers in real-time, which enhances their learning experience. The app integrates a variety of AI-driven features that facilitate personalized learning, such as personalized learning, such as live interactions that help improve oral fluency and listening comprehension skills.

In addition, HelloTalk is equipped with language learning tools that include voicemail, text translation, grammar correction, and pronunciation practice. These tools encourage active participation and provide immediate feedback, which is essential for language acquisition. The platform also enables in-depth cultural exchange, allowing learners to understand the context and culture behind the language they are learning. With a personalized learning experience, the app helps users utilize their learning time effectively and reduce frustration, which in turn improves the continuity and effectiveness of their learning. Overall, the integration of AI in HelloTalk not only improves the learning process but also makes it more engaging and effective for second language learners (Chen, 2023).

The study on the Hello Talk application for improving speaking skills reveals several strengths and weaknesses. Among its strengths, the research highlights the generally positive feedback from students, who reported that the app helped them overcome their fear of making mistakes and boosted their confidence in speaking English. Additionally, Hello Talk features engaging elements that maintain students' enthusiasm for learning, making it a preferred choice among users. The application also facilitates cultural exchange and interaction with native speakers, enriching the language learning experience beyond traditional classroom settings. Furthermore, it provides students with the opportunity to practice speaking with a diverse range of users from different countries, enhancing their exposure to various accents and dialects (Rosilah & Ulfa, 2024).

Recent research has looked at how well the HelloTalk app helps students learn languages, especially English as a foreign language. Research shows that, compared to conventional approaches, HelloTalk can significantly improve students' narrative reading ability (Zulaikah et al., 2024). In addition, HelloTalk app has shown good results in the process of learning vocabulary to high school students, making learning more interesting and interactive (Siregar & Ismahani, 2024). In addition, the app has been shown to be

effective in improving tenth grade students' ability to write retelling texts, with a 25% increase in average score after use (Anisa Septia Megawati & Chantika Dewi, 2024).

HelloTalk has some unique features compared to other language learning apps. The app allows users to have a continuous dialog or conversation with other users using various features such as text messaging, video chat, and voice calls, resulting in an engaging and entertaining learning experience. In addition to emphasizing language learning, HelloTalk also emphasizes social communication and daily life, so that users not only learn the language but also understand the context and culture. Features such as auto-correction and AI-based education provide instant ways to help users identify and correct their problems, making the learning process more efficient. With a large worldwide community, the app offers the opportunity to learn multiple languages and dialects while providing flexibility in choosing learning methods based on individual needs and preferences.

This study offers some new insights into language learning that is aided by technology, particularly in the development of keterampilan using mobile applications. One aspect of it is its emphasis on Indonesian mahasiswa. In contrast to previous research that was more general or focused on schoolchildren, this study specifically examines the effectiveness of HelloTalk in enhancing the academic performance of senior citizens in the final semester at Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, offering a fresh perspective on the role of applications in higher education in Indonesia. In addition, this study adopts a kualitatif approach using observation and questionnaires, which differs from previous studies that typically use quantitative methods like pre-test and post-test.

This study enables more in-depth exploration of learning experiences, learning challenges, and mastery of HelloTalk, hence providing more accurate information about applications in the real world. According to (Imanina & Palupi, 2023), the analysis of communication in the HelloTalk application can be seen from the perspective of Computer-Media Communication (CMC), which provides more insight into human interactions with the use of technology.

In addition to identifying the benefits of using HelloTalk, this study also highlights the challenges faced by students, such as high costs for premium features, internet connectivity issues, and the complexity of certain app features. A study by (Apriliani, 2024) shows that the implementation of artificial intelligence in language learning can enhance learning effectiveness and efficiency, but still faces technical challenges such as accessibility and limitations of free features. Therefore, understanding these challenges is crucial for designing optimal strategies for mobile-assisted language learning app usage.

Additionally, this study explores the role of artificial intelligence (AI) features in language learning, such as auto-correction and real-time translation, which aid language acquisition. Tundreng et al., (2023) found that AI integration in language learning has significantly increased at the university level, with various AI-based tools like ChatGPT frequently used in language learning strategies (researchgate.net). Although the integration of AI in language learning has been widely discussed, few studies have specifically analyzed its impact within a peer-to-peer language exchange platform like HelloTalk, thus contributing to the growing literature on AI-assisted language learning.

Furthermore, this study not only assesses the improvement in speaking skills but also examines its impact on students' confidence in speaking English. By exploring how real-time interactions with native speakers influence students' readiness to communicate, this study provides valuable insights into the affective factors of second language acquisition. HelloTalk in English language learning can increase motivation and learning outcomes because it enables direct interaction with native speakers. Therefore, this study contributes to understanding how application-based interaction can build students' confidence in speaking a foreign language.

Overall, the novelty of this study lies in exploring the experiences of Indonesian university students using HelloTalk, the qualitative approach in evaluating the effectiveness of the app, and the identification of practical challenges in its usage. Moreover, this study provides new perspectives on the role of AI in language learning and the psychological benefits of peer-to-peer interaction in a digital language exchange environment. The findings lay the foundation for future research on optimizing mobile language learning applications for higher education. Artificial intelligence plays a key role in enhancing the effectiveness of language learning by enabling more adaptive and responsive learning. The study is guided with four research questions; How does HelloTalk contribute to the improvement of English speaking skills among fifth semester students at Mataram State Islamic University? In what ways do HelloTalk's AI-powered features (such as auto-correction and real-time translation) enhance or hinder language learning? How does HelloTalk compare to other language learning apps in terms of fostering speaking skills? And what challenges do students face when using HelloTalk for language learning, and how can these challenges be mitigated?

Literature Review

Technology-enhanced learning (TELL) has attracted significant attention in recent years, with research exploring its theoretical, effective, and dependent foundations. These studies have identified several theoretical frameworks and frameworks of various technologies that support collaborative language learning(Su & Zou, 2022). Mobile learning and ICT tools have been identified as highly effective resources for language learning and in order to maximize the benefits of TELL, it is crucial to provide appropriate training and support for teachers in integrating technology into their teaching practices. Studies show that technology-supported language learning can be as effective as learning with human teachers(Nurmala et al., 2023). However, there are challenges, such as potential misuse by students(Iberahim et al., 2023).

According to (Ghanizadeh et al., 2015), TELL was shown to have a positive impact on students' language skills, such as acquiring, organizing, interacting, and learning, as well as sub-skills such as grammar and vocabulary. The integration of technologies such as social media, smartphone apps, and virtual reality has enhanced interaction, engagement, social media, and learning in language teaching (Zhou & Wei, 2018). In order to effectively implement TELL, students need to implement the theoretical foundations and practical applications of technology in language teaching. (Kholidi et al., 2024) emphasized that students see digital literacy as the ability to communicate and understand the language of technology and the ability to use digital tools. They believe that digital literacy is beneficial to support their academic achievement and work for professional development.

In their study on the benefits of artificial intelligence-based apps for personalized learning, (Moreira-Fontán et al., 2019) found that auto-correction and automatic translation features help language learners understand context and correct errors. (Lian, 2017) examined how technology supports collaboration-based learning, similar to the idea of HelloTalk connecting users with native speakers in real-time. (Ghanizadeh et al., 2015) studied how gamification increases motivation to learn a language, which can be further applied in HelloTalk to improve user engagement. (Wood & Shirazi, 2020) found technical problems with the app. the integration of technology into language learning has been found to increase student motivation, develop positive attitudes towards learning, and create enjoyable learning experiences (Tafazoli & Romero, 2017). Analysis of the Impact on Students' Speaking Confidence*

Beyond assessing the improvement in language skills, this study delves deeper into the psychological effects of using HelloTalk on students' confidence in speaking English.

It explores how regular interactions with native speakers, facilitated by the app's real-time communication features, encourage students to overcome their fears and hesitations when speaking in a second language. This study investigates the crucial role of these real-time, peer-to-peer exchanges in boosting learners' self-efficacy, thereby fostering a more confident approach to speaking English.

By engaging with native speakers and receiving immediate feedback in a supportive environment, students gain valuable insights into their own strengths and weaknesses. This process not only enhances their linguistic abilities but also positively influences their willingness to participate in conversations, making them more likely to engage in future interactions. The research emphasizes the importance of affective factors—such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence in second language acquisition, highlighting that the emotional and psychological aspects of learning can significantly impact a learner's success in mastering a new language.

By employing a qualitative approach to assess the effectiveness of the app, this study goes beyond traditional pre-test/post-test evaluations, providing a richer, more nuanced understanding of how students interact with the platform and the challenges they face. Additionally, the identification of practical obstacles such as technical limitations and the cost of premium features gives valuable insight into the barriers to widespread adoption and effective use of language-learning apps. Furthermore, this study contributes new perspectives on the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language learning. It explores how AI-powered tools, such as real-time translation and speech recognition, support learners in refining their speaking skills and enhancing their comprehension.

The findings also highlight the psychological benefits of peer interaction in a digital language exchange environment, showing how such interactions can significantly boost learners' motivation and self-confidence. The positive impact of these features underscores the importance of a holistic approach to language learning, where both cognitive and emotional aspects are taken into account. These insights provide a foundation for future research aimed at optimizing mobile-assisted language learning applications, with an emphasis on improving accessibility, user engagement, and overall effectiveness in the context of higher education.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-explorative method to understand the effectiveness of HelloTalk application in improving the English speaking skills of fifth semester students at UIN Mataram. This approach was chosen because it aims to explore the phenomenon in depth in the context of its use by students. In line with this approach, the research was conducted by involving students who have used the HelloTalk application and analyzing their experiences in using the available features to improve their English speaking skills (Budiarti et al., 2024).

Research Participants

The participants in this study were 5th semester students who had high academic needs in improving English speaking skills. The selection of participants was carried out by purposive sampling method, namely selecting students who have used HelloTalk application for at least one month. This criterion was set so that the research could capture more in-depth experiences from students who were already accustomed to using the application in their learning process. The selection of respondents also considered various levels of speaking ability, so that various perspectives could be obtained regarding the effectiveness of this application (Waruwu, 2024; Abdussamad, 2022; Fadli, 2021).

Data collection in this study was carried out through two main methods, namely observation and interviews. Observation aims to record the patterns of students' use of the

HelloTalk application, including the frequency of interaction with native speakers, the communication patterns used, as well as the utilization of auto-correction features in the application. Through these observations, the researcher sought to gain an objective understanding of how students develop their speaking skills (Hansen, 2020).

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to explore students' experiences in more depth. These interviews lasted 20 to 30 minutes, and with the consent of the participants, the interviews were recorded to ensure the accuracy of the data in the analysis. This diverse interview method allowed students to provide open-ended answers regarding their experiences using HelloTalk, the challenges faced, as well as comparisons with more conventional English learning methods. Previous research has shown that interviews can enhance language learning, as seen in studies on language speaking comprehension (Karyati & Hapsari, 2019).

Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, it was analyzed using thematic analysis. The first step was the transcription of the interviews and observations to facilitate further review. The data coding process was then carried out by grouping the data based on the main themes that emerged from the participants' answers. Categorization was carried out to classify data based on aspects of speaking skills obtained through HelloTalk, such as speaking fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary enrichment. The last stage is the interpretation of findings that connects the research results with relevant theories and identifies practical implications in English language learning (Sutikno et al., 2021).

With this systematic methodological approach, the research provided transparency in the data collection and analysis process. Clarity in the selection of participants and the use of tested instruments helped to ensure that the research results were valid for the development of technology-based learning methods. This research also provides insight into how HelloTalk app can be integrated into teaching methods to improve the effectiveness of learning to speak English in an academic environment (Rosaliza, 2015). Researchers need to prepare interview protocols to guide the process and ensure alignment with the research objectives (Syafril & Erlina, 2018). Different types of interviews, question formats and duration should be considered when planning interviews. The quality of data collected through interviews can be affected by factors such as the number of interviews conducted, participant selection criteria and data saturation. Although qualitative methods offer many advantages, researchers may face various constraints in their application. Thus, the combination of observations and interviews not only enriches the data obtained but also provides a comprehensive picture of students' experiences in learning English using HelloTalk app.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Respondents showed good interest in the HelloTalk application. Although there is a premium version that is considered expensive, their interest remains, indicating that the features offered by HelloTalk are able to attract users' attention. In terms of focus on the explanation, it shows that they are quite concentrated when listening to information about the application. The explanation presented seems to be clear and interesting, thus making respondents better understand the benefits of using HelloTalk. Interaction with the presenters was also very active, Respondents not only listened, but also gave responses and participated in discussions. This reflects their enthusiasm and engagement in the process of learning about the app. Regarding the ability to follow they quite easily follow the steps given, such as downloading the application, indicating that the instructions delivered are quite clear and can be understood by users.

Understanding of the material was good, respondents were able to understand the information presented and did not hesitate to ask questions if something was unclear, indicating that they were active in the learning process. Follow-up with further questions was very active, with respondents eager to ask questions related to premium features and the authenticity of HelloTalk users. Finally, respondents' confidence in using HelloTalk, while they felt quite confident, was seen to be a little hesitant when trying to chat with other users from abroad, an aspect that can be improved with experience of using the app.

The interviews reflect the respondents' experience of using the HelloTalk app to improve their foreign language speaking skills. The duration of use varied from one week to up to one month, with varying frequency of interaction. Some respondents often spoke with native speakers because they found it enjoyable, while others interacted less frequently due to difficulties in finding suitable interlocutors. All respondents reported an improvement in their speaking ability, although the degree of improvement varied. Some felt an improvement of about 10%, while others noted significant improvements in pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary.

The most improved aspects were pronunciation and vocabulary, although some respondents also reported improvements in reading and speaking in general. The main benefits perceived by the respondents include the opportunity to practice directly with native speakers, understanding the language context through real conversations, and improved speaking fluency. However, some obstacles were also encountered, such as difficulty understanding certain vocabulary, network access issues, complicated app features, as well as the perceived high cost of premium features. Although the app was considered quite easy to use, some respondents experienced technical problems.

Confidence in speaking after using the HELLOTALK app varied. Some respondents felt more confident, while others did not feel a significant change. Overall, HelloTalk was found to be effective in improving foreign language speaking, especially in casual conversations with native speakers.

Table 1. The Interview Results

Question :

Do you feel any improvement in your foreign language speaking ability after using Hello Talk?
If yes, how much?

R1: Yes, 10% improvement since using Hello Talk R2: I feel there is a significant improvement, especially in terms of pronunciation and fluency. interacting directly with native speakers can help me correct mistakes directly, so I can learn easily. R3: Yes, quite a big deal as it adds new vocabulary in the app R4 : Sy felt the improvement of foreign language in terms of interacting via chat

R5 : I feel there is a slight improvement, but not much R6 : The improvement I experience when using this app is very helpful in my speaking process R7 : Only a small increase in vocabulary R8 : Yes, but just a little bit, I don't really like studying with AI or something like online people R9 : Slightly increased and I feel that

Question

How easy do you think the Hello Talk application is to use to improve your speaking skills?

R1: It's Quite easy because in addition to increasing vocabulary hello talk can also improve our English Speaking skills R2: in my opinion it's quite easy to use this application to improve English Speaking skills with native speakers directly R3: In my personal opinion it is very easy to improve speaking skills besides that this application is also very good for chatting casually with

R5 : Ordinary, because this application still often errors on my cellphone R6 : It's easy and useful for us to practice our speaking skills R7 : Actually, it's easy to use the hello Park application, it's fun but it's just not VIP yet, which is like what's missing. R8 : Very easy, because the application is very practical R9 : Easy enough

foreigners R4 : Easy enough to improvise speaking

Question :

Do you feel more confident speaking a foreign language after using HelloTalk?

R1: Yes because HelloTalk allows direct interaction with native speakers to improve language skills practically and it makes me more confident because there is an experienced person or expert we are learning from. R2: yes definitely, because this App provides opportunities to understand cultures from different countries through communication, so I have a lot of experience and know a variety of languages. R3: es, because HelloTalk has auto-correction and learning features that make the learning process more effective and fun, so after using hellotalk I feel confident.

R4 : Can increase self-confidence R5 : I don't think so, because my confidence is still low. R6 : Confident enough R7: As for feeling confident, no, it's not really like that R8 : Yes R9: Not really

The results show that the use of the HelloTalk application has a positive impact on the academic achievement of fifth semester students at the Mataram State Islamic University. Based on the results of observations and interviews, the majority of respondents experienced improvements in several main aspects of speaking skills, namely fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence in speaking.

Respondents who already had a higher level of English proficiency before using HelloTalk reported that the app helped them greatly in improving their fluency and pronunciation. They felt more comfortable speaking with native speakers and were able to improve their understanding of different English accents. In contrast, respondents with lower initial proficiency levels benefited more in terms of vocabulary improvement as well as understanding sentence structure, although some of them faced problems in understanding live conversations, especially when speaking with fast-talking native speakers. To provide a clearer picture of the improvement in students' speaking skills after using HelloTalk, the following table summarizes the changes reported by respondents based on their initial proficiency level.

Table 2. Improvement in Speaking Skills Based on Initial Proficiency Level

Speaking Skill Aspect	High Proficiency Respondents	Intermediate Proficiency Respondents	Low Proficiency Respondents
Fluency	Significant improvement, more confident when speaking with native speakers	Starting to be more fluent in daily conversations but still experiencing some difficulties	Still hesitant but trying to speak more often
Pronunciation	Improved accent and intonation	More aware of pronunciation mistakes and beginning to correct them	Frequently assisted by the auto-correction feature in recognizing mistakes
Vocabulary	Slight improvement, focusing more on idioms and informal expressions	Gained a lot of new vocabulary from interactions with native speakers	Significant improvement in understanding basic words
Confidence	Greatly increased, more comfortable in	Gaining confidence in speaking, although still afraid of making mistakes	Slight improvement, but still feels nervous

conversations with
native speakers

From the table above, it can be seen that students with higher initial proficiency tended to benefit the most in speaking fluency and pronunciation, while students with lower proficiency levels made the most significant improvements in vocabulary and basic understanding of English. In addition, the study also revealed that the use of the autocorrect feature in HelloTalk was helpful in improving grammar and pronunciation. Respondents with low proficiency levels found this feature to be a very useful tool to understand their mistakes, while respondents with high proficiency levels made more use of this feature to perfect their sentences and expressions.

However, some obstacles were also found in using HelloTalk, especially for respondents with lower proficiency levels. They found it difficult to understand conversations with native speakers who spoke too fast or used idiomatic expressions that they had not yet mastered. In addition, some respondents reported that the paid premium features of the app limited their access to interact more broadly with users from different countries. Overall, the results of this study suggest that HelloTalk is an effective tool for improving English speaking skills, with benefits varying depending on the user's initial proficiency level. Students with higher English skills saw improvements mainly in fluency and pronunciation, while students with lower skills saw the greatest benefits in vocabulary and confidence.

Discussion

The use of the HelloTalk app has proven to be a valuable tool in enhancing English language skills among final-semester students at Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram. The findings from this study indicate that the app significantly contributes to improvements in writing, grammar, and fluency. Respondents highlighted that HelloTalk's interactive features, including auto-correction and live conversations with native speakers, made their learning experience more engaging and relevant to real-world communication. It is in line with Anisa and Chantika (2024) who found that the ability to communicate with native speakers in a dynamic and interactive manner encouraged students to practice English more frequently, fostering greater confidence in their speaking abilities.

One of the most significant benefits of using HelloTalk is its auto-correction feature. This situation help EFL students do correction in their speaking. This finding is in line with Arifin et al. (2024) who found that the function of auto-correction feature allows students to identify grammatical errors instantly, thereby reinforcing correct usage patterns. Many students noted that such immediate feedback made them more aware of common mistakes, helping them internalize proper grammatical structures and refine their writing skills. In addition to auto-correction, the ability to engage in live conversations with native speakers proved invaluable. Respondents expressed that real-time interactions made them more accustomed to various accents, improved their listening skills, and encouraged them to think more quickly in English.

Another key advantage of the app is the increased confidence it fosters in students. Language learners often struggle with anxiety and fear of making mistakes, which can hinder their progress. However, the study revealed that consistent engagement with native speakers through HelloTalk helped students overcome these psychological barriers (Darmawati, 2018; Rachmawati et al., 2023). By regularly practicing English in a supportive environment, they became more comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas. The informality of these conversations also contributed to a sense of ease, allowing students to practice without the pressure often associated with classroom settings.

Despite these benefits, several challenges were identified in the study. One common concern was the high cost of premium features. While the free version of HelloTalk offers many useful functions, several advanced tools are locked behind a paywall (Rosilah & Ulfa, 2024). Some respondents felt that the financial burden of upgrading to a premium membership limited their ability to fully utilize the app's potential. Given that many students operate within tight budgets, the cost factor may deter wider adoption of the application.

Technical issues also emerged as a notable challenge. Unstable internet connections frequently disrupted conversations, causing frustration among users. Some respondents reported difficulties in maintaining smooth communication due to lagging video and voice calls, which affected their learning experience. Additionally, the complexity of certain app features posed a learning curve for some students. While HelloTalk is generally user-friendly, certain advanced functions, such as language exchange settings and AI-driven corrections, were perceived as difficult to navigate. Addressing these issues through a more streamlined interface could improve usability and accessibility for a broader range of learners.

The findings from this study align with previous research that emphasizes the role of technology in language acquisition. Studies by Darmawati (2018) and Godwin-Jones (2019) underscore the effectiveness of technology-based language learning in enhancing motivation and improving learning outcomes. This study supports Godwin-Jones' assertion that sustained conversations with native speakers foster cross-cultural communication, a crucial component of language proficiency. The interaction with native speakers not only helps learners develop linguistic competence but also enhances their understanding of different cultural contexts, which is essential for effective communication in a globalized world.

Furthermore, this study complements the work of Chen (2023) on the role of artificial intelligence in language learning applications. The auto-correction feature of HelloTalk exemplifies how AI-driven tools can personalize the learning experience, making it more efficient. Unlike conventional classroom methods that rely on delayed feedback from instructors, AI-powered instant corrections enable learners to recognize and rectify errors in real-time. This aligns with modern pedagogical approaches that emphasize immediate feedback as a key factor in effective language acquisition.

However, this study also highlights issues that have been less explored in prior research. For example, while many studies focus on the theoretical advantages of technology in language learning, fewer have examined the practical challenges faced by users. The high cost of premium features and technical difficulties reported by respondents contrast with the findings of Su & Zou (2022), whose study predominantly discusses theoretical applications of technology without delving into the everyday user experience. By addressing these real-world challenges, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the limitations associated with digital language learning tools.

Another key implication of this study is the potential integration of HelloTalk into traditional teaching methods. While structured classroom learning provides foundational knowledge, HelloTalk offers an immersive environment for practical application. This supports the argument made by Ghanizadeh et al. (2015), who suggest that digital literacy and gamification can enhance motivation in language learning. By incorporating HelloTalk into the curriculum, educators can create a blended learning experience that maximizes the benefits of both traditional instruction and digital tools. For instance, structured conversation exercises within the app could complement classroom discussions, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life scenarios.

At the same time, concerns about over-reliance on technology in language learning must be considered. Research by Iberahim et al. (2023) warns that excessive dependence

on digital tools may reduce students' willingness to engage in face-to-face interactions. This aligns with some respondents' hesitation to fully adopt HelloTalk, as they preferred conventional in-class learning methods. To address this issue, an integrated approach that balances digital and in-person learning may be more effective. For example, educators could design guided speaking activities through HelloTalk while ensuring that classroom discussions remain a core component of language instruction. By using HelloTalk as a supplementary tool rather than a primary method, students can reap the benefits of digital engagement without losing the advantages of traditional learning environments.

Given the challenges identified in this study, several improvements could enhance the effectiveness of HelloTalk as a language learning tool. Reducing the reliance on premium features by making more functionalities available in the free version could encourage broader student participation. Additionally, simplifying certain interface elements and providing better user guidance could make the app more accessible to learners of varying technical proficiencies. Addressing technical issues such as connection stability would also improve the overall user experience. Moreover, the integration of HelloTalk into formal language learning curricula could provide structured opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills in both formal and informal settings.

This study highlights the significant role that HelloTalk plays in enhancing English language proficiency among students. Its interactive features, real-time feedback mechanisms, and immersive learning environment make it a valuable complement to traditional classroom methods. While challenges such as cost, technical difficulties, and interface complexity exist, the benefits of using HelloTalk far outweigh these limitations. By refining its design and incorporating it into blended learning models, HelloTalk has the potential to become an even more effective tool for language learners worldwide.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the significant role that HelloTalk plays in enhancing English language proficiency among final-semester students at Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram. The app's interactive features, such as auto-correction and live conversations with native speakers, have been instrumental in improving students' writing, grammar, and fluency while also boosting their confidence in using English for communication. These results align with prior studies that emphasize the importance of technology in language learning, supporting the argument that digital tools can create engaging and immersive learning experiences. Despite some challenges, including the high cost of premium features and technical difficulties, the study highlights that HelloTalk serves as an effective supplementary tool alongside traditional classroom instruction. By incorporating structured activities and guided exercises within the app, educators can further maximize its potential, ensuring that students receive the best of both digital and conventional learning methods.

However, for HelloTalk to be fully optimized as a language learning tool, certain improvements should be considered. Reducing dependency on premium features, simplifying the app's interface, and improving technical stability could enhance user experience and encourage broader adoption. Moreover, integrating HelloTalk into formal curricula through a blended learning approach may allow students to benefit from structured yet flexible language practice. Addressing concerns about over-reliance on digital tools is also essential, as language learning should strike a balance between technology-driven and face-to-face interactions. As the landscape of language education continues to evolve, tools like HelloTalk, when properly integrated, can serve as powerful assets in fostering language proficiency and intercultural communication, ultimately preparing students for real-world global interactions.

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