The Contribution of Audio Features in the *Haba Inggreh* App to the Development of Oral Communication Skills

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study explored the roles of the audio-recording and playback features within the Haba Inggreh app on the speaking skills of students at a high school in Nagan Raya. The study involved 34 students and 5 teachers, using interviews as the primary instrument for data collection. The aim was to understand how these technological tools influence the students' speaking proficiency, engagement, and confidence. Interviews with students revealed that the audio-recording feature allowed them to practice speaking in a controlled environment, free from the immediate pressures of live conversation. This practice enabled them to focus on pronunciation, intonation, and fluency, which are critical components of effective speaking. The playback feature was particularly beneficial, as it provided an opportunity for self-evaluation. Students reported that listening to their recordings helped them identify areas for improvement and track their progress over time. Teachers also noted the positive impact of these features on students' speaking skills. They observed that students who regularly used the Haba Inggreh app demonstrated improved confidence in speaking activities, both in and out of the classroom. The ability to repeatedly listen to their own speech allowed students to become more aware of their linguistic strengths and weaknesses, fostering a more self-directed approach to language learning. Furthermore, the study found that the integration of the Haba Inggreh app's audio features encouraged greater student engagement. The interactive nature of the app made the learning process more enjoyable and motivating, which is crucial for sustaining interest in language learning.

Keywords: *mobile learning, learning application, speaking skill, audio-recording feature, ELT*

1.   INTRODUCTION

The integration of mobile applications in language learning has revolutionized the educational landscape, providing learners with unprecedented access to resources and opportunities for practice. These applications offer a range of features designed to enhance different language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Mohammadi et al., 2020). One of the most significant advantages of using mobile applications for language learning is their accessibility. Learners can practice anytime and anywhere, making it easier to fit language study into their daily routines. This flexibility is particularly beneficial for busy individuals who may not have the time to attend traditional language classes (Criollo-C et al., 2021).

Mobile applications often incorporate gamification elements, which make learning more engaging and enjoyable. By turning language exercises into games, these apps motivate users to practice regularly. Points, badges, and leaderboards provide a sense of achievement and encourage competition among users (Karim et al., 2018). This gamified approach not only makes learning fun but also promotes consistent practice, which is crucial for language acquisition. Additionally, the interactive nature of these applications allows learners to receive immediate feedback on their performance, helping them identify and correct mistakes in real-time.

One of the most impactful features of mobile language learning apps is the use of audio recording and playback functionalities. These tools are particularly effective for improving speaking and listening skills. By recording their speech, learners can practice pronunciation, intonation, and fluency in a controlled environment and their memory records the process more vividly (Ismail & Sabrina, 2023). Listening to their recordings allows them to self-evaluate and track their progress over time. This self-assessment is critical for developing speaking

proficiency, as it helps learners become more aware of their linguistic strengths and weaknesses (Karim et al., 2018).

Beyond speaking skills, mobile applications also support the development of other language competencies. For instance, apps like Duolingo, Babbel, and Memrise offer a variety of exercises to build vocabulary and grammar knowledge. These apps use spaced repetition systems to reinforce learning, ensuring that users retain new words and structures over time. Interactive lessons and quizzes provide users with ample opportunities to practice and apply what they have learned in context. Additionally, many apps offer listening exercises featuring native speakers, which help learners develop their comprehension skills and familiarize themselves with different accents and speech patterns (Bağcı & Pekşen, 2018).

Reading and writing skills are also catered to by language learning apps. Platforms like LingQ and Readlang allow users to read texts in their target language while providing instant translations and explanations for unfamiliar words. This feature helps learners expand their vocabulary and understand the nuances of the language in context. Writing exercises, often integrated into language apps, encourage users to compose sentences, paragraphs, or even essays, which are then corrected by native speakers or language experts. This feedback is invaluable for improving writing accuracy and style (Junining et al., 2020).

Mobile applications for language learning have revolutionized how people acquire new languages, offering a plethora of features that cater to different learning styles and preferences. These features can be broadly categorized into interactive content, personalized learning paths, social engagement tools, gamification elements, offline capabilities, audio recording and playback functionalities, and advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and augmented reality (Göksu & Atici, 2013). Together, they create a comprehensive and engaging learning experience that traditional methods often lack.

Interactive content is at the core of language learning apps. This includes a variety of media such as text, audio, and video, which are used to teach vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Apps like Duolingo and Babbel utilize interactive exercises that require users to read, listen, and speak in the target language. This multimodal approach ensures that learners engage with the language in multiple ways, enhancing retention and comprehension. For instance, listening to native speakers helps with understanding pronunciation and intonation, while writing exercises improve grammar and sentence structure. Personalized learning paths are another critical feature. Modern language apps leverage data analytics to tailor the learning experience to individual users. By tracking progress and identifying areas of difficulty, these apps can adjust the difficulty level of exercises and recommend specific lessons. This adaptive learning model ensures that users are neither bored with content that is too easy nor overwhelmed by material that is too challenging (Cao, 2014).

Gamification is a powerful tool in maintaining motivation and engagement. By incorporating game-like elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards, language learning apps make the process more enjoyable and competitive. For instance, Duolingo uses a system of streaks and daily goals to encourage consistent practice. Users earn rewards for completing lessons, which can be used to unlock additional content or features. This gamified approach taps into the natural human desire for achievement and progress, making language learning a fun and addictive activity. Offline capabilities are essential for users who do not have constant access to the internet. Many language learning apps offer downloadable content, allowing users to continue their studies without an internet connection. This is particularly useful for people who travel frequently or live in areas with unreliable internet service. Offline access ensures that learning is not interrupted and that users can make the most of their time, whether they are on a long flight or commuting to work (Rifa'i et al., 2021).

In regards to audio recording and playback functionalities, they are indispensable in language learning apps (Palalas & Wark, 2020). These features allow users to practice speaking and listen to their own recordings, which helps in identifying and correcting pronunciation errors. Apps like Pimsleur and Speechling incorporate these functionalities, enabling learners to compare their pronunciation with that of native speakers. By recording

their speech and playing it back, users can hear their mistakes and work on improving their accent and fluency. This self-assessment tool is invaluable for developing confident speaking skills.

Advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) are pushing the boundaries of what language learning apps can offer. AI is used to create more sophisticated and personalized learning experiences (Park, 2011). For example, apps like Mondly use AI to simulate conversations with a virtual chatbot, providing users with instant feedback on their pronunciation and grammar. This interactive and immersive approach helps learners practice speaking in a safe and controlled environment. Augmented reality, on the other hand, offers a more engaging and contextual learning experience. Apps like MondlyAR allow users to interact with virtual objects and characters in their real environment, making language learning more dynamic and memorable. Moreover, speech recognition technology plays a significant role in language learning apps. This feature allows users to practice speaking and receive immediate feedback on their pronunciation. Apps like Speechling and Pimsleur incorporate speech recognition to help learners develop accurate pronunciation and fluency. By comparing the user's speech to native speaker models, these apps can provide detailed feedback and suggest improvements. This interactive and responsive approach helps learners build confidence in their speaking abilities.

Language learning apps also emphasize cultural immersion as a key component of language acquisition (Sulisworo & Toifur, 2016). Understanding the culture behind a language enhances comprehension and makes the learning process more meaningful. Apps for learning usually include cultural notes and real-life dialogues to provide context and relevance to the language being taught. This helps learners appreciate the nuances and subtleties of the language, which are often tied to cultural expressions and traditions.

Audio recording and playback are essential functions in speaking drills, particularly in language learning and public speaking practice. Recording and playing back your speech allows you to hear yourself as others would, making it easier to identify areas for improvement such as pronunciation, intonation, and pacing. This self-evaluation process is crucial for honing your speaking skills. Listening to our own recordings also facilitates feedback and correction. You can compare your speech to native speakers or your intended standard, and make adjustments accordingly. This iterative process of listening and refining helps ensure that your speech becomes more accurate and effective over time (Faiz & Kurniawan, 2023). Additionally, regularly recording our speech can help track progress. By keeping a record of your practice sessions, you can monitor your improvements over time. This tracking provides motivation and a sense of achievement as you notice your skills enhancing. Playback is also beneficial for practicing fluency. By mimicking the rhythm and flow of recorded native speakers, you can practice speaking more naturally and smoothly. This can significantly improve your overall speaking fluency and make your speech sound more authentic. Repeated practice with recording and playback can build confidence. As you become more accustomed to hearing your voice and refining your speech, you gain confidence in your speaking abilities. This confidence is crucial, especially in public speaking or when using a new language in real-life situations (Yu et al., 2013).

In the rapidly evolving landscape of educational technology, *Haba Inggreh* stands out as a pioneering application developed by the researchers themselves, at Universitas Teuku Umar. This innovative app is designed to enhance the language learning experience, specifically focusing on the English language. Divided into two main sections—speaking and listening—*Haba Inggreh* addresses the fundamental skills required for mastering a new language. Its comprehensive approach includes advanced features like audio recording and playback for speaking practice and detailed comprehension tests for listening skills, making it an invaluable tool for learners.

The speaking section of *Haba Inggreh* is particularly noteworthy for its incorporation of audio recording and playback functionalities. These features are essential for learners to develop and refine their speaking abilities. By allowing users to record their speech, the app facilitates self-evaluation, enabling learners to hear themselves as others would. This auditory feedback is crucial for identifying and correcting errors in pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. As learners repeatedly listen to and analyze their recordings, they become more aware of their strengths and areas needing improvement. This iterative process of recording and playback

not only helps in fine-tuning their speaking skills but also builds confidence as learners witness their own progress. Moreover, the playback function allows users to compare their recordings with native speakers or predefined standards within the app. This comparison is a powerful tool for self-correction and improvement (Contrino et al., 2024). By mimicking the native pronunciation and intonation patterns, learners can gradually align their speech to sound more natural and fluent. The app also offers instant feedback, highlighting specific errors and suggesting improvements, which accelerates the learning process. This interactive and responsive system makes *Haba Inggreh* a personalized tutor that adapts to each learner's needs and pace.

In addition to the speaking section, *Haba Inggreh*'s listening section is designed to sharpen learners' comprehension skills through a series of meticulously crafted tests. Listening comprehension is a critical component of language acquisition, as it directly impacts the ability to understand spoken language in real-world contexts. *Haba Inggreh* addresses this need by offering a diverse range of audio materials, including dialogues, monologues, and interactive scenarios. These materials are selected and designed to reflect everyday conversations and various accents, providing learners with a realistic listening experience (Hamdani, 2024). The comprehension tests in the listening section are structured to challenge learners at different levels of proficiency. They include multiple-choice questions, true/false statements, and short-answer questions, which test learners' ability to grasp the main ideas, details, and nuances of the spoken content. Immediate feedback on these tests helps learners understand their mistakes and learn from them. Additionally, the app tracks progress over time, allowing learners to see improvements in their listening skills, which is highly motivating (Mohamad & Alameen, 2014).

The exploration of application is considered as the novelty offered in this study since there has not been any single study being conducted on this newly-built app. Thus, the research question formulated in this study is as shown below:

1. What are the roles of audio-recording and playback features within *Haba Inggreh* app on speaking skill based on students' and teachers perspectives?

2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore the role of audio recording and playback features within the *Haba Inggreh* app in enhancing students' speaking skills. A case study approach was suitable for this research as it allowed an in-depth examination of the specific context and experiences of a group of students and their teachers using the app (Miles et al., 2014). The primary data collection method used was semi-structured interviews, providing rich, detailed insights into the participants' perceptions and experiences.

The participants in this study included a group of students who regularly use the *Haba Inggreh* app and their English language teachers. The selection criteria for the students included those who had been using the app for at least three months and were actively engaged in using the audio recording and playback features. The teachers, who had been closely monitoring the students' progress, provided additional insights and context.

The primary instrument for data collection was a set of semi-structured interview questions designed to elicit detailed responses about the impact of audio recording and playback features on various aspects of speaking skills. The interview questions covered topics such as replicating intonation and rhythm, motivation and confidence, correcting comprehension, pronunciation accuracy, speaking fluency, using different accents, and discovering grammatical errors.

There were two groups being interviewed: students and teachers. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each student. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes and was conducted in a quiet, comfortable setting to encourage open and honest responses. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to ensure accurate data collection. A semi-structured interview was also conducted with the teachers to gather her observations and insights on the students' use of the app and their progress. This interview provided additional context and corroborated the students' responses. Ethical approval was obtained prior to

conducting the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and their consent was obtained before participating. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Later, the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. First, the audio was transcribed. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim to create accurate records of the conversations. The transcripts were then reviewed for accuracy and completeness. Second, it is coding. This involved coding the data to identify key themes and patterns related to the impact of the audio recording and playback features on speaking skills. Initial codes were generated by carefully reading the transcripts and highlighting significant statements and phrases. Then, the initial codes were then grouped into broader themes that captured the main aspects of the participants' experiences. Themes were developed iteratively, with constant comparison and refinement to ensure they accurately represented the data. The themes were aligned with the interview questions, focusing on intonation and rhythm, motivation and confidence, comprehension correction, pronunciation accuracy, speaking fluency, accent adaptation, and grammatical accuracy. The final step involved interpreting the themes in the context of existing literature and the specific research questions. The findings were discussed in relation to their implications for English language teaching, highlighting the practical applications and benefits of using audio recording and playback features in language learning apps.

3.   RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In the following are some excerpts taken from the students and teachers as the results.

Excerpt 1:

Interviewer: How often do you use the audio playback feature to practice intonation and rhythm?

S34: I use it every day.

S20: Maybe three times a week.

The interpretation of the responses above indicates varied usage of the audio playback feature among students. S34's daily use suggests a high level of engagement and reliance on the feature for improving intonation and rhythm. In contrast, S20's less frequent use, about three times a week, indicates a moderate but consistent engagement. This variation highlights different levels of commitment and suggests the need for personalized approaches to maximize the effectiveness of the tool for all students.

Excerpt 2:

Interviewer: How does listening to your own recordings affect your motivation to keep practicing speaking?

S2: It makes me want to practice more.

S11: I'm more comfortable speaking out loud.

The excerpt above shows that listening to their own recordings positively impacts students' motivation and confidence. S2 feels encouraged to practice more, indicating increased motivation. S11 feels more comfortable speaking out loud, suggesting enhanced confidence and reduced anxiety in speaking activities. This highlights the effectiveness of self-listening as a tool for improving speaking skills.

Excerpt 3:

Interviewer: How has using the playback feature helped you improve your pronunciation accuracy?

S1: It has helped a lot. My words are clearer now.

S16: It has made my pronunciation much better.

S37: I was saying a word wrong and fixed it after listening.

The interpretation of these responses illustrates the significant impact of the playback feature on improving pronunciation accuracy. S1 and S16 both note considerable improvements, with clearer and better

pronunciation. S37 highlights a specific instance of correcting a mispronunciation after using the playback feature. These responses collectively emphasize the tool's effectiveness in enhancing students' pronunciation skills through self-evaluation and correction.

Excerpt 4:

Interviewer: How helpful is the playback feature in helping students understand their own speaking mistakes?

T2: It's very helpful. Students become more aware of their errors and can self-correct.

From this teacher's perspective, the playback feature is very helpful in aiding students' understanding of their own speaking mistakes. T2 noted that this tool significantly increases students' awareness of their errors, enabling them to identify and self-correct these mistakes more effectively. This feedback underscores the feature's role in fostering independent learning and improving overall speaking proficiency by providing students with the ability to critically evaluate their own speech.

Excerpt 5:

Interviewer: Can you provide an example of a common mistake students identified and corrected after listening to their recordings?

T6: Many students realize they mispronounce certain words and correct them after playback.

According to this teacher, a common example of the playback feature's effectiveness is students identifying and correcting mispronunciations. T6 highlights that many students become aware of their frequent mispronunciation of certain words and are able to correct these mistakes after listening to their recordings. This demonstrates the playback feature's practical impact on enhancing pronunciation accuracy.

Excerpt 6:

Interviewer: Can you share an instance where the playback feature helped a student correct a grammatical mistake?

T3: One student repeatedly used incorrect verb tenses but corrected this after listening to their recordings and comparing with correct examples.

This teacher shared an instance where the playback feature helped a student correct a grammatical mistake. T3 noted that one student repeatedly used incorrect verb tenses but was able to correct this issue after listening to their recordings and comparing them with correct examples. This illustrates the playback feature's effectiveness in improving students' grammatical accuracy through self-assessment and comparison.

The discussion that can be provided based on the data analysis is as in the following. The responses from students and their teachers provide insightful perspectives on the effectiveness of the audio recording and playback features within the *Haba Inggreh* app for improving speaking skills. These features appear to be particularly beneficial in several key areas: replicating intonation and rhythm, boosting motivation and confidence, aiding in correcting comprehension, enhancing pronunciation accuracy, improving speaking fluency, adapting to different accents, and identifying grammatical errors. This discussion will explore these aspects in detail and consider their implications for the English language teaching discipline.

Replicating Intonation and Rhythm

Students frequently used the audio playback feature to practice intonation and rhythm. Many students reported significant improvements in their ability to match the intonation and rhythm of native speakers. They noticed that their speech sounds more natural and fluid, which indicated that the playback feature helped them internalize the natural patterns of English speech. The teachers supported this observation, noting that students now speak with more natural intonation and rhythm. This alignment between students' self-reported improvements and the teachers' observations reinforces the utility of this feature. By regularly practicing with playback, students can better understand and replicate the melodic and rhythmic aspects of English, which are crucial for effective communication (Contrino et al., 2024).

Motivation and Confidence

Listening to their own recordings appears to have a significant positive impact on students' motivation and confidence. Many students felt more inclined to practice after hearing their progress, and they reported feeling less nervous when speaking. This suggests that the playback feature serves as a powerful tool for positive reinforcement, allowing learners to see and hear their improvements over time. The teacher concurred, noting that students who used the playback feature exhibited increased confidence and less hesitation in speaking. As Azizah & Muslikah (2021) indicated, the playback feature not only aids skill development but also positively influences students' attitudes toward language learning. When students can track their progress, they are more likely to stay motivated and engaged, leading to more consistent practice and faster improvement.

Correcting Comprehension

Students found the playback feature very helpful for identifying and correcting their speaking mistakes. By listening to their own recordings, they could clearly hear errors they might not have noticed while speaking. This can facilitate self-correction and learning. For example, students mentioned correcting word order and mispronunciations after reviewing their recordings. The teachers also highlighted the effectiveness of playback in helping students become aware of their mistakes. This shared viewpoint underscores the feature's role in enhancing self-assessment and independent learning, enabling students to take ownership of their progress. The ability to self-correct is a valuable skill, as it promotes autonomy and confidence in learning.

Pronunciation Accuracy

The playback feature has been particularly beneficial for improving pronunciation accuracy. Students used it to compare their speech with native speakers, and they found this method very effective for fine-tuning their pronunciation. They reported that their words become clearer and more precise after using the playback feature. The teachers noted substantial improvements in students' pronunciation clarity, attributing this to the consistent use of the playback feature. This agreement between students and the teachers highlighted the crucial role of playback in developing precise pronunciation. Clear pronunciation is essential for effective communication, and the ability to listen to and mimic native speakers is a key component of achieving this goal.

Speaking Fluency

Students also reported that the playback feature helped them speak more fluently, with fewer pauses and a smoother flow. They noticed improvements in their speaking speed and coherence, indicating that regular use of playback contributes to overall fluency. The teachers observed similar benefits, noting that students spoke more naturally and quickly. This alignment suggests that playback effectively supports the development of speaking fluency, making students more confident and articulate speakers. Fluency involves not just speed but also the ability to speak smoothly and coherently, and the playback feature helps students achieve this by providing a platform for continuous practice and self-assessment.

Using Different Accents

Some students used the playback feature to practice speaking with different accents, finding it helpful for understanding and adapting to various speech patterns. Although initially challenging, consistent practice with playback helps them overcome difficulties. The teachers acknowledged the benefits of using playback for accent practice, noting that it aids students in comprehending and using different accents. This highlights the feature's versatility in exposing learners to diverse linguistic nuances. Understanding different accents is an important skill in today's globalized world, where English is spoken with a variety of regional and national accents. The ability to adapt to and understand different accents enhances communication and broadens students' listening and speaking abilities.

Discovering Grammatical Errors

Students used playback to identify and correct grammatical errors in their speech. By listening to their recordings, they could hear when their grammar is incorrect and make necessary adjustments. Students cited examples such as correcting verb tenses and prepositions after reviewing their recordings. The teachers confirmed that playback helped students recognize and fix grammatical mistakes. This shared experience indicates that the playback feature is an effective tool for enhancing grammatical accuracy and reinforcing proper language structures. Grammar is a foundational aspect of language proficiency, and the ability to self-correct through playback helps students internalize correct grammatical usage.

Implications for English Language Teaching

The positive feedback from both students and the teachers suggests that integrating audio recording and playback features into language learning apps can provide substantial support for learners. These features enable students to practice and improve their speaking skills in a self-directed manner, fostering greater independence and confidence in their language learning journey. For English language teaching, this implies a shift towards more technology-enhanced learning environments where students can utilize tools like playback to enhance their speaking abilities.

The use of playback features can also complement traditional classroom teaching by providing additional practice opportunities outside of class. Teachers can assign playback-based activities as homework, allowing students to practice speaking in their own time and at their own pace. This can lead to more effective use of classroom time, focusing on interactive activities and personalized feedback. Furthermore, the ability to self-assess and correct through playback can reduce students' reliance on immediate teachers' feedback, promoting a more autonomous learning approach. This aligns with modern educational theories that emphasize learner independence and self-regulation. By empowering students to take charge of their own learning, teachers can foster a more dynamic and engaging learning environment.

There are some implications for English Language Teaching. The positive feedback from students and the teachers highlights the substantial support that audio recording and playback features can provide in language learning apps. These tools enable students to practice and improve their speaking skills in a self-directed manner, fostering greater independence and confidence in their language learning journey. For ELT, this implies a shift towards more technology-enhanced learning environments where students can utilize tools like playback to enhance their speaking abilities. Playback features complement traditional classroom teaching by providing additional practice opportunities outside of class. Teachers can assign playback-based activities as homework, allowing students to practice speaking in their own time and at their own pace. This can lead to more effective use of classroom time, focusing on interactive activities and personalized feedback

4. CONCLUSION

The integration of audio recording and playback features within the *Haba Inggreh* app has demonstrated considerable benefits in enhancing students' speaking skills. The feedback from both students and their teachers revealed that these features play a critical role in improving various aspects of spoken language proficiency, including intonation, rhythm, motivation, confidence, pronunciation accuracy, fluency, accent adaptation, and grammatical accuracy. This conclusion synthesizes the findings, discusses the implications for English language teaching (ELT), addresses study limitations, and provides recommendations for ELT teachers.

Key findings are as follows: The consistent use of the playback feature has led to noticeable improvements in students' ability to replicate the intonation and rhythm of native speakers. Both students and the teachers had observed that speech sounds more natural and fluid, suggesting that regular practice with playback helps internalize the melodic and rhythmic patterns of English. Besides, listening to their own recordings significantly boosted their motivation and confidence. The ability to hear their progress encourages them to practice more frequently and reduces nervousness when speaking. The playback feature is highly effective for helping students identify and correct their speaking mistakes. By listening to their recordings, students can clearly

hear errors they might not have noticed while speaking, facilitating self-correction and learning. Pronunciation accuracy also significantly improved due to the playback feature. The feature also supports the development of speaking fluency. Practicing with different accents using the playback feature has helped students understand and adapt to various speech patterns. Playback also aids in discovering grammatical errors.

Despite the positive findings, this study has several limitations. The sample size of respondents was limited, which may not fully represent the diverse experiences of all students using the *Haba Inggreh* app. A larger sample size would provide more comprehensive data and insights. The study also relied on self-reported data, which can be subject to bias. Future research should incorporate objective assessments and third-party evaluations to validate the findings. Furthermore, the impact of playback features on other language skills, such as listening comprehension and reading, was not explored. A more holistic approach examining the interplay between speaking and other language skills would offer a deeper understanding of the overall benefits of playback features.

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