

THE USE OF STIMULER APP TO SUPPORT THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRAK

Tinjauan literatur ini mengkaji peran aplikasi Stimuler dalam mendukung pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Fokusnya adalah pada pentingnya kompetensi berbicara, tantangan linguistik dan psikologis umum yang dihadapi oleh pembelajar, dan kontribusi pembelajaran bahasa yang dibantu perangkat seluler dalam mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan literatur tematik naratif, studi ini mensintesis temuan dari artikel jurnal terpilih yang berkaitan dengan penggunaan aplikasi Stimuler dalam pengajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris. Studi-studi yang ditinjau dianalisis secara tematik berdasarkan tujuan penelitian, metode, dan hasil yang dilaporkan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa aplikasi Stimuler memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap pengembangan keterampilan berbicara pembelajar, khususnya dalam pengucapan, kelancaran, kepercayaan diri, dan partisipasi di kelas. Tugas berbicara interaktif, umpan balik langsung, dan skenario komunikasi kehidupan nyata memungkinkan pembelajar untuk berlatih secara mandiri sambil mengurangi kecemasan berbicara. Namun, beberapa tantangan masih ada, termasuk kendala teknis seperti akses internet yang terbatas yang dapat memengaruhi implementasi. Secara keseluruhan, tinjauan ini menunjukkan bahwa aplikasi Stimuler adalah alat digital yang efektif dan relevan untuk mendukung pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris dan latihan mandiri, khususnya di lingkungan pembelajaran yang didukung teknologi.

Kata kunci: speaking skills, Stimuler app, mobile-assisted language learning, literature review, English learning

ABSTRACT

This literature review examines the role of the Stimuler app in supporting English speaking skills learning. It focuses on the importance of speaking competence, common linguistic and psychological challenges faced by learners, and the contribution of mobile-assisted language learning in addressing these challenges. Using a narrative thematic literature review approach, the study synthesizes findings from selected journal articles related to the use of the Stimuler app in teaching English speaking. The reviewed studies were analyzed thematically based on their research objectives, methods, and reported outcomes. The findings indicate that the Stimuler app positively contributes to the development of learners' speaking skills, particularly in pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and classroom participation. Interactive speaking tasks, immediate feedback, and real-life communication scenarios enable learners to practice independently while reducing speaking anxiety. However, some challenges remain, including technical constraints such as limited internet access that may impact implementation. Overall, this review indicates that the Stimuler app is an effective and relevant digital tool to support English speaking learning and independent practice, particularly in technology-supported learning environments.

Keywords: speaking skills, Stimuler app, mobile-assisted language learning, literature review, English learning

INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language that plays a vital role in international communication, particularly in educational and professional contexts. In Indonesia, English is positioned as a foreign language and is taught formally at all levels of education, from elementary school to university, reflecting its importance in preparing students for global interactions. Among the four language skills, speaking plays a central role because it directly supports effective communication in everyday life, enabling individuals to express information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly. Therefore, mastery of speaking skills is crucial to ensure smooth interactions and meaningful communication, as speaking involves the ability to articulate words and sounds to convey meaning to others (Graddol, 2006; Crystal, 2003; McKay, 2012; Tarigan, 2008).

Speaking skills in English are consistently highlighted in the literature as a key factor influencing learners' academic participation, social interaction, and professional readiness. Previous studies indicate that regular speaking practice not only enhances fluency but also helps learners manage anxiety and develop self-confidence, allowing them to express ideas more freely and engage more actively in classroom discussions. Beyond the classroom context, English speaking ability is also closely linked to effective global communication, given the dominant role of English in education, business, science, and technology. As a result, learners with strong speaking skills tend to gain advantages in academic performance and career opportunities, particularly in international and multicultural professional settings (Sadullayeva, 2021; Rao, 2019; Akhter et al., 2020).

Speaking skills remain a challenge for many students due to the interplay between linguistic limitations and psychological barriers. Common difficulties include limited vocabulary, inaccurate grammar, unclear pronunciation, low fluency, and difficulty expressing ideas, often accompanied by low self-confidence and speaking anxiety. These conditions cause students to hesitate during oral activities and limit their ability to communicate effectively, even when they have understood the learning material. These challenges are often exacerbated by unsupportive learning

environments, including ineffective teaching methods, minimal peer interaction, and uninteresting speaking topics, all of which reduce students' willingness to participate in oral communication. Nevertheless, speaking skills are crucial because they facilitate fluent communication, strengthen students' self-confidence, and open up broader academic and professional opportunities. Therefore, teaching speaking requires focused attention to help learners develop effective oral communication and actively engage in global contexts (Brown, 2007; Abrar et al., 2018; Pawlak, 2011; Dörnyei, 2005; Kormos & Dénes, 2004).

Previous studies have showed that technology plays a crucial role in English language teaching by increasing student motivation, engagement, and success in mastering English. The use of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) allows learners to learn flexibly anytime and anywhere through mobile devices and language learning technology. Furthermore, digital learning tools have been shown to encourage more active speaking and student participation (Redjeki & Muhajir, 2021; Kukulska-Hulme, 2012; Hossain & Ahmed, 2020).

These findings supported the use of digital applications such as the Stimuler app, which allowed students to practice speaking independently anytime and anywhere without feeling embarrassed or pressured, especially for learners with limited opportunities to use English in their daily lives (Putra, 2018; Sniukiene et al., 2020; Zou et al., 2023).

This literature review aims to explore the significance of English speaking skills in global, educational, and workplace contexts, to identify the linguistic and psychological challenges faced by learners in developing speaking competence, and to examine the potential of technology, particularly mobile-assisted language learning and digital applications such as the Stimuler app, in facilitating speaking practice, enhancing learner motivation, supporting students' confidence and engagement in English speaking activities.

METHOD

This study employed a narrative thematic literature review approach to synthesize and interpret findings from various previous studies

addressing the use of the Stimuler app to support English speaking skills. This approach does not examine each study individually, but rather focuses on exploring recurring themes, patterns, and differences across existing studies, thus obtaining a comprehensive picture of the application and meaning of the Stimuler app in speaking learning (Green et al., 2006; Snyder, 2019).

The research data were sourced from reputable, peer-reviewed journal articles that specifically examined the use of the Stimuler app or mobile-assisted language learning in the context of teaching and learning English speaking skills. The selected articles were selected based on their relevance to the research focus and then analyzed, taking into account the research objectives, research design, participant characteristics, and key reported findings.

Each selected article was critically analyzed and grouped into themes representing important aspects of speaking skill development, including pronunciation, fluency, learner confidence, participation, and learning motivation. The findings are then synthesized and presented in a comparative table containing the authors, study title, research method, sample, and main results. Since this study is a literature review, there is no direct involvement of the population or sample. Published journal articles served as the primary data source and are systematically analyzed in the Results and Discussion section.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a thematic synthesis of previous studies examining the use of the Stimuler app in supporting English speaking skills learning. The findings are grouped into four main themes: (1) improvement of speaking components, (2) Learner confidence and anxiety reduction, (3) interactive features and feedback mechanisms, and (4) contextual and technical challenges in implementation.

1. Improvement of Speaking Components

Based on a review of all the studies analyzed, there is strong agreement that the Stimuler application plays a positive role in improving key components of speaking skills, particularly pronunciation and fluency. Several studies have shown that regular speaking practice using

Stimuler provides learners with the opportunity to repeat pronunciation patterns and evaluate their oral performance, resulting in more precise articulation and fluent speech (Mubarok & Pryana, 2025; Thompson & Richards, 2022). These findings align with the concept of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), which emphasizes the importance of frequent exposure, ease of access, and repeated practice as key prerequisites for developing speaking skills (Chinnery, 2006; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Various studies have also revealed that Stimuler functions as a supportive speaking practice tool that extends the learning process beyond the classroom, while also providing opportunities for learners to improve their speaking skills through independent practice activities.

2. Learner Confidence and Anxiety Reduction

Another important theme emerging from the literature is the role of the Stimuler app in boosting student confidence and reducing speaking anxiety. Several studies have shown that students feel more comfortable practicing speaking through the app because it minimizes the fear of negative evaluation from peers or teachers (Sari & Rahman, 2025; Setiawan & Nugroho, 2018). The opportunity to practice independently allows students to experiment with language use, make mistakes, and gradually improve without direct social pressure. From an affective perspective, this supportive learning environment fosters a greater willingness to speak and increases student participation in subsequent speaking activities in class. These findings highlight the importance of psychological factors in speaking instruction and demonstrate how digital apps like Stimuler can address affective barriers to oral communication.

3. Interactive Features and Feedback Mechanisms

The interactive features of the Stimuler app, particularly the automated feedback, are also frequently highlighted as a key benefit. Several studies report that immediate feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and fluency helps learners identify errors and adjust their speech in real time (Mubarok & Pryana, 2025; Denistiani, 2025). Furthermore, the inclusion of real-life communication scenarios allows learners to

practice speaking in contexts that resemble everyday interactions, increasing their readiness for real-life communication (Johnson et al., 2020; Lee, 2019). These findings suggest that Stimuler supports both mechanical practice and speaking in context, bridging the gap between controlled practice and meaningful language use.

4. Contextual and Technical Challenges in Implementation

While findings are generally positive, some studies also report challenges related to the implementation of the Stimuler app. One recurring issue is the reliance on stable internet access, which can limit effective use in areas with inadequate technological infrastructure (Sari & Rahman, 2025). Furthermore, differences in research focus are evident across studies. While some studies emphasize measurable learning outcomes such as speaking scores and pronunciation accuracy (Denistiani, 2025; Thompson & Richards, 2022), others prioritize affective outcomes such as motivation and anxiety reduction (Sari & Rahman, 2025). This variation suggests that Stimuler's effectiveness is influenced by contextual factors, learner characteristics, and research design.

Synthesis of Findings

Overall, the thematic synthesis indicates that the Stimuler app is an effective digital tool to support English speaking skills learning. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate its benefits in improving speaking skills, fostering learner confidence, and providing interactive and flexible practice opportunities. At the same time, the challenges and variations identified across studies enrich our understanding of Stimuler's impact by highlighting the importance of technological readiness and contextual adaptation. Therefore, Stimuler can be viewed not only as a supplementary instructional medium but also as a self-paced learning tool that supports the cognitive and affective dimensions of speaking development.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This narrative thematic literature review demonstrates that the Stimuler app plays a significant role in supporting English speaking skills learning. Synthesized findings from various studies reveal four interrelated themes that explain its contribution to speaking development. First, the

literature consistently demonstrates that Stimuler supports the improvement of core components of speaking, particularly pronunciation and fluency, by providing opportunities for repeated and independent speaking practice outside of class. Second, the reviewed studies highlight the app's positive impact on learners' affective factors, particularly in increasing self-confidence and reducing speaking anxiety, as independent practice minimizes fear of negative evaluation and fosters a greater willingness to speak. Third, Stimuler's interactive features, including immediate automated feedback and real-life communication scenarios, have been shown to facilitate learners' awareness of their speaking performance and readiness for authentic oral communication.

Finally, despite these advantages, the literature also identifies contextual and technical challenges, such as dependence on stable internet access and varying research focuses, that impact the app's effectiveness across learning contexts. Overall, these findings suggest that the Stimuler app serves not only as a supportive learning medium but also as a self-paced learning tool that addresses the cognitive and affective dimensions of English speaking development. While its potential is clear, effective implementation relies on contextual adaptation and technological readiness. Therefore, further research is encouraged to further explore learners' experiences and perceptions of using the Stimuler app across various educational levels and settings, particularly to better understand its long-term impact on speaking development.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this narrative thematic literature review, several recommendations can be made. First, English teachers are encouraged to integrate the Stimuler app as a complementary tool for classroom teaching, particularly for speaking practice. Its self-paced and flexible nature makes it suitable for extending learning beyond limited class time, while still allowing teachers to guide students in setting goals and reflecting on their progress. To maximize its benefits, teachers should align app activities with learning objectives and provide follow-up discussions or feedback in class.

Second, schools and educational institutions should consider technical readiness

before implementing the Stimuler app. Stable internet access, adequate devices, and basic digital literacy support are essential to ensure students can use the app effectively. Providing initial training or simple guidance can help reduce technical barriers and increase students' confidence in using the app.

Third, future researchers are encouraged to conduct empirical studies exploring the long-term effects of using the Stimuler app on speaking development. Research involving different educational levels, learning contexts, and mixed-methods approaches will offer a deeper understanding of how learners experience the app over time. In particular, studies focusing on continuous improvement, learner autonomy, and affective change would help strengthen the existing literature and provide more comprehensive insights into the role of mobile applications in speaking skill development.

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