Artificial Intelligence-Based Application *Cake* as the Alternative for Learning Speaking: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract. Technology in education develops so fast. Learning language also needs media that can support the students to develop their speaking skill. This article aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges of students in using artificial intelligence-based application *Cake* as the alternative for learning speaking. In this qualitative research, the writer used observation, interview and documentation. It was conducted on the second semester students of *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* study program*, Tarbiyah* Faculty of *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus.* The results showed that *Cake* application is so helpful and contributive to the students' learning process because this application is easy to access, serves various topics in every level and category, the examples of conversation, chance for practicing to speak, evaluations of pronunciation, score of pronunciation/speaking and repetition. The challenges for the students in using this application are the materials unavailability, internet connection, gadget capacity and finding appropriate place for accessing and learning it. This application records and test the students' speaking so it needs a quiet place.

Key words: artificial intelligence application; cake; speaking; opportunities; challenges

INTRODUCTION

Learning foreign languages is important because it will be useful in the future. Nowadays, learning a foreign language is not as difficult as in previous times. One of the most popular foreign languages to learn in various countries is English because English is an international language. The number of people who learn English is increasing every year due to the influence of technology, especially internet technology. There are many technologies that can make it easier for us to learn foreign languages. Technology accessed by many people to get materials easily is gadget. By using gadget, students can learn everything without place and time limitation because it can be accessed everywhere and everytime.

Many students still find difficulties in learning English, especially speaking. This condition is usually experienced by the students in school level so it is not surprising if they cannot be able to communicate or speak well. The materials in school level is dominated by reading text and answering the questions. They do not have enough time to practice, especially speaking. The little time and no partner to speak English make them less confident to communicate using English. Many studies show that teachers believe in the importance of teaching speaking, yet they do not have enough time for that because of the shortage of time to practice and the big numbers of the textbook topics (Chen, 2021; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). This condition emphasizes teaching reading and writing rather than speaking.

The conditions in school affect the students condition in university. They tend to be shy and unconfident to speak English. Lack of vocabulary, fluency, grammar mastery, pronunciation and unconfidence are some points that make them choose to be silent (Chen, 2021; ŞENER et al., 2020). The lecturers must pay attention and try to solve this condition.

For being able to communicate well, students need to have partner. Some of them said that they cannot learn English speaking optimally because they just attend the class once a week, no partner to speak English and no friends from other countries. It must be understood by the students that partner should not be meant a real person. So many media that can be used, like song, video and social media.

University students are categorized as adult learners. They are supported to be able to independent or autonomous in learning. They master gadget and can operate well. Although the technology development runs so fast, students

need to be guided in learning.

The learning principle is a fun activity. Gadget as learning media is expected by the students can be motivation booster and can make the teaching and learning process more active, effective and fun. By using learning media (gadgets), it is hoped that both teachers and students will know the implementation of information and communication technology in the midst of sophisticated era so that they do not experience technological stuttering.

For English teaching and learning process, various speaking applications can be accessed from the gadget. One of them is *Cake* application. It is one of the students' favorite speaking application (Suciati, 2021). In this application, the students can access various topics. It is in the form of video/film and conversation examples. This application can be partner for the students to speak English . The speaking learning process using *Cake* application has been implemented by the students of *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* (TBI) IAIN Kudus. The students must get the advantages of this application. On the other hand, there must be difficulties or constraints faced by the students in its implementation. For that reason, the writers want to conduct the research entitled 'Artificial Intelligence-Based Application *Cake* as the Alternative for Learning Speaking: Opportunities and Challenges'.

This research aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges experienced by the students in the implementation of Artificial Intelligence-based application *Cake* as the alternative for learning Speaking. The research results are expected to give contribution for readers about *Cake* application and the implementation, as the reference and give recommendation for further studies.

METHODS

In conducting this research, the writers used qualitative research. It is a research process to understand human or social phenomena by creating a comprehensive and complex description that can be presented in words, reported in detail and carried out in a natural setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2014). The writers used inductive approach analysis so that the process and meaning based on the subject's perspective are more highlighted in this qualitative research.

In this descriptive research, the writers examined the status of a group of people (second semester students (33) of *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* (TBI) department of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus), an object (the use of *Cake*, Artificial Intelligence-based Speaking application), a condition (speaking teaching and learning process), a system of thought (students' perception about the use of *Cake* for learning Speaking on Professional Context subject). The result is a systematic, factual and accurate description about the investigated conditions.

In conducting this research, the writers did some steps. First is data collection. In collecting data, observation sheets, interview guides, documentations were used. Second is data reduction. The writers perform data reduction by making comparative analysis of data that is still saturated. The third is data display. And, the last step is conclusion. In this phase, the writers discuss the data and make conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are so many researchers who conduct a research about Cake application. They are the use of *Cake* for teaching English for Specific Purposes (Chotimah, 2022), its implementation in online teaching (Suryani et al., 2021), its implementation to Senior High School students (Yanthi, 2020), its implementation to Junior High School students (Agustin, M; Lindawati, R; Mustopa, 2012). Meanwhile, this research is focused on the implementation for university students in classroom.

Students of *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* (TBI) at *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus* feel that they only have limited opportunities to practice speaking English. The lecturer also realized this condition. In classroom, students cannot explore their speaking skills optimally because of big number of students (more than 30 students) and limited learning period (150 minutes). This limited duration makes the lecturer has the initiative to implement an Artificial Intelligence-based speaking application, namely *Cake*.

The *Cake* application is an Artificial Intelligence-based application that uses a fun or enjoyable method for students (Suryani Ai Siti Maryam, Nurinsani Chyntia, Purnama Gunawan Indra, Hakim Irfan Luqmanul, 2021; Chotimah, 2022) . It serves video, film, conversations, and many other features so the students can select what they are interested in. Speaking is a very exciting challenge because students are required to follow the native speakers' pronunciation.

In this Cake application, there is a conversation feature between two native

speakers. In another feature, students are invited to join as one of the speakers in the conversation and they can also choose the role of the speaker alternately according to their wishes. This feature is a favorite feature because students will feel like they have a partner to speak English here. It makes students feel that this application is very fun and becomes a good partner to speak English. Along learning speaking using *Cake* application, the students get some opportunities and challenges.

The opportunities got by the students in learning speaking using *Cake* application are the easy access, various topics, the examples of conversation, chance for practicing to speak, evaluations of pronunciation, score of pronunciation/speaking and chance to have repetition. First, *Cake is easy to access.* The students can access this application free from their own gadget. It can be found from playstore. For using *Cake*, the students just need to install it to their gadget. There is no limitation to access so the students can access it everywhere and everytime. In the implementation, the students are asked by lecturers to listen and practice to speak. Every process is guided by the lecturer because they must be controlled. Second, *Cake has some topics in various levels and categories.* The topics served in cake are various. Some of them are news, speak like native, and social life. The students can also choose the Cake level. There are basic, beginner, and advanced. Moreover, there are some categories. They are like daily conversation, bussiness, story, idiom, music, and expressions. Third, *Cake serves the examples of conversation.* When the students click the topic, the student will see the written conversation and listen the native speakers talk. From this feature, the students can listen how to pronounce, express and have a right intonation. Fourth, *Cake gives chance to practice speaking.* After listening the example from the speakers, the students can click the microphone (speak) button to practice and have a conversation with the speaker. They also can choose the role what they want. Fifth, *Cake assesses or evaluates the students'pronunciation.* After the students practice to speak, they must record it. Then, the application will evaluate their speaking automatically. The wrong pronunciation will be crossed in red color. Meanwhile, the black ones are right. And sixth, *Cake gives score to the students'pronunciation.* For the assessment, the Cake will give score A, B, C or D. Moreover, there is also appreciation in the form of stars. More stars shows better score. The seventh, *Cake gives the students chance to repeat and reach the better score.* When the students are not satisfied with the result, they can repeat to practice. Students are free to repeat the pronunciation without limit according to their wishes. They can practice several times auntil they achive the better or best score. *Cake* uses the sophistication of Artificial Intelligence so that students can also keep repeating the pronunciation of native speakers until they reach grade A or until they are fluent.

In implementing the *Cake* application, the students do not just find the opportunities but also the constraints. The challenges found by the students in using this application are the materials unavailability, internet connection, gadget capacity and finding appropriate place for accessing and learning it.

First challenge is materials unavailability. In learning speaking, the lecturer has determined the lesson plan according to the curriculum. In the lesson plan, there are material that are studied for one semester. However, not all of these materials are covered in *Cake*.

The second challenge is internet connection. To access this application, students' gadgets must be connected to the internet. In campus, if the wifi quality is good, students feel fine, but if the wifi is slow or off, students find it difficult to access, especially if they have to use their personal internet quota. It will spend a lot of quota. The problem about internet connection is common happened in teaching English using online media (Demuyakor, 2020; Lestiyanawati, 2020; Todd, 2020)

The third challenge is gadget capacity . Students usually have a lot of memory on their cellphones. It can be photos, videos, files, etc. To install cake, there must be enough space so that this application can be installed and used optimally. Some students finally have to delete some files or move data to a laptop so they can use the application.

The last challenge is finding an appropriate place for accessing and learning it. If students are asked by the lecturer to access *Cake* simultaneously, it is very noisy and students cannot practice speaking maximally because they are disturbed by the sound of the application or other friends. To overcome this problem, lecturer sometimes asks the students to have outdoor class or asks them to find the different places so that the practice process can run well.

CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion in the previous point, it can be concluded that students get many contributions from Artificial Intelligence-based application *Cake* in their learning English speaking because of some advantages. The *Cake* application is easy to access and serves various topics, examples of conversation, chance for practicing to speak, evaluation of pronunciation, score of pronunciation/speaking and chance for repetition. On the other hand, students also get the challenges to use this application in learning speaking. Those challenges are materials unavailability, internet connection, gadget capacity and finding appropriate place for accessing and learning this application.

From the constraints felt by the students in using *Cake* application for learning speaking, the writers recommend that: (1) there must be an AI-based speaking application completed with material that suits on the teaching curriculum; (2) there must be speaking handout/book completed with the guidance/instructions of AI-based speaking application; (3) it is expected to further researchers to conduct the studies focusing on the other aspects of the Cake use/effect in detail; (4) the further researchers can do the study focusing on other AI-based speaking applications.

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