

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Concept of Speaking

1. Definition of Speaking

Among the four language skills, speaking is considered the most important for successful communication in the current era of globalization (Rao, 2019). Kusumayati et al. (2025) state that speaking is one of the best ways to actively build and strengthen English proficiency. It calls for skill in choosing words, controlling intonation, and using expression so listeners can easily understand the message. Speaking is a crucial skill in communication (Hussain, 2017)

Within English learning, speaking counts as a productive skill that needs steady, ongoing practice. However, many students still struggle to master speaking skills. Several factors cause their low speaking ability. First, students' vocabulary is still limited, which makes it challenging for them to convey their ideas in English. Secondly, students rarely practice speaking in English because they are not very active during speaking lessons. Thirdly, teachers dominate the lessons, so students do not have many opportunities to participate during speaking lessons (Indah Dwi Rahayu, 2020)

2. The Function of English Speaking in the Current Era

Being able to speak English well matters greatly nowadays, particularly amid rapid globalization and digital growth. English is used as an international language, and proficiency in English is an absolute requirement in various multinational companies, because English serves as a means of communication (Yustika & Aisyah, 2025). Therefore, speaking ability plays a significant role in communication between countries and cultures.

First, speaking English serves as a means of communication in a global world. Today, people from different countries interact with each other through business, education, tourism, and social media. By mastering speaking skills, a person can convey ideas, thoughts, and opinions well and clearly, as well as build relationships with people from different countries.

Second, English language skills support academic and professional development. Many seminars, webinars, conferences, and international scholarship programs require participants to have good speaking skills. In the workplace, especially in multinational companies, English is often used in meetings, presentations, and negotiations.

Third, English language skills serve as a means of accessing media and technology, both online and offline.

Most digital platforms, online courses, and international collaborations use English. With good speaking skills, individuals can participate more actively in global discussions and innovation.

Finally, the ability to speak English also helps boost confidence in speaking and social skills. Students who can speak English fluently tend to be more confident when conveying their thoughts and participating in conversations.

In conclusion, English competence in today's world acts as a tool for global communication, a support for academic and career success, access to information and technology, and a means of building confidence in social interactions.

3. The Component of Speaking Proficiency

The elements of speaking proficiency encompass several key aspects that work together to facilitate effective verbal communication. Being proficient at speaking goes beyond simply producing words it also means expressing ideas clearly, correctly, and suitably across different situations.

First, language proficiency is very important for students because they will need communication skills in the future, such as explaining lesson material, reflecting on results, and giving instructions. Bilianti (2026) defines

fluency as the natural, effortless ability to speak with minimal errors that would otherwise distract listeners from the intended meaning. The ability to speak fluently does not necessarily mean speaking quickly, but speaking at a natural pace and without interruption. In the context of learning, the ability to speak fluently indicates how accustomed students are to using English automatically, without having to think too long to form sentences.

Second, pronunciation is seen as one of the key components in learning English. Correct pronunciation allows learners to be more easily understood by native speakers or other English speakers. It also creates a positive impression and boosts confidence when speaking (Hataruk et al., 2025). Pronunciation errors can lead to misunderstandings even if the grammar used is correct. The main purpose of pronunciation is not to imitate the accent of native speakers, but to achieve clarity and comprehensibility.

Third, accuracy pertains to the proper use of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Accuracy ensures that the message conveyed complies with language rules and does not cause ambiguity. The correctness of sentence structure, tense usage, subject-predicate agreement, and appropriate word choice determines whether the message delivered is easily

comprehensible (Mursalin, 2025). In formal or academic situations, accuracy plays a crucial role because grammatical errors can affect the credibility of the speaker.

Finally, confidence plays a vital psychological role when it comes to speaking ability. Self-confidence is the belief in one's own abilities, believing in every decision or action taken. A higher level of self-confidence tends to correspond with stronger mathematical communication skills, whereas lower self-confidence is associated with weaker mathematical communication abilities (Tina et al., 2025). Therefore, building self-confidence is just as important as improving language skills themselves.

Based on the explanation above, speaking ability consists of several key components: fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence. These components work together to facilitate effective, clear, and meaningful communication in various situations.

According to Brown (2004), speaking ability can be evaluated based on several components, such as fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In this study, these components have been adapted into four main aspects: fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence.

Fluency refers to the capacity to speak smoothly and consistently without excessive pauses or hesitation, indicating how naturally students express their ideas in

spoken language. Pronunciation relates to the clarity and accuracy of speech sounds, stress, and intonation, so that the message can be clearly understood by the listener. Accuracy involves the correct use of grammar and vocabulary to ensure that the ideas conveyed are precise and meaningful. Additionally, confidence reflects the student's level of assurance in expressing their ideas without fear or hesitation.

These four aspects are interrelated and mutually reinforcing in promoting effective communication. Therefore, fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and self-confidence serve as the primary criteria for assessing students' speaking skills in this study.

B. Teaching Speaking for Young Learners

1. The Concept of Teaching Young Learners

Education for young learners covers the principles, features, and strategies applied in teaching children, generally aged between 5 and 12 years. Consequently, in an educational setting, this emphasizes how essential it is to create a supportive learning atmosphere suited to a child's developmental stage while also fostering the child's physical, cognitive, and language growth through fitting instructional methods (Yuliarsih, 2024).

Children learn more effectively through concrete experiences than through abstract

explanations. As proposed by Jean Piaget, children at elementary school age are situated in the concrete operational stage of development, which is the stage where they understand something if they can see, touch, or experience it directly. Therefore, the learning process must involve real objects, such as pictures, demonstrations, and physical activities that allow them to be directly involved.

In addition, children have a relatively short attention span, making it very difficult for them to focus on one activity for a long time. This condition requires teachers to vary learning activities, such as using songs, games, role-playing, and group activities. Fun and interesting activities are very important to attract their interest and motivation to learn.

Emotionally, children are very sensitive and need support and praise from their surroundings. Positive reinforcement can help build their confidence and courage to participate actively. A safe, comfortable, and enjoyable learning environment is also an important requirement for effective learning (Mendrofa et al., 2025).

Amelianda et al. (2024) argue that solid communication is fundamental in language learning, laying groundwork for later academic achievement and

social competence. Children tend to master language naturally when they use it in real contexts. Therefore, listening and speaking activities need to be prioritized before focusing too much on reading and writing.

Overall, the concept of teaching children emphasizes active, interactive, and enjoyable learning supported by a positive environment. Teaching children requires creativity, patience, and a deep understanding of their developmental characteristics.

2. The Emergence of Technology in Teaching Speaking

The emergence of technology in speaking instruction has brought significant changes to the language learning process in this modern era. Technological developments have resulted in various innovations that make speaking practice more interactive, flexible, and meaningful.

In the past, speaking activities were generally limited to interactions in the classroom, such as conversations, role-plays, or direct communication between teachers and students. However, with the development of digital technology, students now have access to various platforms such as language learning applications, video conferencing, and interactive multimedia learning resources. This opens up more

opportunities for students to practice speaking beyond the classroom setting.

This material about technology in English education examines concrete methods for integrating technology into the English-learning process, while also serving as a comprehensive resource for learners aiming to use technology to strengthen their English abilities (Pujiono et al., 2024). Through videos, podcasts, and online conversations with native speakers or more proficient speakers, students can listen to the pronunciation, intonation, and expressions used in real-life situations. This exposure helps improve pronunciation and fluency.

In addition, technology also provides opportunities for real-time communication. Video conferencing platforms allow students to participate in virtual discussions, presentations, and even international collaborations. These activities can boost their confidence and improve their English communication skills.

Many language learning applications also feature voice recognition, which provides instant feedback on pronunciation and English accuracy. This instant feedback helps students identify their mistakes and correct them independently.

The emergence of technology in speaking instruction has expanded opportunities for independent learning, increased access to authentic communication, and boosted student motivation and confidence. When used appropriately, technology can be a highly effective tool in supporting the development of speaking skills in the digital age.

C. Gamification in Language Learning

1. Definition of Gamification

Gamification can be described as the practice of incorporating elements typically that are commonly found in games and adapt them to non-game contexts settings, such as education, to boost student motivation, involvement, and active participation in learning. Gamification is frequently equated with closely related concepts, such as game-based learning and serious games. According to Triantafyllou et al. (2025), gamification adopts effective elements commonly found in games and implements them in non-game settings with the aim of boosting user participation, engagement, and overall performance. Within an educational setting, this idea is applied to turn learning activities into something more engaging and interactive, encouraging students to move beyond

passive reception of content and take part more actively in their own learning.

When applied to language learning, gamification is capable of producing a livelier and more stimulating learning experience. Features such as challenges, scoring systems, or particular milestones tend to push students toward greater motivation to keep participating and practicing. In addition, this approach can also help reduce boredom or anxiety that students often experience when learning a foreign language, especially in speaking skills that require high self-confidence

2. Elements of Gamification in Learning

According to (Daemei et al., 2025), gamification involves applying features typically associated with games such as competition, point systems, rewards, badges, challenges, and interactive storytelling into activities that are not traditionally game-based. These elements serve as a form of feedback that shows students' learning progress and encourages them to continue achieving their learning goals.

Within the scope of language education, such features can be utilized to design learning activities that feel more interactive and appealing to students. This

approach utilizes psychological aspects that make games appealing, such as the desire to achieve goals, the presence of competition, and the enjoyment of facing challenges. These elements can raise students' internal drive, pushing them to become more actively involved in the learning process. With a well-organized system of challenges and rewards, students are not merely finishing assigned tasks but are also encouraged to strive for stronger outcomes in every learning activity. This can help increase student engagement and encourage them to continue practicing and developing their language skills more actively and continuously.

3. The Role of Gamification in Language Learning

Applying gamification within language education plays a part in strengthening student motivation and involvement. This method is able to build an active and pleasant learning atmosphere, making students more inclined to take part in learning activities. Through interactive and challenging activities, students can learn more independently while gaining a more meaningful learning experience.

In addition to increasing motivation, gamification can also help students develop their language skills gradually. The feedback system provided through game elements allows students to see

their progress directly. This can help students correct their mistakes and increase their confidence in using English, especially in speaking skills. Hence, applying gamification within language learning may serve as a useful approach to producing a more captivating and interactive learning process that helps students develop their language ability.

D. Teaching Speaking Using Technology

1. The Integration of Technology in Speaking Instruction

Incorporating technology into speaking instruction means the structured use of digital tools to help build students' oral communication ability. In the present day, technology has turned into a fundamental part of everyday life, and education is no different. The availability of online learning platforms, educational apps, and the growing reach of internet access has created fresh opportunities to design more creative and inclusive teaching approaches (Rizqiyah et al., 2025). Digital platforms such as mobile learning applications, artificial intelligence-based systems, audio-visual media, and interactive speaking software provide students with structured and repeated exposure to speaking exercises.

Through technology, students can access authentic pronunciation models, receive speaking stimuli,

and complete oral response tasks independently. As a result, students can practice more frequently compared to traditional methods, which are usually restricted by classroom time. Technology integration also lengthens the learning process past school hours, offering students more chances to develop their speaking skills on their own and on an ongoing basis.

2. The Pedagogical Impact of Technology on Speaking Development

The use of technology in speaking instruction has significant pedagogical implications. First, technology supports the improvement of core speaking components such as fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence (Khairuddin, 2024). Repeated exposure to pronunciation models and instant feedback mechanisms helps students improve their articulation and sentence structure. Second, technology provides a less stressful learning environment. Students can practice speaking privately before performing in front of others, which reduces the fear of making mistakes (Wahyuni et al., 2025).

Moreover, technology contributes to greater motivation and involvement. Elements like interactivity, progress-tracking tools, and immediate performance feedback help make learning livelier and easier to

measure. When students can observe their own progress over time, it builds their confidence and commitment toward continued practice. As a result, technology not only enhances language skills but also fosters a positive attitude towards speaking English.

E. The Concept of Stimuler Application

1. Definition of Stimuler Application

Stimuler is a digital learning innovation created to help students improve their English-speaking ability in an interactive way. The application offers a range of features, including pronunciation drills, simulated conversations, and AI-generated automatic feedback. Through these features, students can practice speaking anytime and anywhere, without fear of making mistakes in the presence of their teachers or classmates.

(Denistiani, 2025), explains that Stimuler is a platform powered by artificial intelligence created to help users advance their English-speaking abilities through immediate feedback covering vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The application analyses users' written and spoken English pronunciation using AI, providing instant feedback and suggestions for improvement. This application features interactive lessons and collaboration tools to encourage more speaking practice. Currently, Stimuler continues to evolve, making English-speaking

practice more enjoyable and effective for learners around the world(Sari & Rahman, 2025).

2. Teaching Speaking Using Stimuler

Enhancing speaking ability through Stimuler means utilizing this application as a technology-driven learning medium. Digital resources such as Stimuler provide dynamic and engaging methods for practicing speaking as technology continues to influence language learning processes(Sari & Rahman, 2025). As a digital learning tool, Stimuler is designed to provide interactive speaking exercises that can help students develop fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence.

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In speaking lessons, Stimuler serves as a training tool and source of feedback. This application allows students to listen to pronunciations, repeat sentences, and record their own voices. Through this process, students can compare their pronunciation with the correct model and become aware of their mistakes. Repeated practice helps students improve their fluency and clarity in speaking.

In addition, Stimuler also supports independent learning. Students can practice anytime and anywhere without being tied to class schedules. The more students practice, the more accustomed they become to producing language automatically.

In classroom implementation, teachers can integrate the Stimuler application into various speaking activities, such as conversation exercises, picture description, storytelling, and role-playing. After individual practice, students can be asked to present their speaking results to the class. Thus, technology serves as a preparatory stage before direct communication practice.

Using such applications may likewise boost learning motivation (Sari & Rahman, 2025). Digital tools help make lessons more engaging and reduce monotony. Learners often feel more at ease practicing through technology since it lessens anxiety and fear of committing errors.

However, the effectiveness of teaching speaking using Stimuler greatly depends on the teacher's planning. The use of the application must be tailored to the learning objectives and the students' ability levels. Technology should be a supporting tool that reinforces interaction and communication practice, not replace it.

3. Teaching Procedure Using Stimuler Application

Delivering speaking lessons with the Stimuler application entails a set of organized steps aimed at strengthening students' speaking ability through a technology-supported process. This approach combines the use of the Stimuler app as a learning tool with speaking tasks designed by the teacher. Generally, this approach consists of several stages that help students develop their fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence.

During the opening stage, the teacher presents the learning goals and clarifies the topic to be covered. This step is meant to get students ready and activate what they already know before moving into speaking practice. The teacher also introduces the Stimuler app and explains how to use it as a learning tool.

In the core activity, students use the Stimuler application to practice their pronunciation and speaking skills. Students listen to pronunciation examples provided by the app and repeat the sentences to improve their pronunciation and speaking fluency. The Stimuler application serves as a practice tool that provides automatic feedback on students' speaking performance. Meanwhile, speaking tasks such as guided speaking, describing pictures, and short monologues are assigned by

the teacher and integrated with the use of the application over several learning sessions. Through the feedback provided by the application, students can identify their mistakes and improve their speaking skills independently.

While the lesson is underway, the teacher takes on the role of facilitator, guiding and observing student activity. The teacher makes sure learners stay actively involved and offers further clarification whenever necessary. Students are also encouraged to repeat these exercises to achieve better results.

In the closing stage, students are given a chance to show their speaking ability in front of their classmates. This exercise allows them to apply what has been practiced and helps raise their confidence in speaking. The teacher then provides feedback and summarizes the lesson.

Overall, the use of the Stimuler application in speaking instruction creates an interactive, student-centered learning environment. The application allows students to practice more independently and consistently, and to receive immediate feedback that supports the development of their speaking skills

4. Teacher and Students' Roles in Teaching Speaking Using Stimuler Application

In applying speaking lessons using Stimuler, teachers and students have complementary roles. How well technology-based learning succeeds relies not just on the application, but also on the way teachers organize the lesson and the degree of active student participation.

a. The Role of the Teacher

In technology-based speaking lessons, teachers act as facilitators, motivators, and evaluators. As facilitators, teachers provide clear instructions on how to use the Stimuler application and describe the learning objectives that are to be realized. Teachers must be able to act as facilitators in classroom learning and must be able to guide students (Sulistriani, Joko Santoso, 2024).

As mentors, teachers monitor students' progress and provide additional explanations when students encounter difficulties in pronunciation, fluency, or vocabulary usage. Although the application can provide feedback, teachers still play an important role in providing more in-depth corrections and reinforcement of student learning outcomes.

Teachers also act as motivators by providing encouragement and support so that students become

brave and confident when speaking. In addition, teachers act as evaluators who assess students' speaking skills based on aspects such as fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence

b. The Role of the Students

When Stimuler is used in speaking lessons, students are expected to remain actively engaged during the entire learning process, following directions, making the most of the app's features, and taking part in classroom speaking activities.

Students also play a role as independent learners. Because Stimuler allows for flexible practice, students are responsible for managing their study time and practicing consistently, both inside and outside of class.

In addition, students act as communicators. After practicing individually through the application, students are expected to apply the results of their practice in real communication activities, such as paired conversations, group discussions, or presentations in front of the class.

In general, both teachers and students share a collaborative role when using Stimuler for speaking instruction: teachers direct and support the learning

process, while students participate actively and take ownership of developing their own speaking ability.

5. The Advantages of the Stimuler Application

There are a number of benefits offered by the Stimuler application for English teaching and learning, particularly regarding the enhancement of students' speaking ability, which include the following:

a. Improving Pronunciation Accuracy

The Stimuler application provides artificial intelligence (AI)-based pronunciation exercises that allow students to listen to correct pronunciation examples and imitate them. This helps students correct their pronunciation mistakes and improve the clarity of their speech.

The artificial intelligence (AI) system will analyze the recording results and provide instant feedback. With instant corrections, students can identify their pronunciation mistakes and correct them immediately.

Repetitive practice also helps students become more familiar with English vocabulary and sounds, so that their pronunciation becomes clearer, more accurate, and easier to understand.

b. Providing Automatic Feedback

The Stimuler application provides an automatic feedback feature that is given immediately after students complete their speaking exercises. The system analyzes students' voice recordings and displays evaluations of pronunciation, accuracy, and speech clarity. This feature helps students understand which parts are good and which parts still need improvement with instant feedback; students don't have to wait for corrections from teachers to find out their mistakes. This speeds up and improves the learning process. Students can immediately try the same exercise again until they get better results.

c. Supports Independent Learning

Stimuler supports independent learning by allowing students to practice anytime, anywhere. The application does not limit practice to classroom hours, giving students the flexibility to manage their own study time.

This ease of access allows students to repeat material or exercises they find difficult without time pressure. Thus, learners are able to study at a pace that suits them and according to their individual needs.

Independent learning through Stimuler also fosters a sense of ownership of their own learning process. Students become more actively involved in developing their speaking skills because they have direct control over the frequency and intensity of their practice.

d. Increases Student Motivation to Learn

The interactive features in Stimuler make the learning process more interesting and less tedious. Speaking exercises accompanied by automatic assessment and instant results can spark enthusiasm to achieve better results.

When students see their grades or performance improve over time, it motivates them to continue practicing. The small sense of accomplishment gained through improved practice results can increase students' intrinsic motivation.

In addition, the use of technology that is in line with the current digital era makes students feel closer to the learning media. This creates a more enjoyable learning atmosphere that is applicable to their daily experiences.

e. Boosting Confidence in Speaking

Regular speaking practice through Stimuler helps students gradually build confidence. Because these exercises can be done through the app, students can try and repeat them without feeling embarrassed about making mistakes in front of their teachers or classmates.

This more private learning environment gives students the confidence to experiment with pronunciation and sentence structure. They can correct their mistakes before demonstrating their speaking skills directly in class.

As their abilities improve and they make fewer mistakes, students will feel more confident in their own abilities. The confidence built through these independent exercises is essential in supporting speaking performance in real-life communication situations.

6. The Disadvantages of the Stimuler Application

Although Stimuler offers many benefits, it also comes with a number of drawbacks, described below:

a. Limited to Direct Productive Speaking Exercises

Stimulation refers to speaking and response exercises based on the system through the application. The exercises provided are

generally structured, such as imitation, reading, or responding to specific instructions. This is indeed effective for training pronunciation accuracy and clarity of speech.

However, these applications do not yet fully provide spontaneous communication interactions, such as direct conversation or two-way discussions between students. As a result, students may experience limitations in practicing more natural communication skills, such as responding spontaneously, maintaining a conversation, or adapting their language to real communication situations

b. Requires Internet Access

The use of the Stimuler application requires a strong and stable internet connection for its features to run optimally. The process of sound analysis, automatic feedback, and progress monitoring is highly dependent on the internet. This condition can be an obstacle for students who have limited internet access or an unstable network. Connection interruptions can hinder the learning process and reduce the effectiveness of learning.

c. Limited Grammar Explanations

Stimuler focuses more on speaking and pronunciation exercises than on explicit explanations of grammar. This application emphasizes direct practice rather than in-depth delivery of grammar theory or rules.

As a result, students may still need additional explanations from teachers regarding sentence structure or correct grammar usage. Therefore, the use of Stimuler should be supported by classroom learning so that students' understanding of grammar continues to develop in a balanced manner

d. Potential Dependence on Technology

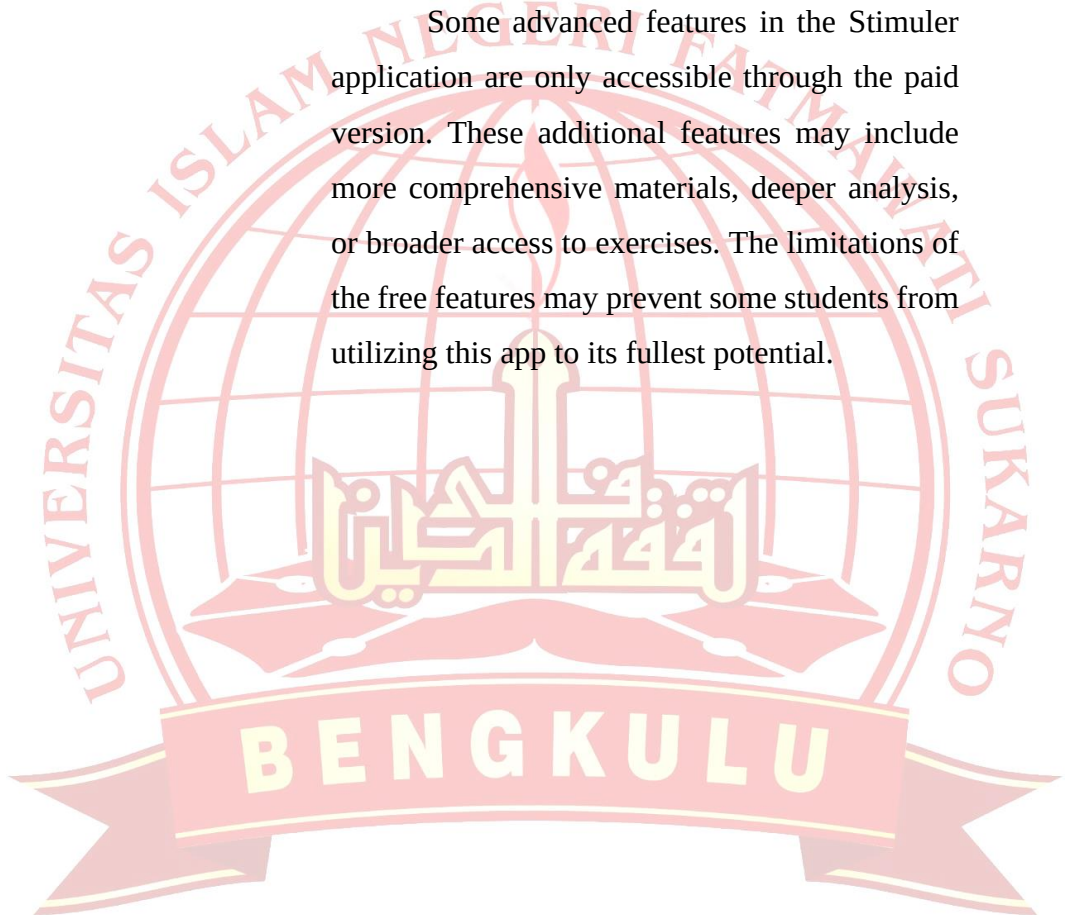
Relying too heavily on the app without pairing it with in-class speaking activities may lessen direct interaction between teachers and students. Over-dependence on app-based exercises could hinder the optimal growth of students' interpersonal communication skills.

Direct interaction remains important for training spontaneous responses, nonverbal expressions, and communication dynamics that

cannot be fully simulated by technology. Therefore, the use of Stimuler needs to be combined with direct speaking activities

e. Limited Free Features

Some advanced features in the Stimuler application are only accessible through the paid version. These additional features may include more comprehensive materials, deeper analysis, or broader access to exercises. The limitations of the free features may prevent some students from utilizing this app to its fullest potential.



7. Procedures for using the Stimuer application

The Stimuler application is used as a tool for learning to speak, with the following general procedure.

- a. Install the Stimuler application through the Play

Store or App Store

(<https://apps.apple.com/id/app/stimuler-berbicara-inggris/id1627501632?l=id>)]

b.

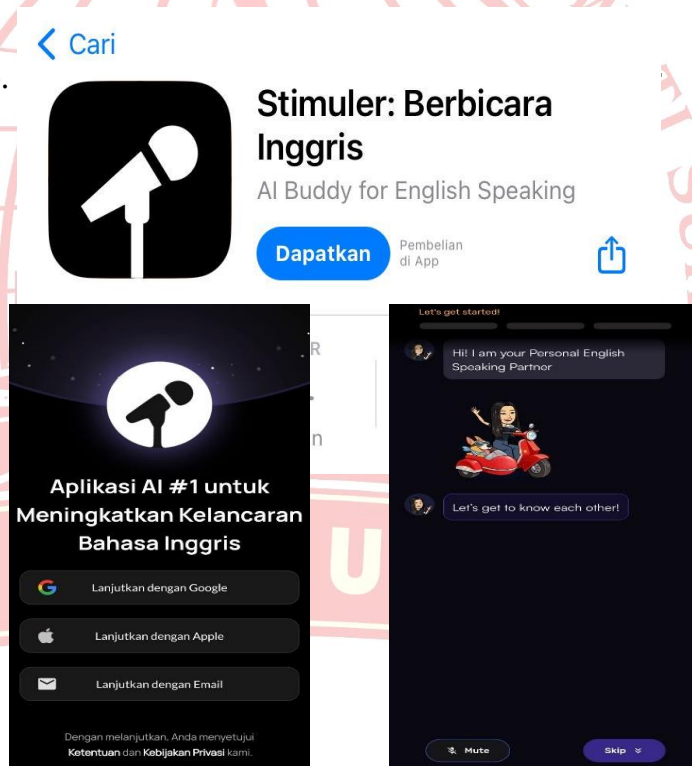
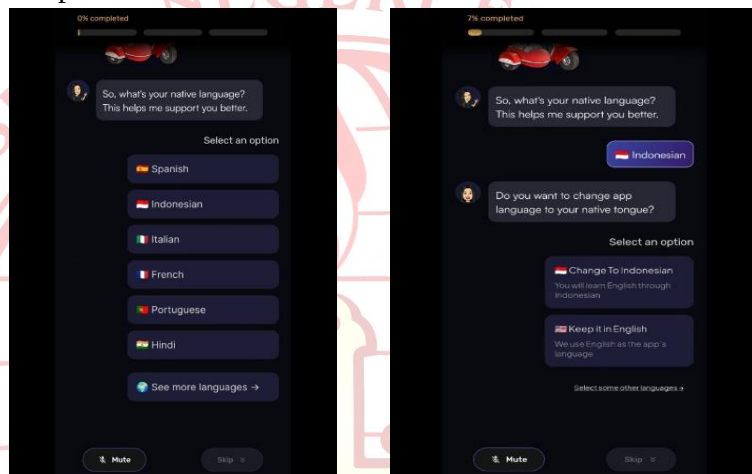


Figure 2.1

(Stimuler Application Login Screen)

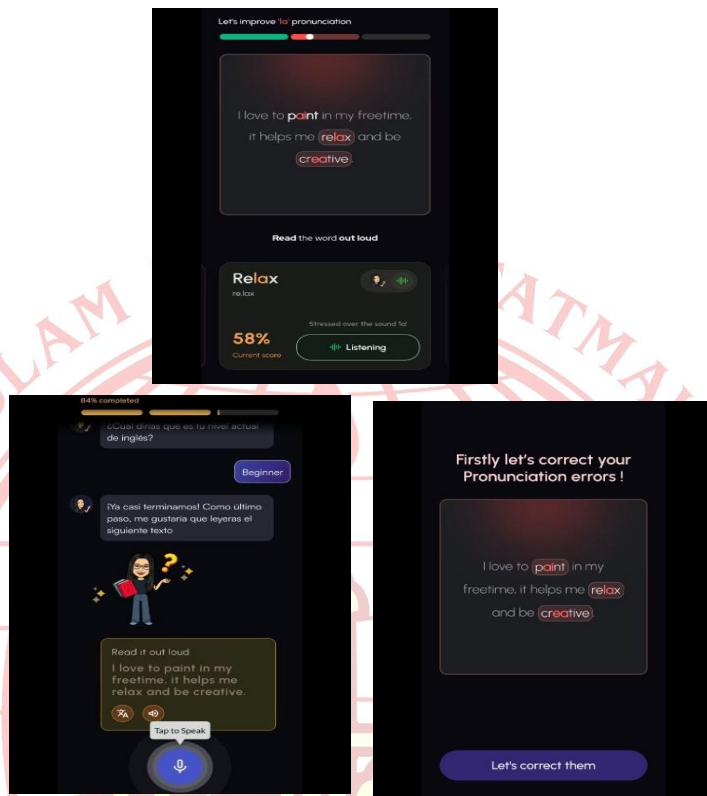
- c. Next, before starting the speaking exercises, users are asked to fill in some preliminary information, such as their name, phone number, native language, and English proficiency level. For beginner users, a beginner-level option is available.



(Figure 2.2)

Stimuler Application Personal Data Entry Screen

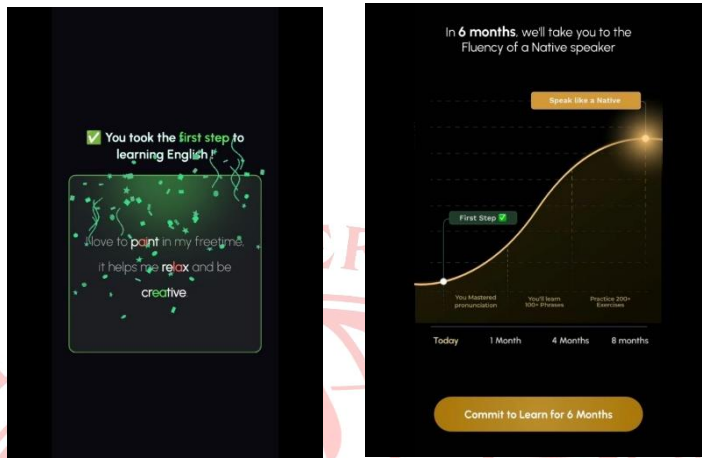
- d. After this stage, users begin practicing their speaking skills by reciting the sentences provided by the application. The application then analyzes the user's pronunciation and provides automatic feedback on any mistakes made. Users are allowed to correct any words they have pronounced incorrectly.



(Figure 2.3)

Stimuler Application Speaking Practice and Pronunciation Correction Screen

- e. After the correction process is complete, the application displays the assessment results and the user's speaking skill progress. In addition, Stimuler also provides a progress monitoring feature that displays the user's speaking practice progress over a certain period of time.



(Figure 2.4) Stimuler Application Speaking Ability Results and Progress Screen

F. Previous Study

Previous research has examined the utilization of digital applications as a learning medium in English language teaching, particularly in enhancing students' speaking abilities.

A study by Denistiani (2025), entitled 'The Effectiveness of Stimuler Application as Learning Media to Improve Students' Speaking Skills at Vocational School,' applied a quasi-experimental method with two comparison groups—experimental and control. The results indicated that students who used Stimuler obtained notably higher speaking scores compared with those taught through conventional approaches. This gain appeared across pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. Both this research and the previous one use Stimuler as a medium to develop

speaking skills and adopt a quasi-experimental design. The difference lies in the participants: the earlier study focused on vocational high school students, while the current research targets eighth-grade junior high school students, with a more specific emphasis on fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence.

Research by Shakira et al. (2026), titled 'The Use of the Stimuler App to Support Development of English Speaking Skills,' used a thematic literature review approach, examining various earlier works related to how the Stimuler app supports speaking skill development. Findings demonstrated that the app positively affects speaking performance, especially in improving pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and participation in class. The app was also found to help lower speaking anxiety by allowing self-paced practice, interactive elements, and instant feedback. Even so, this study pointed out several obstacles, such as technical barriers like limited internet access, which could interfere with its implementation. Both pieces of research use Stimuler as a tool to enhance speaking ability, but they differ methodologically: the previous study relied on a literature review, whereas this current research directly tests the app's effectiveness through experimentation.

A study conducted by Ülker (2026), entitled 'Gamification in Language Teaching and Learning: A Systematic Review of Various Studies,' adopted a qualitative approach through a systematic review to examine multiple pieces of research concerning the application of gamification within language instruction. The results showed that gamification has a beneficial effect on both learning achievement and motivation. It was found that gamification supports growth across several language competencies, including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, reading, listening, pragmatics, and collocation. Furthermore, gamification components such as points, badges, rewards, feedback, and leaderboards were shown to raise student engagement and involvement in learning. The study concludes that gamification is an effective way to strengthen language ability and student motivation within English language teaching. Both studies center on gamification-based technology as a means to support English learning and enhance language ability. They also both stress the importance of digital instructional tools in raising student motivation and engagement. Nevertheless, the two studies differ in design and scope: the previous research applied a systematic review to look at gamification across a range of English skills, whereas this study takes a quantitative approach using a quasi-

experimental design. In addition, that study focuses on the use of gamification in the learning of English in general, whereas my research specifically concentrates on the application of Stimuler to improving EFL students' speaking abilities, which includes aspects of fluency, pronunciation, accuracy, and confidence.

G. Research Assumptions

Several key assumptions underpinned the way this research was designed and carried out. It was assumed that the Stimuler application would be useful and applied in line with the intended learning objectives. It was also assumed that the students who participated as the study's subjects had relatively equivalent basic English language skills, so that any differences in learning outcomes that emerge could be more easily attributed to the treatment given. Learning activities using this application were conducted consistently in line with the research design, ensuring that the learning process ran effectively and was measurable. In addition, the speaking skills assessment instrument utilized is considered capable of measuring students' abilities objectively, validly, and reliably. With these assumptions, this study is hoped to contribute accurate results in line with the objectives set by the researcher

H. Conceptual Framework

This study used a quasi-experimental design that involved two classes, specifically an experimental group and a control group. Both classes were given a preliminary test to measure the students' initial speaking proficiency. Following this, the experimental group received treatment in the form of using the Stimuler application in speaking lessons, whereas the control group received instruction without using the application (using a conventional approach). After several meetings, both groups were given a final exam to determine the final results of the students' speaking abilities. Test results following the treatment from both classes were subsequently compared to identify whether a difference existed in the improvement of students' speaking abilities after treatment.

Based on the research diagram, the relationship between these variables are explained below:

1. Independent Variable (Variable X)

In this study, the independent variable was the utilization of the Stimuler application as a learning medium for speaking instruction in the experimental class.

2. Dependent Variable (Variable Y)

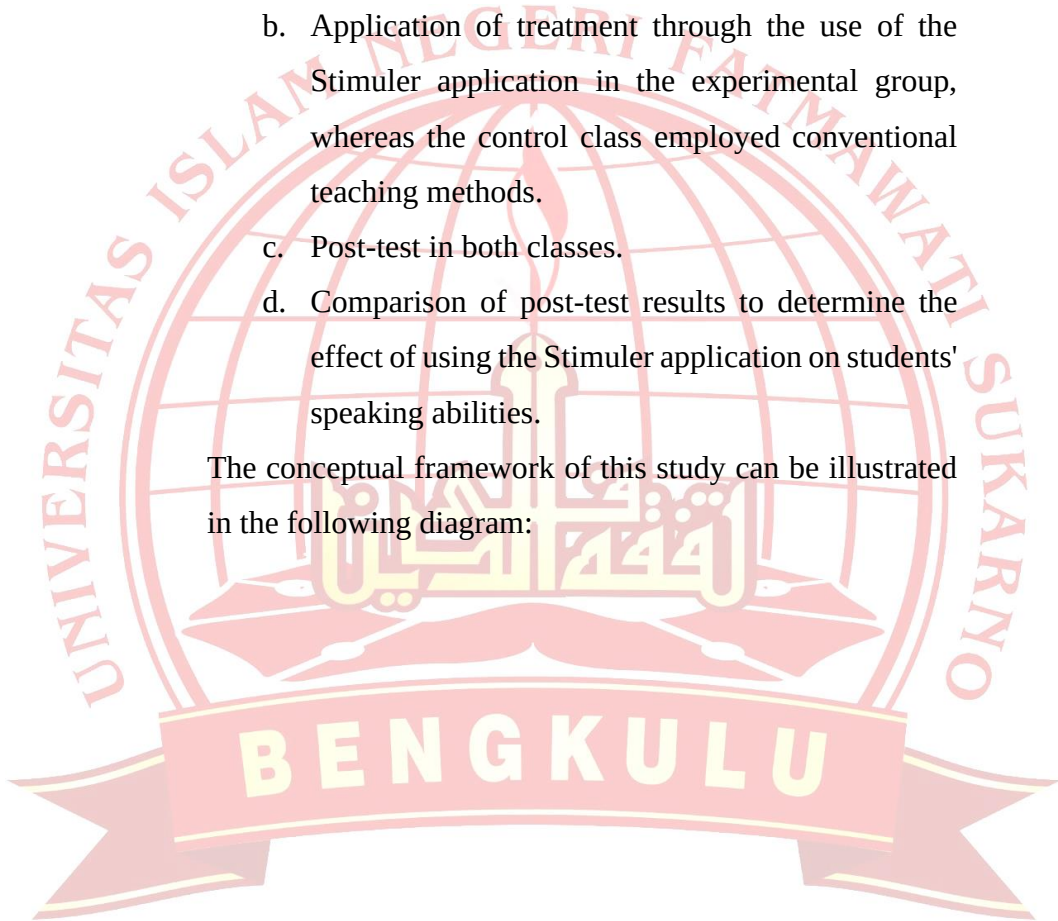
The dependent variable in this research is students' speaking ability, which includes fluency, accuracy, and comprehension.

3. Research Procedure

This study was carried out in several stages, namely:

- a. Conducting a pre-test in the experimental class and control class.
- b. Application of treatment through the use of the Stimuler application in the experimental group, whereas the control class employed conventional teaching methods.
- c. Post-test in both classes.
- d. Comparison of post-test results to determine the effect of using the Stimuler application on students' speaking abilities.

The conceptual framework of this study can be illustrated in the following diagram:



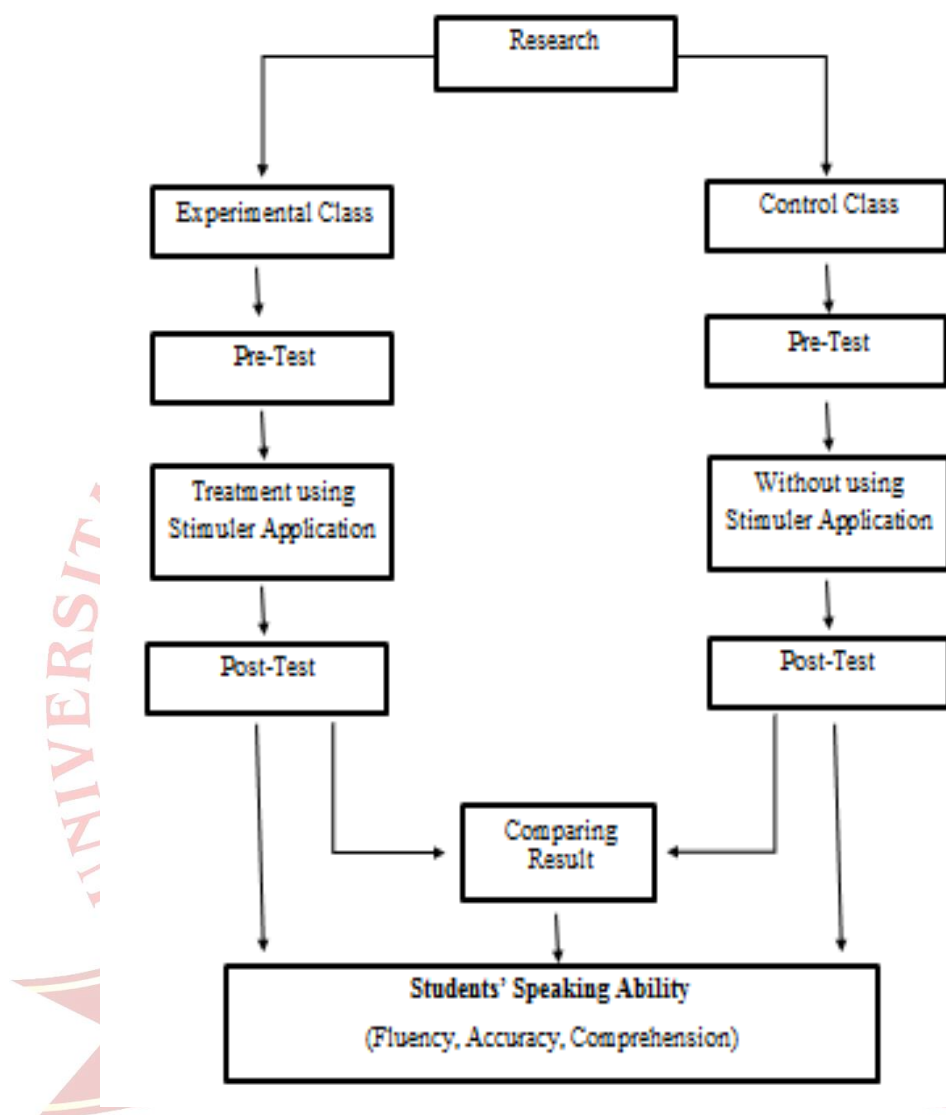


Figure 2.5 Conceptual Framework of the Research

A. Hypothesis

The hypothesis is based on a theoretical model that is based on or not based on reality, and can produce one or more predictions that can be tested (Mietchen & Heger, 2024). This format is relevant for an experimental design with two groups: the experimental group (using the Stimuler application) and the control group (using conventional learning methods).

1. H_0 (Null Hypothesis): The use of the Stimuler application has no significant effect on the speaking skills of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 11 Bengkulu Tengah.
1. H_a (Alternative Hypothesis): The use of the Stimuler application has a significant effect on the speaking skills of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 11 Bengkulu Tengah.