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Enhancing EFL Speaking: A Junior High Experiment Using Audio-Visual Slides

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of audio-visual slides in enhancing the speaking skills of seventh-grade students. Despite being a key skill for expressing ideas and interacting in English, speaking is often underpracticed in the classroom. To bridge this gap, the study implements audio-visual slides that integrate visual and audio elements to capture students' attention and stimulate their imagination. The research employs a pre-experimental one-shot case study design involving 32 students. It focuses on four core indicators of speaking proficiency: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. The results show that the students achieved an average speaking score of 69.53, and the t-test value reached 70, indicating their performance in the "good" category, particularly in grammar and pronunciation. These findings indicate that using audio-visual slides positively impacts students' speaking abilities. Statistical analysis further supports the conclusion that this method is effective. These outcomes highlight that incorporating audio-visual materials into English lessons can create a more dynamic, engaging, and encouraging language learning environment, helping students build greater confidence and competence in speaking English.

Keywords: EFL; Speaking skills; Audio-visual slides; Junior high school

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1. Introduction

Speaking is widely regarded as an essential skill in language learning, as it enables people to articulate thoughts, convey information, and engage in meaningful communication. For students, speaking clearly and confidently is crucial for interacting with others and expressing ideas. According to Yusuf et al. (2023), speaking is often considered the core of English communication. However, mastering this skill requires a combination of sub-skills, such as accurate pronunciation, appropriate diction, grammatical accuracy, effective sentence construction, and proper intonation patterns. These elements form the foundation for fluent and

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coherent oral communication (Rena et al., 2023; Spezzini, 2023; Aminah et al., 2019; Arbain et al., 2017).

Despite its importance, many students struggle with speaking English due to limited exposure, lack of confidence, and minimal practice for authentic practice. A similar challenge was observed at SMPN 2 Krembung, where several students showed reluctance to speak English and often reverted to their native languages (Indonesian and Javanese). Such conditions suggest that speaking proficiency demands theoretical understanding and real-life communication practice. In this regard, teachers play a vital role in fostering supportive classroom environments that promote active participation and communicative use of the target language. As Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) noted, developing communicative competence early is critical to achieving long-term language proficiency. Effective speaking instruction requires targeted training in speech patterns, rhythm and intonation, appropriate word choice, and organizing logical ideas (Spezzini, 2023; Arbain & Nur, 2017; Nur & Jamilah, 2022).

To address these instructional needs, integrating engaging and accessible teaching media becomes crucial. Media that stimulate attention and emotional engagement can significantly improve students' comprehension, retention, and motivation (Andriani et al., 2022; Arbain & Rohman, 2023; Erliana & Arbain, 2020). One promising approach involves audio-visual (AV) media, which provides multisensory input and simulates authentic language exposure. As Karya et al. (2022) highlighted, the lack of interaction with native or proficient English speakers remains a significant challenge in EFL learning, making AV content a valuable substitute (Gracella & Rahman Nur, 2020; Nur, 2020).

PowerPoint-based slides enhanced with audio elements offer a simple yet effective instructional tool among various AVM options. These slide presentations can combine visual imagery with narration or sound effects to maintain student attention and deliver consistent language input. While PowerPoint is frequently used in classrooms, it is often integrated with other platforms or examined as part of broader multimedia strategies. Prior studies support the general value of AV media. Asadi (2015) confirmed that AV materials support all four

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language skills without focusing specifically on speaking. Syafril and Kurniawati (2021) found that audio-enhanced PowerPoint slides improved student and parental engagement, though their study did not assess gains in students' speaking ability. Dewi et al. (2023) showed improvements in pronunciation through AV media, while Aziz and Dewi (2020) focused on student motivation through storytelling slides, without evaluating speaking proficiency. Yadi (2022) found improved grammar and vocabulary, yet no comparative analysis was made across speaking components. Supriyani et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of content quality and cultural relevance but did not explore low-cost AV tools in low-resource contexts.

Despite these promising findings, few studies have focused on using PowerPoint-based audio-visual slides in resource-limited EFL contexts, such as Indonesian public junior high schools that combine AV slide media with a structured experimental design. This study seeks to fill that gap by using simple, low-tech audio-visual slides created with PowerPoint and embedded audio, offering a practical and replicable solution for seventh-grade students in the Indonesian junior high school. By focusing on individual speaking components, this study offers insight into the pedagogical effectiveness of this underrepresented medium in enhancing speaking skills through a structured experimental design. The following research questions guide it:

1. Can audio-visual slides improve students' speaking abilities?
2. Which aspect of speaking is most positively affected by using audio-visual slides?

2. Method
2.1. Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach using an experimental method to investigate the effect of audio-visual slides on students' speaking performance. Specifically, it examines the immediate impact of using AV slides in learning descriptive texts to improve students' speaking skills. The design adopted is a pre-experimental one-shot case study, in which a single group receives a treatment followed by a post-test, without including a comparison group or pre-test (Cresswell, 2014; Sugiyono, 2011). As Sugiyono explains, this design is characterized

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by the absence of pre-treatment measurement, the involvement of only one group, and the implementation of assessment directly after the treatment.

Although this design lacks a control group, the design is considered suitable for preliminary studies that aim to explore treatment effects in practical classroom contexts (see Table 1). Further, this study intends to serve as a foundational work that informs future research. This initial exploratory step contributes to a growing understanding of low-cost, easily implemented media strategies in under-resourced EFL classrooms.

Table 1. One-shot case study design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment (X)	Observation (O)
Experimental	-	X	O

Description:

- X: Treatment using audio-visual slides for teaching descriptive texts.
- O: Post-treatment observation of students' speaking performance.

The research hypotheses tested were:

- H_0: Audio-visual slides improve students' speaking ability ($\mu = 70$).
- H_1: Audio-visual slides have little or no effect on speaking ability ($\mu \neq 70$).

2.2. Setting and Participants

This study was conducted during the even semester of the 2023/2024 academic year at SMPN 2 Krembung, Sidoarjo, East Java. The researchers selected a single class, Grade 7B, as the sample, comprising 32 students (14 males and 18 females). One of the researchers also served as the English subject teacher, allowing for consistent instructional delivery and close classroom observation. Although the study was limited to one class within a single school, this approach enabled controlled intervention implementation and minimized external variables. However, it is important to note that the relatively small and homogenous sample may limit the generalizability of the findings beyond this context. Nonetheless, focusing on a typical Indonesian junior high school setting provides a reliable and contextually relevant basis for evaluating the effectiveness of AV slides.

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2.3. Data Collection

Data were collected through classroom observation, student interactions during discussions, and active presentation participation. Students' speaking performance was evaluated using a five-point rating scale: very poor, poor, fair, good, and excellent. A performance rubric adapted from Brown and Lee (2015) guided the assessment process. Following the treatment, each student delivered a presentation to demonstrate their speaking skills, and individual scores were assigned based on the rubric.

Two raters conducted the assessments to improve objectivity and minimize potential bias: the English teacher (Rater 1) and one of the researchers (Rater 2). Before rating the students' presentations, the raters participated in a calibration session in which they reviewed the rubric, discussed scoring criteria, and examined sample student responses to align their interpretations. While no formal inter-rater reliability test (e.g., Cohen's Kappa) was conducted, this calibration step was intended to promote consistency in scoring. Both raters independently scored each presentation and engaged in discussion when discrepancies occurred to reach a consensus score. This procedure aimed to reduce subjectivity and strengthen the credibility of the assessment.

The treatment was implemented over three instructional meetings:

1. First meeting

    - Students watched a video about Sidoarjo local wisdom.

    - The teacher explained descriptive text and modeled descriptive sentences.

    - Students responded to questions and engaged in interactive discussions.

2. Second meeting

    - A classroom picture was used to elicit vocabulary practice.

    - Students identified objects and used determiners (a/an) to construct descriptive sentences.

    - The teacher guided students in writing texts and introduced basic presentation techniques.

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3. Third meeting

- Students prepared and delivered their descriptive sentences in small groups.

- The teacher observed and rated their speaking performance.

- Peers provided feedback, and the session concluded with a teacher-led reflection and encouragement.

Throughout the sessions, students were encouraged to actively speak, describe objects using visual prompts, and apply language structures introduced in class. Although the study was conducted in a single public school, the setting reflects typical conditions in Indonesian EFL classrooms. Therefore, the findings may provide helpful insights for similar educational contexts, mainly where clear rubrics and collaborative assessment practices support fair evaluation.

2.4. Treatment Procedures

The researchers implemented a learning strategy during the experiment using audio-visual (AV) slides created with Microsoft PowerPoint, which combined visual content with embedded audio to support speaking practice. The instructional topic focused on describing objects, and students were guided to listen and repeat target vocabulary, promoting listening comprehension and oral fluency. The learning procedure was structured into three stages:

1. Introduction

   The teacher introduced the topic using PowerPoint slides. Students listened to the audio, summarised key points orally, and constructed descriptive sentences based on the examples provided. The teacher reinforced understanding by repeating essential content.

2. Learning Process

   The slides were used to engage students' attention and provide listening input. Students listened to 2-3 short descriptive sentences, completed diagnostic comprehension tasks on printed answer sheets, and studied relevant linguistic features for describing objects.

3. Practice

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Students worked in pairs to describe objects using picture prompts. They then presented their descriptions in small groups, received peer feedback, and were assessed by the teacher using a speaking performance rating scale.

Although more interactive digital tools, such as Quizlet or Kahoot, can offer dynamic and gamified learning experiences, the study deliberately employed PowerPoint—a simple and widely accessible tool—to reflect the realities of under-resourced EFL contexts. This pragmatic choice ensured pedagogical effectiveness while maintaining replicability across schools with limited technological infrastructure and budget constraints.

2.5. Data Analysis

All data were analyzed quantitatively using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics 26 (www.spss.com). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' speaking performance, and a one-sample t-test was conducted to examine whether the mean score significantly differed from a set benchmark. This analysis was guided by the study's single-group design and the aim to evaluate the impact of AV slides use on speaking ability. The statistical procedures were selected based on their relevance and suitability for addressing the research questions clearly and effectively (Cresswell, 2014). Although more advanced analyses, such as ANOVA or regression, were not employed due to the scope and sample characteristics, the findings were interpreted within relevant theoretical and empirical frameworks to support validity.

3. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings that directly address the research questions of this study. The results are organized into two sub-sections: (1) the effectiveness of audio-visual (AV) slides in enhancing students' speaking abilities, and (2) the specific aspects of speaking most influenced by using these materials.

3.1. The Effectiveness of Audio-Visual Slides in Enhancing Speaking Ability

Many 7B students face challenges in developing speaking abilities, as English is neither their mother tongue nor their second language. Their daily communicate in Javanese and

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Indonesian (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020) limits exposure to spoken English. Previous studies, such as Yusuf et al. (2023), highlight that students' linguistic background and the instructional media used significantly influence speaking skill development.

To address this challenge, the teacher implemented AV slides during classroom instruction (see Figure 1). These slides, designed in PowerPoint and enriched with audio narration, aimed to stimulate students' auditory and visual senses. As a cost-effective alternative to complex multimedia tools, AV slides offered visual aids and clear audio models that supported comprehension and pronunciation practice. This dual-channel content presentation sought to make abstract language elements more tangible and engaging for students.

Figure 1. Implementing audio-visual slides to teach English in the classroom

A presentation-based speaking assessment was conducted to evaluate the intervention's impact. Students were scored using a standardized rubric, with scores ranging from 35 to 90 and an average score of 69.53, categorized as "good". The standard deviation (SD) of 13.522 indicates a range of student performance levels (see Figure 2).

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Score	32	35	90	69.53	13.522
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Figure 2. The distribution frequency of the t-test

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A one-sample t-test compared the mean score to a benchmark value of 70 to determine statistical significance. The result (t = 0.196, p = 0.846) showed no statistically significant difference from the benchmark (see Figure 3). However, the primary aim of the intervention was not solely to exceed a specific score but to enhance learning engagement and language accuracy through accessible, interactive media.

					One-Sample Test	
				Test Value = 70		
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Score	-.196	31	.846	-.469	-5.34	4.41

Figure 3. The T-test Value

Despite the lack of statistical significance, qualitative observations during the intervention revealed increased student participation, reduced speaking anxiety, and noticeable improvement in pronunciation and grammar. These findings align with studies by Kathirvel and Hashim (2020) and Putri and Syamsuyurnita (2024), who emphasize multimedia's motivational and instructional benefits in language classrooms, particularly in low-resource contexts.

3.2. Aspects of Speaking Improved through Audio-Visual Slides

Students' presentation performances were assessed using a detailed rubric to identify which the AV slides intervention most influenced speaking components. Both the researchers and the English subject teacher conducted the evaluations.

As shown in Chart 1, students achieved the highest average scores in pronunciation and grammar (mean score = 4), followed by slightly lower scores in fluency and comprehension (mean score = 3). These results suggest that the AV slides method was most effective in improving aspects related to language form, such as accurate pronunciation and grammatical structure. These outcomes are likely the result of repeated auditory exposure and visual reinforcement of language patterns, which helped students internalize correct forms and sounds. It aligns with a study by Al Aqad et al. (2021), who found that multimedia input

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supports the formation of mental representations for vocabulary and grammar. In this study, students could better associate language rules and terms with concrete visuals and consistent audio models.
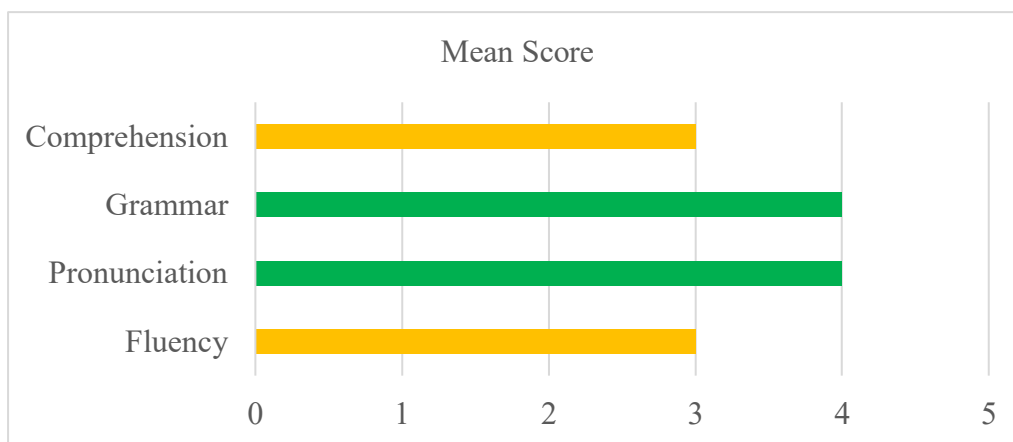

Chart 1. Results of the highest speaking aspect scores

However, it is important to acknowledge that the study's speaking tasks focused primarily on structured, monologic presentations. As such, aspects of speaking such as conversational fluency, spontaneity, and interactive dialogue were not directly assessed. These higher-order communicative skills are critical to speaking proficiency but require more time, authentic interaction, and dialogic tasks.

4. Conclusion

Integrating AV slides into English lessons can improve students' speaking skills by creating. The findings demonstrated that using AV slides effectively enhanced students' pronunciation and grammar within a short period, contributing to a more engaging and effective learning environment. These outcomes reinforce prior studies supporting the benefits of AV materials in enhancing English-speaking proficiency. This study provides robust evidence for incorporating AV tools in EFL classrooms to accelerate language acquisition and improve speaking ability. Techniques involving sound repetition and visual cues can help deepen students' understanding of the content, boosting their confidence and communicative competence. However, this research was limited by its relatively short intervention period, the

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absence of a control group, and its focus on a single public school and proficiency level. Future studies should incorporate a broader range of speaking activities to evaluate how AV materials influence fluency and interaction in real-time communication, employ pre- and post-test designs with control groups, and extend the intervention duration to assess long-term retention.

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