

## Evaluating the Efficacy of the EJOY English Application to Escalate Eleventh-Grade Students' Speaking Proficiency

Winda Oevi Saskiana<sup>1</sup>  
Dian Fadhilawati<sup>1\*</sup>  
Miza Rahmatika Aini<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Balitar Islamic University, Blitar, Indonesia

### Abstract

*This study assessed EJOY application' efficacy to enhance eleventh-grade students' oral proficiency in explaining natural phenomena, focusing on various aspects like pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and content. Pre-experimental research utilizing a one-group pretest and post-test design was conducted, covering thirty-five students at SMAN 1 Blitar, especially class XI-MIPA3. The study unfolded in three phases: pretest, treatment, and post-test, with a preliminary tryout to ensure test validity and reliability. Data analysis, conducted using a paired sampled T-test with SPSS 26, revealed a significant improvement in students' speaking achievement in explanation texts. Rising from 72.00 to 80.62. In addition, the Sig 2 tailed was under 0.05. It referred that the Ejoy application is effective to escalate students' speaking skills. From the findings, it is recommended students use the EJOY application in English to refine their speaking skills. Further, the English educators are advised to integrate the EJOY Application to enhance learning outcomes or incorporate it into other topics to create more engaging and interactive curricula, tailored to specific learning objectives.*

**Keywords;** EJOY Application, Speaking Proficiency, Explanation Text, Pre-Experimental

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, communication skills have become indispensable assets in education and beyond (Fadhilawati, Malahayati, and Suyitno 2023). The language predominantly used by individuals worldwide to communicate is English (Rao, 2019). English is a global lingua franca that stands out as a language that must be mastered to navigate this interconnected world; it serves as the universal medium for business transactions, scientific discourse, and cross-cultural communications. (Budiman et al. 2023). Because of the importance of English in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, Indonesian students from Junior to Senior High school must learn it (Widianto et al., 2024; Fauziyah, 2022). Indonesian English Instruction is focused on mastering four crucial skills such as speaking, reading listening, and writing (Fitriani & Fadhilawati, 2022).

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<sup>1\*</sup>Corresponding author, email: [dianfadhilawati@yahoo.com](mailto:dianfadhilawati@yahoo.com)

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Among those mentioned four crucial skills. Speaking is deemed the most significant, serving as a vital indicator of proficiency (Maulana et al., 2022; Zyoud, 2016). It serves as the primary mode of communication, enabling learners to articulate their thoughts and engage with others in authentic scenarios (Fadhilawati, 2015). Moreover, speaking is pivotal as it enables individuals to articulate ideas in a structured manner tailored to their audience (Nazara 2011). Speaking facilitates communication and enhances various language components such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency (Maylia Arina and Islamiah 2020). Therefore, speaking skills are imperative for verbal communication, discussing topics, and delivering presentations (Darmuki and Hariyadi 2019).

Despite the importance of speaking discussed above, many students in Indonesia face difficulties in mastering speaking skills (Maylia Arina & Islamiah, 2020; Wiratama et al., 2023). These challenges include feeling shy and nervous when speaking in public, lacking confidence to respond to teachers' questions in class, struggling to use appropriate vocabulary and grammar when presenting, and having difficulties with pronunciation. (Riswandi, 2016; Fadhilawati Rina Sari et al., 2018). Several factors contribute to these difficulties. Firstly, there is a lack of understanding of vocabulary and grammar among students. (Tantri 2018). Without a strong foundation in these areas, it is challenging for students to speak the targeted language. Secondly, pronunciation issues can hinder communication, making it harder for students to be understood. (Sari, Wageyono, and Wangi 2020). Additionally, inadequate academic literacy, particularly in reading and writing. Moreover, speaking is deemed challenging due to its multi-sensory nature, encompassing eye contact, body language, facial expressions, pauses, rhythm, and intonation, significantly influencing communication dynamics (Sari and Lestari 2019).

Regarding the speaking difficulties. The students in the XI MIPA 3 at SMA Negeri 1 Blitar faced challenges in acquiring speaking skills in the context of explanation text, especially in explaining natural phenomena. The impediments to learning English speaking in this area stem from various factors, including a limited vocabulary, uncertainty about pronunciation, incomplete comprehension of grammar rules, a lack of confidence, and nervousness when speaking spontaneously without prior preparation. Those factors made their learning outcomes less than the minimum requirement. Based on the block test result under the topic of explanation test, which was 71.00, the result was less than the minimum standard required by the school, 76.00.

To enhance the students' speaking learning outcomes, Educators must integrate appropriate technologies. One such digital tool suitable for teaching speaking skills is the EJOY application. Designed to improve language proficiency, EJOY English offers features such as oral communication practice, speech recognition technology, vocabulary and sentence construction exercises, and gamified elements for engaging learning experiences. While similar to other applications like Cake, Duolingo, YouTube, and Instagram Reel in functionality, EJOY stands out for its unique integration with YouTube, offering additional learning opportunities. Several studies have investigated the efficacy of digital technologies in improving students' speaking abilities. For instance, Chotimah explored the impact of Cake apps on speech abilities at As-Syafi'ah Islamic University. (Chotimah 2022).

Similarly, Hafifah focused on using the Duolingo app among tenth-grade students at Madrasah Aliyah Bilingual Batu. (Hafifah .2021). Syafiq et al. examined the benefits of utilizing YouTube videos for English learning at Muhammadiyah University of Kudus, observing enhancements in fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and contextual understanding (Syafiq et al. 2021). Furthermore, Widiyanti and Fadhilawati examined the Instagram Reel to lift speaking ability among Senior High School students, particularly in the context of report text materials. (D. Tri Widiyanti and D. Fadhilawati 2024), and the latest is Febby et al. researched lifting students' speaking skills in explaining natural phenomena by utilizing the Seesaw application (Dwi Cahyani et al. 2024).

Despite numerous studies exploring the use of digital technologies to enhance students' speaking proficiency, there remains a research gap regarding using the EJOY application. Previous research has examined the effectiveness of various applications such as Cake, Duolingo, and YouTube videos in improving speaking skills among students. However, limited study focuses on using EJOY explicitly to improve speaking abilities, notably in the context of explanatory texts relating to natural phenomena. By leveraging EJOY's features and content tailored to English language learning, this research seeks to contribute valuable insights into the potential of utilizing digital tools for enhancing speaking proficiency in educational settings.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Speaking**

Speaking involves the exchange of spoken words between individuals. As described by (Nurmadina et al., 2021), speaking serves the purpose of sharing thoughts, ideas, and knowledge. Additionally, Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz (2021) Noted that speaking is a vital language skill, facilitating oral interaction between speakers and listeners for knowledge transfer, relationship building, and information sharing.

Speaking, in the context of this research, pertains to the explanatory texts, particularly concerning natural phenomena. This involves students' ability to verbally convey how natural events and processes occur, such as the formation of rain, the creation of rainbows, and the life cycle of butterflies. For instance, students should be able to explain the water cycle that leads to rainfall, the refraction and dispersion of light that results in rainbows, and the stages of metamorphosis in butterflies. These explanations require not only a clear understanding of the scientific concepts but also the ability to communicate them effectively, demonstrating both their comprehension and their speaking proficiency.

### **2.2. Explanation Text**

An explanation text is a form of writing that describes or explains a specific process, concept, or phenomenon. According to Law (Kencana & Fauzia, 2022)), this type of text aims to elucidate how something functions or takes place. Furthermore, Anderson and Anderson, as cited in (Aida & Widiyati, 2020), described explanation texts as those that clarify how or why something happens.

When explaining a social or natural phenomenon, the speaker should adhere to the generic structure of an explanatory text. Derewianka, as cited in (Zebua, 2022), identifies three primary components of an explanatory text: a) Statement: which includes phenomena that align with the text's purpose; b) Sequence of events: consists of

chronologically ordered events within the paragraphs; and c) Conclusion. In the current study. Explaining text refers to the material that must be learned by students under the skill of speaking by applying the EjoyEnglish Application.

### **2.3. EJOY Application**

EJOY English is an application designed to help users enhance their English language skills (Chau 2020). It provides a range of features such as vocabulary games, reading exercises, and listening practice. A notable aspect of EJOY English is its use of gamification to make the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. The app awards points and badges for task completion and milestone achievements, fostering a sense of accomplishment and motivating users to keep learning.

EJOY is a versatile language learning application offering numerous advantages to its users. It allows for a personalized learning experience, where users can customize their studies based on their skill level, learning goals, and interests by selecting from a diverse range of lessons and exercises. The app employs interactive learning methods such as games, quizzes, and flashcards to enhance engagement and effectiveness. (Bui 2017).

Supporting multiple languages including English, Spanish, French, German, and Chinese, EJOY caters to learners of various linguistic backgrounds, whether they are beginners or seeking to improve proficiency. Available on both mobile devices and desktops, the app ensures accessibility anywhere, and users can download lessons for offline learning, enabling uninterrupted study even without an internet connection. With a variety of pricing plans, including a free version, EJOY offers a cost-effective solution for individuals looking to learn a new language or enhance their existing language skills.

## **3. METHODS**

The researchers conducted a quantitative study to investigate how effective EJOY is in escalating 35 students' speaking proficiency in explaining natural phenomena in SMAN I Blitar. This approach focused on objectivity, precision, and using structured instruments for data collection. This methodology was appropriate for research issues that involve numerical analysis and seek to produce generalizable results based on representative samples. (Creswell and Creswell 2018). Furthermore, a pre-experimental design, specifically a one-group pretest and post-test, was carried out. The research methodology consisted of three essential stages: pretest, treatments, and post-test (Arikunto 2013). It was possible to conduct research because of the availability of a language laboratory as well as the rule that permits students to use mobile phones to support learning.

Data collection was conducted through a speaking test in May 2023, with the evaluation criteria centered on students' pronunciations, vocabulary choice, grammar usage, speaking fluency, and content that aligns with explanation text genres. Before administering the test, it was piloted in other classes to ensure its validity and reliability. A trial examination was conducted on May 5th, 2023. This trial aimed to assess the quality and consistency of the test questions, which were identical to those in the pretest. The study employed pretest and post-test procedures to evaluate students' progress in articulating explanatory texts. The pretest, administered on May 8th, 2023,

required students to take a subjective speaking test in which they explained natural phenomena prompted by a video.

The researchers implemented a series of interventions that included introducing and reinforcing the use of the EJOY app among students, along with reviewing materials related to explanatory texts. The first session, conducted on May 10th, focused on familiarizing students with the EJOY app and revisiting key concepts of explanatory texts. During this lesson, students were asked to orally repeat the audio elements provided by the app, paraphrasing them in their own words.

In subsequent sessions held on May 17th, 24th, and 26th, students engaged in activities centered around natural phenomena. They watched videos on themes such as "How Does a Rainbow Happen?", "How Does Rain Form?", and "How Does the Water Cycle Work?", were all accessed through the EJOY app. After viewing the videos, students were tasked with orally interpreting the content, identifying challenging vocabulary, exploring their meanings, and practicing accurate pronunciation using the app's shadowing feature. The purpose of these interventions was to augment pupils' understanding, broaden their lexicon, and boost their oral communication abilities in the context of explanatory texts, leveraging the interactive capabilities of the EJOY platform.

A spoken assessment was administered, focusing on natural process explanations. It was to evaluate students' ability to identify and interpret the main concepts of the explanatory texts, grasp subtleties, learn new terms, and rearticulate the text verbally using diverse language expressions. The test, which included a link to the pertinent video and a scoring rubric, offered students a time frame of 90 minutes to complete. For the final assessment, they were required to verbally describe the material for up to 5 minutes.

Following the post-test, the research data was statistically analyzed to assess the impact of the instructional intervention. A paired sample t-test was conducted using SPSS 26 to compare participants' pre-test and post-test scores. The effectiveness of the EJOY application in enhancing senior high school students' speaking skills was evaluated at a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . An observed p-value above 0.05 led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and the rejection of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) (Kwak 2023).

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researchers explored different research results connected to the study's principal result to answer the research question. The results included the tryout test findings, the test's validity and reliability, homogeneity and normality, pre- and post-testing results, paired sample t-test results, and hypothesis test results. Before conducting the pretest in the XI IPA 3 class at SMAN 1 Blitar, the researchers ran a trial test to ensure its validity and reliability as a research instrument. The tryout test for a class of XI IPA 6 was held on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at SMAN 1 Blitar, with 35 participants. The examination assessed many aspects of speech, such as grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and content, based on the context of the explanation text.

Following the tryout results, the researchers utilized SPSS 26 to analyze the students' responses to the test instructions to establish the test's validity and reliability. The tables below present the results of the validity and reliability tests.

**Table 1.** The Validity Output

Question	R count	R table	Description
Q1	0.866	0.333	Valid
Q2	0.819	0.333	Valid
Q3	0.822	0.333	Valid
Q4	0.854	0.333	Valid

Each question has a count more significant than the r-value from the r table (0.333), a positive result, as shown in the tables above. Therefore, the instruments' items are deemed valid. Further, the researchers did a reliability test. A test is reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient equals or is higher than 0.6. The outcome is presented below.

**Table 2.** The Reliability Output

		N	%
Cases	Valid	35	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	35	100.0

The Statistics of Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.862	4

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was  $> 0.6$ , which indicates the test instrument was reliable. Consequently, the test can be deemed suitable for implementation during the pretest phase. The researcher administered the pretest on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to XI MIPA 3, with 35 respondents. The target was to evaluate the learners' proficiency in speaking, specifically in the context of explanation texts, before incorporating EJOY English into teaching and learning speaking skills. Moreover, following the implementation of the intervention, which involved instructing the speaking achievement required for explanation texts using EJOY English throughout four sessions, the researcher conducted a post-test on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, for XI MIPA 3 students at SMA Negeri 1 Blitar. This post-test aimed to evaluate the student's proficiency in delivering explanatory texts during oral communication following the introduction of EJOY English:

**Table 3.** The Students' Pretest and Posttest Outputs

Respondent	Pretest	Posttest
1	84	88
2	72	80
3	68	76
4	64	76
5	80	84
6	64	80
7	68	80
8	64	76
9	76	82
10	68	80

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Pretest</b>	<b>Posttest</b>
11	64	76
12	68	80
13	72	80
14	68	76
15	72	76
16	72	84
17	72	80
18	80	84
19	68	76
20	72	76
21	76	80
22	80	88
23	72	80
24	72	84
25	64	76
26	72	80
27	68	80
28	72	84
29	72	80
30	68	80
31	68	76
32	88	92
33	76	80
34	76	84
35	80	88
	72.00	80.62

From the outcomes of the pretest presented in the previously mentioned table (3), it was evident that the student's proficiency in speaking explanation texts fell below the satisfactory level. This deficiency is noticeable considering the established minimum mastery criterion for the English subject, 76.00. Consequently, the researcher aims to implement EJOY English to address and enhance the speaking proficiency of XI MIPA 3 students at SMA Negeri 1 Blitar.

Contrastingly, the outcomes of the post-test, as indicated in the previously given table, demonstrated an enhancement in the students' proficiency in delivering explanation texts. The initial mean score of 72.00 has increased to 80.62. Consequently, the researcher confidently asserted that integrating EJOY English into teaching and learning has improved student scores.

After getting the post-test findings, the researcher performed a normality test to see whether the regression model's independent and dependent variables followed a normal distribution. The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was utilized for this purpose. If the significance value in the normality test table is above 0.05, it signifies that the data conforms to a normal distribution. The findings of the conducted normality test for this study are elaborated below.

**Table 4.** The Normality Test Output

	Unstandardised Residual
N	35

Normal Parameters <sup>b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	2.25594830
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.120
	Positive	.095
	Negative	-.120
Test Statistic		.120
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 <sup>c,d</sup>

Furthermore, the researcher did a homogeneity test after receiving the findings of the normality test. This test aims to verify that the measured populations are homogeneous. If the significance value in the homogeneity test table > 0.05 indicates that the variances of two or more groups of population data are the same. The following is a table of the homogeneity test results for this study.

**Table 5.** The Homogeneity Test Output

		Levene	df1	df2	Sig.
		Statistic			
Variable	Based on Mean	2.239	1	68	.139
	Based on Median	2.952	1	68	.090
	Based on the Median and with adjusted df	2.952	1	63.261	.091
	Based on trimmed mean	2.905	1	68	.093

To assess the influence of the EJOY English application on students' ability to articulate explanation texts, the researcher analyzed pretest and post-test data using the paired sample t-test. This statistical method was utilized to measure the effectiveness of the intervention by evaluating the difference between the mean scores before and after the treatment. The results of the paired sample t-test for this investigation are presented below.

**Table 6.** Paired Sample T-Test Output

**Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	72.0000	35	5.90115	.99748
	Posttest	80.6286	35	4.13796	.69944

**Paired Samples Correlations**

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pretest & Posttest	35	.838	.000

**Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest	-8.6285	3.31738	-9.7681	-7.4890	-15.38	34	.000
	Posttest	7		3	1			



Based on the information presented in the table, The two-tailed significance value (Sig.) is 0.000, it less than 0.05. Thus, there was a noteworthy disparity in students' performance between the pre- and post-tests. As a result, the (Ha) was received, and the (Ho) was denied. The result shows that 11th-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Blitar, especially those in XI MIPA 3, improved their speaking skills in explanatory texts using EJOY English.

Drawing from the discussion of the earlier findings, it is evident that there was an elevation in students' proficiency in speaking explanation texts, as reflected by an increase from the pretest score of 72.00 to 80.62. Additionally, with a two-tailed significance value (Sig.) < 0.05, the paired sample t-test results revealed a substantial difference between the pre-and post-test data. It demonstrated how well the EJOY English app works to help eleventh-grade students become more proficient speakers of explanatory texts at SMA Negeri 1 Blitar, specifically in class XI MIPA 3.

The research findings might be influenced by the features that Ejoy English has. EJOY English application provides interactive learning and engaging activities that encourage students to participate actively in their speaking class. (Raztiani and Permana 2019) Reported that interactive education can help promote student passion, make the atmosphere lively, and result in optimal output, such as achieving student learning goals.

Speaking activities such as role play and dialog can be practiced by applying the Ejoy English application. It was aligned with the perspective of Sari and Lestari (2019), who asserted that role-playing is efficacious in improving speaking skills, enjoyable, and motivational in broadening students' linguistic dimensions. In addition, Nurmainiati and Raisa (2020) Highlighted that English dialogue is highly recommended for English teachers who want to hone and improve their students' English skills.

Furthermore, EJOY English includes functionalities specifically focused on pronunciation practice. Atli and Bergil (2012) Emphasized that students can develop an awareness of the structure of English sounds through pronunciation practice. EJOY English incorporates voice recognition software, pronunciation analysis, and audio recordings. The result corresponds with the perspective of Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014), who noted that speech recognition software plays a role in helping students improve their speaking skills by transforming spoken words into machine-readable input.

Besides EJOY English application provides a comprehensive set of flashcards and vocabulary activities. Tawarik (2021) Emphasized the interconnectedness of vocabulary and language, asserting that proficiency in spoken language is closely tied to one's vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, using flashcards proves beneficial for students in refining their speaking abilities, aligning with (Kusumaningtyas (2021), who reported that flashcards facilitate the fluidity of conversations and the articulate expression of words and sentences.

The platform also incorporates elements of gamification, injecting an element of enjoyment into vocabulary learning. It concurs with the perspective of Fatima et al.( 2019), who asserted that English learning methods rooted in educational games are highly effective for vocabulary and pronunciation practice, fostering enthusiasm and curiosity among students. In addition, simulated real-life situations are integrated into EJOY English, offering students opportunities to practice speaking in practical contexts.

The result aligns with the findings of Uguma and Obiekezie (2018), who reported that simulation methods significantly influence students' academic achievements in English, enhancing their performance, especially in speaking. Tailoring the learning experience to each student's demands.

EJOY English application employed learning algorithms that adapt to changing difficulty levels according to proficiency and progress. This personalized approach ensures ongoing challenge and engagement, enhancing speaking skills. It resonates with Herawati (2023), who highlighted that personalized learning in self-paced education empowers students to acquire knowledge at their preferred pace and convenience. Finally, EJOY English is accessible on various gadgets, such as PCs, tablets, and smartphones. Learning through those gadgets facilitates them to learn and review the materials wherever and whenever they want flexibility (Aziz, Fadhilawati, and Sutanti 2021)

The last feature is YouTube Connectivity: EJOY English has a function that lets users link to content on YouTube in addition to watching videos within the app to learn from. It is consistent with the findings of Juitania and Indrawan 2(020) that underscored the advantages of using YouTube videos as a teaching tool and the accelerated acceptance of material or learning topics when presented through engaging audio-visual content.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The finding implied that the Ejoy English application was effective in escalating the students' speaking proficiency, particularly in explaining natural phenomena. It indicates that technology cooperation in English Language classrooms is useful for achieving the targeted learning outcomes. Based on findings, educators may incorporate Ejoy English Application in teaching other topics or skills to create more engaging and interactive curricula, tailored to specific learning objectives. Continuous assessment and feedback are needed to monitor progress and adapt teaching methods. Moreover, encourages active student engagement in learning by utilizing digital applications either inside or outside the classroom to foster ongoing language improvement must be conducted gradually. Policymakers and educators should invest in and research further technological applications to ensure their accessibility and effectiveness across various learning contexts.

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