

EXPLORING CAKE APP FOR LISTENING SKILLS: A CASE STUDY IN THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL OF ENGLISH COURSE

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Abstract

The use of technology as a learning tool is essential in the digital age. Incorporating the Cake mobile application as an innovative learning medium can enhance students' listening abilities in elementary-level English courses. Listening is one of the fundamental skills required for learning English, as it supports the development of other language skills. This study aimed to investigate students' perceptions and experiences of using the Cake application as a supporting tool for listening learning. A descriptive quantitative approach was employed, with data collected through a closed-ended questionnaire using a Likert scale. The research design involved a survey of 16 students enrolled in an elementary-level English course. The findings reveal that students hold positive perceptions of the Cake application as a tool for supporting listening learning. The participants reported increased motivation to practice listening and recognized that regular use of the application consistently improves their listening skills. Moreover, all students agreed that the application is user-friendly and practical, indicating that its simplicity and accessibility are well-suited to elementary-level learners.

Keywords: *Cake Application, Listening skills, Elementary-level*

1. INTRODUCTION

English is an essential skill for both academic and professional advancement. Ilyosovna (2020) states that English is one of the most widely used languages in the world. Similarly, Clement and Murugavel (2018) emphasize that English proficiency has become increasingly necessary in both native and non-native English-speaking countries. A global survey on workplace language proficiency reveals that more than 95% of employers in many non-English-speaking countries highly value English language skills. Therefore, strong English proficiency should be a top priority for students, as it contributes significantly to academic success, personal development, and competitiveness in the global workforce. Thus, mastery of English is no longer optional but a fundamental requirement in today's globalized academic and professional environments.

In Indonesia, English is a priority language within the education system. Putri and Siregar (2024) note that English is an essential subject in the national curriculum. English language instruction is provided across educational levels, from elementary school to university. Previous studies indicate that English learning is regarded as a crucial aspect of students' skill development and has been implemented consistently at elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels (Salim & Hanif, 2021; Aditama et al., 2022; Muslim et al., 2020). This widespread implementation reflects the growing recognition of English as a vital competency for academic achievement and global communication. Therefore, the

Indonesian education system places English learning as a strategic foundation for students' future success.

Listening is a fundamental skill in language education, playing a crucial role in second language acquisition. According to Rost (2024), listening involves a complex cognitive process encompassing the perception, processing, and interpretation of spoken language. In the context of second language learning, listening comprehension provides essential input that supports the development of other language skills, including speaking, reading, and writing. Moreover, listening accounts for approximately 40–50% of daily communication, making it a core skill that must be developed to effectively acquire information in a new language (Sartika, 2017). Therefore, listening serves as a foundational component of overall language proficiency and warrants focused attention in language instruction.

Despite the importance of listening in language learning, many students continue to struggle with developing listening comprehension skills. Sartika (2017) identifies several common problems, including rapid speech delivery, limited opportunities for repetition, insufficient vocabulary, difficulty interpreting speakers' pronunciation and speech patterns, challenges in understanding the overall content, and the tendency to focus on understanding every individual word. These difficulties are further compounded by learners' limited attention spans and low motivation. Similarly, previous studies report that listening development is hindered by factors such as speech rate, restricted vocabulary knowledge, and cultural differences, particularly among EFL learners (Chen, 2019; Jiang & Dewaele, 2019). Additionally, Yip and Fisher (2022) note that sustained listening demands can cause listener fatigue, which negatively impacts comprehension. Collectively, these challenges underscore the need for effective instructional strategies and technological support to address learners' diverse listening needs and enhance their listening proficiency.

Technology plays a crucial role in enhancing human capabilities by developing and applying tools and processes. In education, technology contributes to improved learning outcomes, the development of essential skills, and preparation for participation in a digital society (Kalyani, 2024). Mobile applications have gained popularity due to their accessibility and interactive features. Ratheeswari (2018) explains that integrating technology into classroom instruction supports the development of 21st-century skills. Therefore, the integration of educational technology is a promising solution for enhancing students' learning experiences and skill development.

One technological tool that has gained attention in English language learning is the Cake application. According to Yanthi (2020), Cake is a popular Android-based mobile application developed in South Korea. Unlike many language-learning applications, Cake enables users to practice English using authentic content, rather than relying solely on translations into their native language (Nushi & Egbali, 2017). Fitri et al. (2021) state that Cake is a free application released by Cake Corp in 2018, offering practice in listening, speaking, and vocabulary through real-life conversational materials. These features make learning more practical and engaging for students (Kristanti et al., 2024). Hence, the Cake application provides an innovative and accessible platform for improving English listening skills.

Several studies have examined the use of the Cake application in English learning contexts (Putri et al., 2023; Sugandi & Syafiq, 2023; Octavianita et al., 2022). Research findings indicate that the Cake application effectively improves students' English listening skills, particularly among secondary school students in Indonesia (Putri & Siregar, 2024; Juliana, 2024). Furthermore, Hardiyanti (2023) suggests that the Cake app is a practical and highly recommended learning tool for enhancing listening comprehension. Overall, previous research has demonstrated that the Cake application has a positive impact on students' listening abilities and encourages independent English learning. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions and experiences in using the Cake application as a listening learning support tool.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research approach. Data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from Putri and Siregar (2024). The questionnaire employed a Likert scale comprising several statements related to students' motivation, enjoyment, and learning experiences with the Cake application for listening practice. The response options ranged from "strongly agree" to "disagree," enabling the researcher to identify students' levels of agreement with each statement. All

responses were systematically organized and analyzed to obtain an overall picture of students' perceptions of the Cake application in supporting listening learning. The samples were asked to complete the questionnaire after using the Cake application, ensuring that their responses reflected their actual learning experiences.

The sample of this study consisted of 16 students enrolled in an elementary-level English course at an institution designed to develop learners' basic English language skills. All participants had used the Cake application as part of their English learning activities before completing the questionnaire. Moreover, the students had attended the course for a sufficient period, allowing them to provide meaningful and reflective responses regarding their experiences with the Cake application. Consequently, the selected sample was deemed suitable for examining students' perceptions of using the Cake application in listening learning.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the study's findings, based on the data collected from the questionnaire. The analysis focuses on students' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of the CAKE application as a supporting tool for learning English listening skills. The results are presented descriptively to illustrate how students respond to the use of the application in their learning process.

The findings indicate that the CAKE application is one of the online learning applications accessed via smartphones that students consider very useful for supporting and enhancing their English listening skills (Table 1). Specifically, the results show that students perceive the CAKE application as an effective and practical learning tool that assists them in improving their listening comprehension.

Table 1. Result of the Questionnaires

No	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
1.	After using the CAKE app, I feel more confident in understanding spoken English.	9 (56%)	6 (38%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2.	The CAKE application helps me to focus and improve my listening skills.	8 (50%)	7 (44%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3.	I feel more motivated to learn English listening after using the CAKE application.	8 (50%)	7 (44%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
4.	The CAKE app has a variety of materials that help improve my listening skills.	9 (56%)	7 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
5.	I felt a significant improvement in my listening ability after using the CAKE app.	9 (56%)	5 (31%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)
6.	The CAKE application is an English learning application that is easy to use and effective for me to improve my English skills, especially listening skills.	10 (62%)	6 (38%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
7.	Regular use of the CAKE app helps me to develop my listening skills consistently.	7 (44%)	7 (44%)	2 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

8.	I found using the CAKE app effective in helping me understand accents and variations in the English language.	8 (50%)	7 (44%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
9.	I would recommend the CAKE app to my friends as an aid in improving English listening skills.	7 (44%)	7 (44%)	2 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The results of the questionnaire showed that most students had a positive view of the Cake application's ability to improve their listening skills. "After using the Cake application, I feel more confident in understanding spoken English" was the first statement that 94% of students agreed with, with 56% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing. This showed that the Cake app's audio-visual exposure to native speakers helps students learn pronunciation, intonation, and speaking speed more organically. This outcome, supported by Rost (2024), suggests that repeated exposure to relevant, real-world input facilitates the optimal development of listening skills. Additionally, students are more engaged in learning spoken English using the Cake app (Syaffi'i, 2024).

"The Cake application helps me to focus and improve my listening skills" was the second assertion. Based on the questionnaire results, 94% of students agreed with this statement, with 50% strongly agreeing and 44% agreeing. The short video format and interactive listening activities in the cake application feature likely help students stay focused while practicing listening. This aligns with Juliana (2024), who states that most students perceive Cake to be a tool that supports concentration and the development of listening skills. Moreover, this is still related to the statement, "I felt a significant improvement in my listening ability after using the Cake app." The fifth statement showed that 56% of students strongly agree and 31% agree, indicating that 87% of students feel a significant improvement in their listening skills, while 7% feel less agreeable. This suggests that most students agreed that using the Cake application could improve their English listening skills (Putri & Siregar, 2024).

In response to the third statement, "I feel more motivated to learn English listening after using the Cake application," 50% strongly agreed, and 44% agreed, resulting in 94% of students feeling more inspired to learn English listening. The questionnaire findings suggest a very positive outcome. This aligns with Losi (2022), who states that the Cake app boosts the motivation, interest, vocabulary, and listening skills of EFL students. Furthermore, the Cake application successfully boosts students' motivation to learn English and enhances the overall language learning experience in the classroom (Kristanti et al., 2024).

Regarding the fourth statement, "the Cake app has a variety of materials that help improve my listening skills", 56% of students strongly agreed, and 44% agreed that the materials provided by the Cake app helped improve their listening abilities. Additionally, the sixth statement, "The Cake application is an English learning application that is easy to use and effective for me to improve my English skills, especially listening skills," received a response from 62% of students who strongly agreed, and 38% who agreed, indicating that 100% of students responded positively. This aligns with the view of Chotimah and Pratiwi (2022), who note that the Cake app is a free application with a simple interface that allows students to learn anytime, anywhere, and offers various features, making it ideal for beginner-level learners. Moreover, the Cake app has various interesting features that allow learners to experience different listening contexts (Juliana, 2024).

The consistency in the development of listening skills is also apparent in the seventh statement, "Regular use of the Cake app helps me to develop my listening skills consistently". A total of 44% of students strongly agreed, and 44% agreed, indicating that 88% of students recognize that using the Cake app regularly helps them continuously improve their listening skills. Regular exposure to spoken English strengthens students' understanding of vocabulary and sentence structure. Putri and Siregar (2024)

reported that regular use of the Cake app can improve students' overall understanding of English, including their listening skills.

"I found using the Cake app effective in helping me understand accents and variations in the English language". The eighth statement showed that approximately 94% of students feel a positive impact from using the Cake application. Features such as subtitles, audio repetition, and short videos enable students to understand the material in a step-by-step manner. The features of the Cake app are invaluable for language learners, offering exposure to diverse linguistic nuances that enrich their language acquisition experience (Juliana, 2024). Furthermore, the Cake app offers students numerous opportunities for use, is ad-free, features a diverse range of options, and includes a variety of videos (Kristanti et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the last statement, "I would recommend the Cake app to my friends," received 88% approval (44% strongly agreed and 44% agreed). This demonstrates that the Cake app not only improves listening abilities but also provides an enjoyable and compelling learning experience. To support this, Juliana (2024) states that the Cake app improves listening skills while providing a user-friendly and interactive experience. Thus, the Cake app's interactive elements and possibilities for app collaboration inspire students to explore the content more deeply, making learning more enjoyable (Tawali & Kamarudin, 2022).

Furthermore, this study demonstrates that participants perceive the Cake app as a valuable tool for developing listening skills. The high level of agreement in the questionnaire results shows that students experienced increased confidence, motivation, and consistency in listening practice. This means the Cake app effectively supports listening learning by providing easily accessible and engaging listening input. In terms of learning impact, the Cake app can serve as an effective supplementary tool in listening learning. Ease of use and engaging content support self-directed learning, encouraging students to practice listening more consistently, especially at the elementary level of English courses.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that elementary-level English course students positively perceive the Cake application as an effective supporting tool for learning listening skills. The findings indicate that most students experienced increased confidence in understanding spoken English after using the application, as reflected in their agreement that Cake helps them maintain focus, recognize various English accents, and develop listening comprehension through repeated exposure to authentic audio-visual materials. Additionally, the results show that the application enhances students' learning motivation and sustained engagement, encouraging regular listening practice and supporting consistent skill development. All participants also perceived the Cake application as easy to use and accessible, suggesting that its user-friendly design is appropriate for elementary-level learners. However, this study is limited by its small sample size and reliance on self-reported questionnaire data, which may not fully capture actual improvements in listening performance. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, incorporate experimental or mixed-method designs, and include objective measures such as listening tests or classroom observations to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of the Cake application in improving students' listening skills.

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