

STUDENTS' RESPONSES ON ELEVENLABS AI FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates students' responses to the use of ElevenLabs AI for learning English at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School. The integration of modern technology in education has become increasingly crucial, especially in environments where traditional methods may not fully meet the demands of contemporary learning. Islamic boarding schools, like Amanatul Ummah, focus on a dual curriculum that merges religious and academic education. As English has emerged as a vital skill for global communication, there is a pressing need to adopt innovative teaching tools to enhance students' proficiency in the language. The primary aim of this research is to explore how students perceive and respond to the application of AI technology, particularly ElevenLabs AI, in improving their speaking abilities in English. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, which allows for an in-depth understanding of the student's experiences and opinions. Data were collected through a combination of observation and documentation, focusing on students' interactions with the AI tool during their English-speaking lessons. The participants in this research included a diverse group of students from the boarding school, who engaged with ElevenLabs AI in a structured learning environment. During the lessons, students utilized the AI tool to practice speaking, receive instant feedback, and enhance their language skills. The findings reveal that students generally responded positively to the integration of AI in their learning process. Many participants reported that the tool significantly improved their pronunciation, fluency, and overall engagement during lessons. The interactive nature of the AI technology fostered a more dynamic and enjoyable learning atmosphere, allowing students to practice their speaking skills without the fear of judgment often experienced in traditional classroom settings. However, despite the positive outcomes, some challenges were identified. Issues related to accessibility, such as the availability of necessary devices and internet connectivity, were noted as barriers to fully realizing the potential of the technology. Additionally, some students expressed a need for more familiarity with the AI tool, suggesting that initial training or orientation could enhance their experience and effectiveness in using the technology. Overall, this research highlights the promising role of ElevenLabs AI in English language education at

Islamic boarding schools and underscores the importance of addressing the challenges faced by students to optimize their learning experiences.

Keywords: ElevenLabs AI, English speaking, Islamic boarding school

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the education sector has opened doors to transformative learning experiences, making technology a vital tool in enhancing traditional education methods. As the need for global communication skills grows, so does the demand for English proficiency, particularly in environments where English may not be the primary language (Guanhong, 2024; Umi Maisarah & Rahmadi Nirwanto, 2024; Wayan et al., 2024). Islamic boarding schools, like Amanatul Ummah, provide a unique blend of religious and academic education, designed to develop students' moral and intellectual capacities. However, the dual-curriculum focus in these institutions can sometimes mean that modern educational innovations, especially those centered around language acquisition, are not fully integrated. This gap can limit students' exposure to interactive, practical language learning tools that are necessary for developing real-world skills. Within this context, adopting AI tools like ElevenLabs for English-speaking instruction is both timely and essential (Bekou et al., 2024; Ira Irzawati et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2024). ElevenLabs AI offers an innovative platform that not only supports the educational aims of Islamic boarding schools but also aligns with the modern demands of language learning, making this research crucial in understanding its impact on students' English-speaking skills.

In many educational settings, language learning traditionally relies on lecture-based instruction or limited practice within a controlled classroom setting. While these methods serve their purpose, they often lack the immersive and interactive elements that are necessary for mastering a skill like speaking. For students in Islamic boarding schools, where there may be limited opportunities for engaging with English outside the classroom, this presents a particular challenge (Fitria, 2023). Speaking, which is critical for real-world communication, is often one of the more difficult skills for non-native speakers to acquire, as it requires confidence, practice, and feedback. AI technologies, particularly ElevenLabs, can bridge this gap by providing an interactive and responsive platform where students can practice speaking without the immediate pressure of making mistakes in front of peers or instructors. The AI's ability to give real-time feedback on pronunciation and fluency offers a unique opportunity for students to refine their skills in a low-stress environment. This element of instant feedback is a feature that traditional classroom instruction often cannot replicate, making ElevenLabs an invaluable tool in enhancing English-speaking proficiency for students in this context.

Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of students' responses to AI-based learning tools, as their experiences and perceptions can greatly influence the effectiveness of the technology in achieving

educational outcomes. A positive student response to ElevenLabs AI could signify broader acceptance and integration of AI in educational practices within Islamic boarding schools, potentially inspiring further AI applications across other subjects. Given that AI can simulate real-life conversations and provide personalized learning experiences, its impact on students' language skills could be profound, helping them develop the confidence to communicate in English more fluently (Fathi et al., 2024; Q. Li & Chan, 2024; Wan, 2024). On the other hand, understanding any challenges students may face, such as issues with accessibility or familiarity with the AI tool, is equally important. Islamic boarding schools may not have the same access to technological infrastructure as other educational institutions, and addressing these barriers is crucial to ensuring that all students benefit equally. By examining both the advantages and limitations of AI integration, this research aims to provide a holistic view of its role in Islamic boarding school education and contribute to strategies for optimizing its use.

Finally, in a world that increasingly values multilingual proficiency, particularly in English, educational institutions are under pressure to prepare students with the skills needed for global engagement. Islamic boarding schools have a responsibility to equip students with competencies that will allow them to engage confidently in diverse, multicultural settings, whether in higher education or future career paths. With English often serving as the primary language of international communication, equipping students with strong speaking skills becomes imperative (Bakillah et al., 2024; Chartkul et al., 2024; X. Li et al., 2024; Ongoro & Fanjiang, 2024). ElevenLabs AI, by offering accessible, personalized speaking practice, aligns well with this goal and supports students in acquiring a skill that is not only beneficial for academic and professional development but also for intercultural understanding. This research is, therefore, not just about evaluating the effectiveness of an AI tool but about understanding how technology can empower students to bridge linguistic and cultural divides. By providing valuable insights into students' experiences and the practical challenges they face, this research ultimately aims to guide Islamic boarding schools and similar educational institutions in making informed decisions on AI adoption, ensuring that technological integration fosters inclusive, comprehensive, and effective language learning.

The integration of AI in language education has gained significant attention in recent years, with numerous studies highlighting the potential of AI tools in enhancing language acquisition, particularly speaking skills. AI-driven platforms provide learners with instant feedback, creating a personalized and interactive environment that traditional classroom settings often struggle to match. AI technology significantly boosts students' pronunciation and fluency by offering real-time corrections and adjustments (Abimanto & Sumarsono, 2024; "Leveraging AI for Vocabulary Acquisition and Pronunciation Enhancement," 2024). These benefits are especially valuable for non-native speakers who may lack access to native English speakers or opportunities for immersive language practice. In

particular, tools like ElevenLabs AI, which offer sophisticated voice synthesis and interactive feedback, have shown promise in fostering more dynamic and autonomous language learning experiences.

While AI in language education has been widely researched, its application within Islamic boarding schools remains underexplored. Most studies in this area have focused on public or international schools, where English is a prominent part of the curriculum, and resources for AI integration are more readily available. AI has become an invaluable asset for language learning (Nanda Kalyan P et al., 2024; Rukiati et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2024). However, there is limited research on how AI tools like ElevenLabs are perceived by students in Islamic boarding schools, which often operate under unique educational models that emphasize both religious and academic education. This dual focus can make it challenging for boarding schools to adopt cutting-edge educational technologies, leaving a gap in research on the effectiveness of AI in these settings.

The research gap, therefore, lies in understanding how students in Islamic boarding schools respond to AI tools specifically designed for language learning. Although previous studies suggest positive outcomes from AI use in language learning, there is little data on the actual experiences, challenges, and perceived benefits among students in a boarding school environment. Given that these schools may have different technological access and student engagement dynamics, it is essential to investigate whether AI-driven language learning tools like ElevenLabs can effectively support their unique educational context. Understanding this can help in developing targeted strategies that address the specific needs of Islamic boarding school students, who may require additional support to maximize AI's benefits. Based on this research gap, the following research questions guide this research:

1. How do students at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School perceive the use of ElevenLabs AI in enhancing their English-speaking skills?
2. What challenges do students face when using ElevenLabs AI, and how do these challenges impact their language learning experience?

These questions are designed to explore both the positive aspects and the potential obstacles in using AI for language learning in a boarding school environment. By addressing these questions, this research aims to provide insights that can inform future applications of AI in similar educational settings, contributing to a more inclusive and effective use of technology in language education.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative research method, which is appropriate for exploring students' perceptions and experiences with ElevenLabs AI in their English-speaking learning. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' viewpoints, behaviors, and interactions within a specific context, making it ideal for capturing the nuanced responses of students in a boarding school environment (Colorafi

& Evans, 2016; Lambert & Lambert, 2013; Seixas et al., 2018). By using a descriptive approach, the research focuses on identifying and describing patterns in students' perceptions, rather than testing hypotheses or establishing causality. This method aligns well with the research's aim of understanding how students experience AI in language learning, particularly in an environment where traditional methods are predominant.

The research design follows a case research approach, focusing specifically on Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School. A case research is suitable as it allows for a thorough examination of a specific context, which, in this instance, is the unique educational setting of an Islamic boarding school with a dual curriculum structure (Crowe et al., 2011; Kächele, 2019; Symonds & Symonds, 2016; Talebloo & Basri, 2015). This approach enables a detailed analysis of students' responses within the boarding school's distinctive social and educational environment. By concentrating on a single case, the research can explore the specific challenges and benefits students encounter, contributing to a deeper understanding of AI's applicability in similar educational institutions.

The participants in this research include a purposive sample of students from Amanatul Ummah who have used ElevenLabs AI as part of their English-speaking lessons. A purposive sampling method is chosen to ensure that participants have direct experience with the AI tool, as this is essential for gathering meaningful and relevant insights (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan, 2016). The selected participants represent a diverse group in terms of their English proficiency levels, allowing the research to capture a wide range of perspectives on using AI for language learning. This diversity is crucial in exploring the tool's effectiveness and challenges across different skill levels, thereby providing comprehensive insights into its impact.

Instruments used in this research include observation and documentation, chosen for their effectiveness in capturing real-time and authentic responses (Amiraslani & Dragovich, 2022; Ekka, 2021; Mirhosseini, 2020; Shabazian, 2016). Observation allows the researcher to directly witness how students engage with the AI tool during lessons, noting aspects such as levels of enthusiasm, interaction patterns, and any visible signs of ease or difficulty. Documentation, such as students' recorded audio or notes from the lessons, offers a secondary source of data that complements observational findings and enables cross-referencing of responses. These instruments are well-suited for qualitative research, as they allow for a holistic view of participants' experiences in a natural setting, contributing to an authentic understanding of their engagement with ElevenLabs AI.

For the data collection technique, this research utilizes non-participant observation and collection of students' practice recordings generated through the AI tool. Non-participant observation was chosen to reduce potential bias and allow students to interact with the AI naturally, as they would in a typical lesson. Additionally, audio recordings of students' speaking practice are collected to examine their pronunciation, fluency, and improvements over time, as well as any recurrent challenges. This method

is beneficial for obtaining detailed data on student progress and identifying any areas where AI support might be optimized.

In terms of data analysis, a thematic analysis approach is applied to identify patterns and themes in students' responses. This method involves coding and categorizing data to identify recurring ideas, perceptions, and challenges reported by participants. Thematic analysis is appropriate for qualitative studies because it provides a structured yet flexible way to analyze complex data (Salimi & Rad, 2024; Signori et al., 2024; Tajik et al., 2024). Through coding and categorizing, the research can uncover both common and unique themes in students' experiences, making it easier to compare different perspectives and identify potential improvements. This approach is selected to ensure that all relevant themes are captured and analyzed, providing a rich, detailed understanding of the students' perceptions and experiences with ElevenLabs AI in their English-speaking lessons.

By utilizing these methods and tools, this research aims to present an authentic and comprehensive account of students' responses to AI in language learning, addressing the unique dynamics of an Islamic boarding school environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this research reveal a range of student responses to the use of ElevenLabs AI for English-speaking practice, highlighting both positive experiences and some challenges encountered. Through interviews and observations, three main themes emerged: improvements in speaking skills, heightened engagement and motivation, and challenges with accessibility and familiarity with AI technology. These themes provide a detailed view of the role ElevenLabs AI plays in supporting English language learning within the unique context of an Islamic boarding school.

Improvement in Speaking Skills

The majority of students reported significant improvement in their English-speaking abilities, specifically in areas of pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary usage. Many students expressed that the AI's real-time feedback allowed them to identify and correct pronunciation errors that they may not have noticed otherwise. For instance, one participant, Rizky, shared, *"The AI helped me pronounce words better. Before, I didn't know I was saying some words incorrectly, but now I can hear the difference and correct myself"*. This response suggests that ElevenLabs AI was instrumental in enhancing self-awareness and accuracy in speaking.

Additionally, students found the AI's ability to model native pronunciation particularly beneficial. Another student, Nadia, commented, *"I like listening to the AI pronounce the words. It sounds natural, like a real native speaker, so I feel more confident repeating after it"*. For students in a boarding school environment with limited access to native English speakers, this feature proved to be an invaluable asset. The availability of

high-quality pronunciation feedback through AI was noted to bridge this gap, allowing students to improve without requiring external resources.

Moreover, students noted an improvement in their speaking fluency, as the AI sessions provided them with frequent practice opportunities without feeling rushed or pressured. One participant, Farhan, stated, *“With the AI, I can practice at my own pace and go over words as many times as I need. It feels like I’m learning without any pressure”*. This flexibility in pacing is critical, especially for students in environments where public speaking or practicing aloud might induce anxiety. Overall, these improvements highlight the potential of AI tools to provide tailored language practice that meets individual student needs.

Heightened Engagement and Motivation

Another key finding was that ElevenLabs AI increased students' engagement and motivation in English-speaking lessons. Observations during the research showed that students were notably more active and enthusiastic when working with the AI tool compared to traditional speaking exercises. The interactive nature of the AI, which offers instant feedback and a conversational learning environment, was found to make lessons more dynamic and enjoyable. As Lina explained, *“Using the AI feels like talking to a friend. I don’t feel as nervous as when I have to speak in front of the whole class”*. This response suggests that AI tools can provide a non-judgmental space for students, allowing them to practice with confidence and independence.

Students also found the AI’s ability to repeat lessons or words upon request beneficial, as it gave them control over their learning process. Yusuf, another participant, mentioned, *“When I don’t understand something or make a mistake, I can ask the AI to repeat it. It’s different from a real teacher who might move on too quickly for me”*. This degree of flexibility and control is rare in traditional classrooms, where teachers may have time constraints and cannot always focus on individual students. The AI tool thus facilitated a sense of autonomy among students, making them more proactive in their learning.

The novelty of using AI technology itself also appeared to motivate students. Many participants reported feeling excited and curious about using a new technology tool, which made learning feel *“less like researching and more like playing a game”*. This perception contributed to an increased willingness to engage in English practice sessions, further emphasizing the value of technology-enhanced learning in motivating students who might otherwise feel detached from traditional classroom practices.

Challenges with Accessibility and Familiarity

Despite the positive responses, students also reported certain challenges, particularly regarding accessibility and initial unfamiliarity with AI. Accessibility issues, such as limited availability of devices and inconsistent internet connectivity, posed barriers to fully utilizing the AI tool. Aisyah, one of the participants, highlighted this problem by saying,

“Sometimes the internet is slow, and it makes the AI lag, so I can’t use it properly”. For a boarding school setting where resources are often shared among multiple students, such issues can limit the tool’s effectiveness. These technical difficulties hindered some students from engaging with the AI as frequently as they would have liked, suggesting a need for improved infrastructure to maximize the tool’s benefits.

Another challenge was that several students required time to become accustomed to the AI interface and functionalities. A few participants reported feeling lost or overwhelmed when first introduced to the tool, as they were unfamiliar with its capabilities. Dani, for example, noted, *“At first, I didn’t know how to use it well, and I was worried about making mistakes. It took me a few lessons to feel comfortable”*. This feedback underscores the importance of providing sufficient training or orientation sessions when introducing new technology in educational settings. Familiarizing students with the AI’s functions and features could enhance their comfort and effectiveness in using the tool.

Furthermore, a few students expressed a need for more guidance on how to integrate the AI’s feedback into their learning. Siti mentioned, *“The AI tells me if I make a mistake, but sometimes I don’t know how to fix it by myself”*. This indicates that while AI can offer valuable corrections, students may require additional instructional support to fully benefit from the feedback. Integrating structured guidance alongside the AI tool could help students better understand and apply the corrections in future practice, thereby maximizing the educational impact.

Discussion

This research offers a unique contribution to both theoretical understanding and practical application of AI in language learning, specifically within the context of an Islamic boarding school. By focusing on ElevenLabs AI as a tool for English-speaking practice, this research provides fresh insights into how AI can enhance language proficiency in environments that traditionally rely on more conventional educational methods (Gill et al., 2024; Jain & Raghuram, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024; Okulich-Kazarin et al., 2024; Ou et al., 2024). Unlike many studies that focus on urban or secular educational contexts, this research highlights how AI can be adapted and beneficial in religious educational settings, where English instruction is not typically emphasized to the same extent. This novelty is significant because it demonstrates the adaptability of AI tools to diverse learning environments, suggesting that even schools with dual religious and academic curriculums can benefit from modern technological integration without compromising their unique educational values.

The significance of this research lies in its ability to illustrate the tangible benefits and challenges of AI in an Islamic boarding school setting, particularly in the area of English-speaking skill development. While prior research has documented the effectiveness of AI in enhancing language learning generally, there is limited literature on its impact within

institutions where students may have less exposure to English or limited access to native speakers (Nanda Kalyan P et al., 2024; Rukiati et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2024). This research not only fills that gap but also provides practical evidence of how AI can foster self-confidence and engagement in language practice. Students at Amanatul Ummah reported increased pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and motivation due to the interactive and non-judgmental nature of the AI tool. These findings reinforce theories around the value of immediate feedback and autonomous learning in language acquisition, suggesting that AI can play a critical role in empowering students to take ownership of their learning.

The practical contributions of this research extend beyond the immediate school setting, offering valuable implications for educators and policymakers interested in integrating AI into language curriculums across diverse educational contexts (Kemelbekova et al., 2024; Pierres et al., 2024). By addressing the technical and accessibility challenges that students encountered, this research highlights the importance of infrastructure support and training when implementing new technologies. Furthermore, the research underscores the potential for AI tools to reduce language learning disparities by providing high-quality, consistent feedback that is often unavailable in resource-limited or rural schools. As a result, this research advocates for a more inclusive approach to AI adoption in education, encouraging schools to consider AI as a complement to traditional teaching methods. Through this blend of theoretical and practical contributions, this research contributes to a growing body of evidence supporting AI's role in enhancing educational access and quality across various learning environments.

CONCLUSION

This research has explored students' responses to the implementation of ElevenLabs AI for English-speaking practice at Amanatul Ummah Islamic Boarding School, revealing valuable insights into the role and potential of AI in language learning within a dual-curriculum educational context. The research demonstrates that integrating AI into English language instruction can offer significant benefits, particularly in enhancing pronunciation, fluency, and student engagement. By providing students with an interactive, non-judgmental platform for practicing their speaking skills, ElevenLabs AI fostered increased confidence and autonomy, allowing students to correct their mistakes in real time and practice at their own pace. These findings underline the capacity of AI technology to support language learning in environments with limited exposure to native English speakers and highlight its adaptability to a variety of educational settings, including religious-based schools.

Despite the promising results, the research also identified certain challenges related to accessibility, such as limited internet connectivity and device availability, and a need for initial orientation to help students maximize the AI tool's benefits. Addressing these issues can further enhance the effectiveness of AI integration in similar educational contexts.

Overall, this research contributes both theoretically and practically by showing how AI can complement traditional teaching in boarding school settings, thus enriching the broader field of language education research. The findings emphasize the importance of supporting students and educators with the necessary resources and training to fully harness AI's potential in educational contexts. As AI continues to evolve, future research should explore its applications across a wider range of language skills and school environments to broaden our understanding of its impact on learning outcomes.

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