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Effectiveness of Google Read-Along Application in Improving Reading Skills of Rural Area Upper Primary ESL Classroom

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Abstract

The integration of technology into the classroom has been a significant trend in education, with a particular focus on enhancing language learning. This research explores the effectiveness of read-along applications in an upper primary ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom. Read-along applications are digital tools that provide an interactive way for students to engage with texts, supporting their reading skills by reading aloud and offering visual and auditory cues. This study aims to investigate how these applications influence ESL learners' reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall engagement. The increasing integration of digital tools in education presents new opportunities to enhance literacy among ESL learners, particularly in rural areas where access to educational resources is limited. Traditional reading instruction often fails to address individual learning needs, making it crucial to explore alternative methods that foster student engagement and improve reading proficiency. The Google Read-Along application, with its interactive features and real-time feedback, offers a promising solution. This study is motivated by the need to assess its effectiveness in bridging literacy gaps and supporting ESL students in developing essential reading skills. Data were collected through pre- and post-test assessments, classroom observations, and surveys of both students and teachers. Results indicate that read-along applications have a positive effect on student motivation, reading fluency, and vocabulary retention, with challenges primarily related to device accessibility and the appropriateness of app content. This research provides insights into the potential of read-along applications to enhance ESL instruction and offers practical recommendations for educators seeking to integrate these tools into their teaching practices. This research contributes to the field of ESL education by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of read-along applications in improving reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and student engagement. By employing a mixed-methods approach, the study offers a comprehensive analysis of how digital tools can be integrated into ESL instruction, particularly in rural primary schools. The findings will assist educators in making informed decisions about incorporating technology into language learning and offer practical recommendations for optimizing the use of read-along applications in classroom settings. Moreover, this study highlights the potential of

digital literacy tools to enhance educational equity by providing students in under-resourced areas with access to interactive and engaging learning experiences.

Keywords: Read-Along Applications, ESL Learners, Digital Tools, Application Effectiveness, Reading Skills

Introduction

Background of the Study

In recent years, technology has transformed educational practices across the globe. The use of digital tools in ESL classrooms, particularly for reading instruction, has gained traction due to their interactive and engaging nature. Google Read-along applications, which allow students to follow along with audio narration while reading a text, have become an increasingly popular tool in enhancing literacy skills for young learners. These applications offer various features such as vocabulary highlights, audio narration, and comprehension questions, which can provide immediate feedback to students.

For upper primary ESL learners, the development of reading skills is essential not only for language proficiency but also for academic success. Reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition are fundamental components of language learning, and Google read-along applications are seen as a promising solution to address these needs. Given that many ESL learners face challenges with reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, the role of these applications is worth exploring.

Research Problem

Students in rural upper primary classrooms often face challenges in developing reading skills in English as a Second Language (ESL) due to limited access to effective learning resources, teacher support, and engaging educational tools. Traditional methods of teaching reading skills, such as textbooks and worksheets, may not adequately address individual learning needs or motivate students to actively participate.

With the increasing accessibility of technology in rural areas, digital tools like the Google Read-Along Application offer potential as an interactive and personalized solution to improve reading proficiency. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of such applications in enhancing the reading skills of rural ESL students. This raises the need to investigate whether the Google Read-Along Application can bridge learning gaps and provide a practical and impactful approach to improving reading skills in this context.

Purpose and Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Google Read-Along Application in improving the reading skills of upper primary ESL students in rural areas. The research seeks to determine whether the app can address the unique challenges faced by these students, foster greater engagement, and enhance their reading proficiency more effectively than traditional teaching methods. By doing so, the study aims to provide evidence based insights to educators and policymakers on the potential of digital tools to improve literacy outcomes in under-resourced settings.

Mixed-methods approach is employed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the Google Read-Along Application by integrating both quantitative and

qualitative data. Through quantitative analysis, the study measures improvements in students' reading proficiency using pre- and post-intervention assessments, comparing the outcomes of students using the app to those following traditional teaching methods. In addition, qualitative insights are gathered by exploring the perceptions, experiences, and engagement levels of students, teachers, and parents through interviews and focus group discussions. This qualitative component seeks to uncover how the app influences motivation, learning behaviors, and overall user satisfaction. By integrating these findings, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the app's impact, addressing not only measurable improvements in reading skills but also contextual and experiential factors that contribute to its effectiveness. This mixed-methods approach ensures that the research captures both objective outcomes and the lived experiences of users, offering a well-rounded evaluation of the app's potential in enhancing ESL reading skills in rural upper primary classrooms.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How do Google Read-along application affect ESL students' reading skills in an upper primary classroom?
2. To what extent do Google Read-along application enhance vocabulary and comprehension acquisition in ESL learners?
3. How do students perceive the use of Google Read-along application in their reading development?
4. What are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of Google Read-along application in the ESL classroom?

Significance of the Study

This research is significant because it provides insights into the practical application of read-along technologies in ESL education. By examining the impact of these applications on student outcomes, this study can inform educators about the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating such tools into their instructional practices. Additionally, the findings may contribute to a broader understanding of the role of technology in language learning.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study on the effectiveness of the Google Read-Along Application in improving reading skills of rural upper primary ESL classrooms draws upon three key theories:

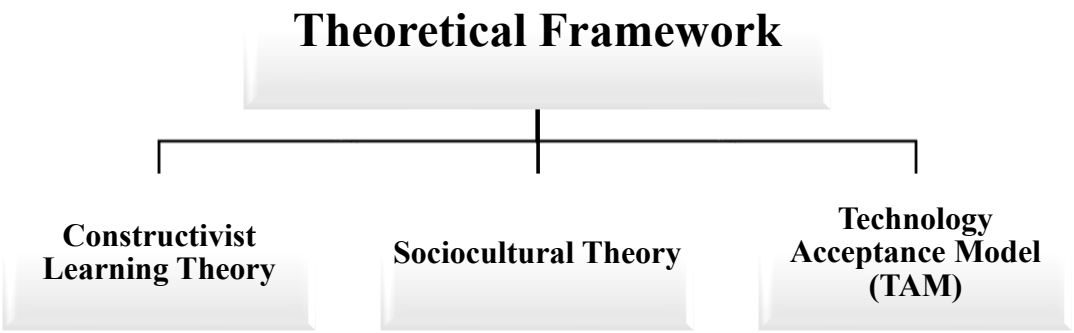

Figure 1.0 Overview of Theoretical Framework

Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, Vygotsky)

Constructivist learning theory emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and meaningful experiences. The Google Read-Along Application aligns with this theory by providing interactive reading exercises, immediate feedback, and adaptive learning pathways that enable students to build their language skills incrementally. By engaging with the app, learners can scaffold their reading skills, moving from simple word recognition to more complex comprehension tasks, which aligns with the constructivist emphasis on active, hands-on learning.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky)

Sociocultural theory highlights the importance of social interaction and cultural context in learning, particularly through mediated tools and scaffolding provided by a more knowledgeable "other." The app serves as a digital scaffold, guiding learners through reading tasks with personalized feedback and encouragement. In the rural ESL context, where teacher support may be limited, the app acts as an accessible and culturally adaptable tool that supports students in their zone of proximal development (ZPD). Additionally, by involving teachers and parents in qualitative evaluations, the study incorporates the sociocultural dimension of learning, recognizing the role of the broader community in language acquisition.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model provides a framework for understanding the factors that influence users' acceptance and effective use of educational technologies. According to TAM, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly affect technology adoption. The study evaluates how rural students, teachers, and parents perceive the Google Read-Along Application in terms of its usability and its effectiveness in improving reading skills. This framework helps to analyze how these perceptions influence engagement, motivation, and ultimately the app's impact on learning outcomes.

By integrating these theories, the theoretical framework provides a comprehensive lens to explore the Google Read-Along Application's effectiveness. The constructivist perspective explains how students interact with the app to construct reading skills, the sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of the app as a mediator in a rural ESL learning context, and the Technology Acceptance Model examines the role of user perceptions in determining the app's impact. Together, these frameworks guide the study's design, data collection, and analysis, ensuring a holistic understanding of the app's role in improving reading skills in rural classrooms.

Review of Related Studies

The use of read-along application has been extensively studied in the context of ESL classrooms, with research from 2020 to 2024 indicating mixed but generally positive results. Below is a summary of key studies and findings.

The Role of Technology in ESL Education

Educational technology, including read-along applications, plays a pivotal role in supporting ESL learners by providing interactive and engaging resources. Research has shown that digital tools can enhance language acquisition by offering personalized learning experiences, immediate feedback, and diverse input sources (Grabe & Stoller, 2021). For young learners,

these tools help bridge the gap between spoken and written language, providing opportunities for practicing listening and reading skills simultaneously.

Impact on Reading Comprehension

Several studies have focused on the effectiveness of read-along applications in improving reading comprehension in ESL students. Tan and Tan (2021) conducted a study with upper primary ESL students in Malaysia, showing that the use of apps such as Raz-Kids and Epic led to significant improvements in reading comprehension. The apps offered interactive features that allowed students to engage with texts at their own pace, helping them internalize the material more effectively. Similarly, Yen and Chang (2022) found that read-along applications positively impacted ESL students' comprehension scores in a Taiwanese classroom, as the combination of audio narration and visual cues supported their understanding of the texts.

Shao and Liu (2022) further emphasized that read-along applications help students process complex information by providing auditory reinforcement for difficult words and phrases, allowing students to focus on meaning rather than struggling with pronunciation. This multi-modal approach was particularly beneficial for upper primary students who may have lower reading proficiency in English.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary development is another area where read-along applications have shown promise. Wang et al. (2020) examined the effectiveness of the Raz-Kids platform in improving vocabulary acquisition among ESL learners in China. The study found that students who used the read-along application demonstrated better vocabulary retention and recall compared to students who engaged with traditional paper-based resources. The interactive nature of the app, with its real-time pronunciation guides and contextual vocabulary exercises, contributed to students' ability to understand and remember new words.

A similar study by Liu and Chen (2023) examined vocabulary learning using read-along apps in an ESL context. They found that ESL learners exposed to read-along applications demonstrated a higher rate of vocabulary retention, especially in terms of understanding words in context. The ability to hear new words in sentences and see them highlighted within the text allowed students to reinforce their learning in a meaningful way.

Student Engagement and Motivation

Student engagement is a key factor in the success of any educational tool. Zhou et al. (2024) conducted research on the impact of gamified read-along apps on ESL students' motivation in a Chinese school. Their findings indicated that read-along applications with built-in rewards, quizzes, and progress tracking systems significantly increased student engagement. Students who were typically disengaged in traditional reading sessions were more likely to participate when using these interactive digital tools.

Saito and Okamoto (2021) also highlighted that the personalized pacing and interactive features of read-along apps, such as the ability to replay difficult sections of text, motivated students to take ownership of their learning. ESL students who might have felt frustrated with traditional reading tasks were more likely to persist when using these apps, as they could control the pace and receive immediate feedback on their progress.

Challenges and Limitations

While the benefits of read-along applications are clear, there are several challenges associated with their implementation in ESL classrooms. One significant issue is technology access. Research by Chen and Lee (2023) found that the success of read-along applications is often contingent on students having access to devices and stable internet connections. In schools with limited resources, students may not be able to consistently use these tools, which can hinder the overall effectiveness of the intervention.

Another challenge is the appropriateness of content. Koh and Lee (2021) noted that not all read-along applications offer content that is suitable for the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of ESL learners. Teachers must carefully select apps that are both appropriate for the learners' language level and culturally relevant to their experiences. Additionally, teacher training is essential for the effective use of these applications. Teachers need to understand how to integrate read-along apps into their lesson plans and provide the necessary support to students who may struggle with the technology.

Methodology

Research Design and Data Collection

This research is an explanatory design mixed-method research begins with the quantitative phase, where a pretest is administered to assess students' initial reading skills before the intervention using the Google Read-along application. After implementing the app as the intervention, a posttest is conducted to measure any improvements in their reading skills. Alongside, a survey is shared to gather quantitative data on students' perceptions of the app, such as its ease of use, engagement level, and effectiveness. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews are conducted with 2 English Language teachers and a English Head panel to gain deeper insights into the results. These interviews explore participants' experiences, challenges, and opinions about the app and its impact on learning. Finally, the integration phase combines the quantitative results which are the score improvements and survey responses with the qualitative insights from interviews to explain why the intervention was effective or not. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the app's impact on students' reading skills..

Sampling

Students from three rural schools made up the population of this research. In this research, the researcher chooses 3 rural school upper primary students as the sample. The totals of students in these school's upper primary classes are 60. 30 students of experimental group uses Read-Along Application and another 30 students of control group, aged 10 to 12 use traditional way of reading to improve their reading skills respectively whereas two English teachers and a Head Panel of English Language who is also a English teacher applying Read-Along Application in their ESL classrooms has included in this research to conduct a semi structure interview. The researcher uses the random sampling method to divide those 60 students into two groups which are control group and treatment group. Both groups were given a pretest, then the experimental group were given a treatment and finally both groups were given a posttest.

Instrument

The research combined quantitative measures where the pre- and post-test assessments on reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition with qualitative data which will be from 6 students where the researcher chooses 2 students from each school to share the Google Form surveys. The survey used in this study is adapted from Tan, S., & Tan, M., originally developed to assess improving of reading comprehension in ESL classrooms with digital read-along tools. Since this study targets upper primary ESL learners in rural settings, several modifications were made to ensure the tool accurately captures the relevant aspects of reading skill development and digital tool usage in this unique context and this survey has checked by a Masters Degree in TESL holder, a lecturer from one of the Institut Kemahiran Belia Negara (IKBN). 3 English teachers will be interviewed to understand more about the view and understanding of teachers in using this Google-Read along appliication.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this explanatory mixed-methods research involves both quantitative and qualitative methods, followed by integration to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the Google Read-Along Application's effectiveness in improving reading skills among rural ESL students. Quantitative analysis begins with pretest and posttest scores from the experimental (app users) and control (traditional methods) groups. Mod, mean, median and the mean percentages are analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics application to compare performance between groups and to evaluate the app's impact. Additionally, survey responses from six students in the experimental group are analyzed using descriptive statistics to examine perceptions of the app's usability, engagement, and effectiveness. For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews with two English teachers and an English Head Panel are transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis to identify patterns such as the app's perceived benefits, challenges, and impact on motivation and curriculum alignment. The integration phase combines quantitative results, such as score improvements and survey data, with qualitative insights from interviews to provide a holistic understanding of why and how the intervention was effective or faced limitations. This combined analysis captures both measurable outcomes and the contextual and experiential factors influencing the app's implementation and effectiveness.

Findings

Pre Test and Post Test Results of Experimental Group in Mode, Mean and Median

Based on the pretest and posttest results, the researcher could perform a detailed analysis of the key statistical measures: mode, mean, and median. Below is a breakdown of how these statistics reflect changes in reading skills due to the use of Google Read-Along :

Table 1.0
Pretest and Posttest Results of Experimental Group

	PRE	POST
N	30	30
MEAN	6.63	8.90
MEDIAN	6.00	9.00
MODE	6	8

The mode is the most frequent score in the dataset. For the **pretest**, the most common score was 6, while for the **posttest**, the most frequent score increased to 8. This suggests that, after using the Google Read-Along application, more students achieved a score of 8 than before. This could indicate a general improvement in students' reading skills, where a higher score became more typical among the group. The increase in the mode supports the idea that the Google Read-Along app may have helped more students reach a higher level of reading proficiency, making 8 the most common score after the intervention.

The mean is the average score of the participants. The increase in the mean score from 6.63 in the pretest to 8.90 in the posttest represents a notable improvement of **2.27 points**. This suggests that, on average, students showed significant improvement in their reading skills after using the Google Read-Along application. The positive change in the mean indicates a general overall improvement in reading skills. Since the mean is influenced by all data points, this increase reflects the overall effectiveness of the app in raising students' reading proficiency.

The median is the middle value when the data points are arranged in ascending order. The median of the pretest was 6.00, meaning that half of the students scored below 6, and half scored above 6. After the intervention, the posttest median increased to 9.00, suggesting that the middle value shifted higher after the students used the Google Read-Along app. The increase in the median indicates that, in terms of central tendency, more students scored higher in the posttest, with the typical student (the one in the middle) now performing at a higher level. This further suggests that the intervention was effective in improving students' reading skills, as a higher middle score shows general progress.

Based on the mode, mean, and median calculation:

- Mode Increase: More students achieved higher reading scores (8 became the most common score).
- Mean Increase: On average, students scored higher after using Google Read-Along (mean increased by 2.27 points).
- Median Increase: The typical student's score improved, indicating that the majority of students experienced a shift to higher performance.

The changes in these statistical measures demonstrate that the Google Read-Along application had a positive effect on the reading skills of the students. All three measures mode, mean, and median show an increase, indicating a consistent improvement across the group. This suggests that the app helped raise the reading proficiency levels of students in the rural upper primary ESL classroom.

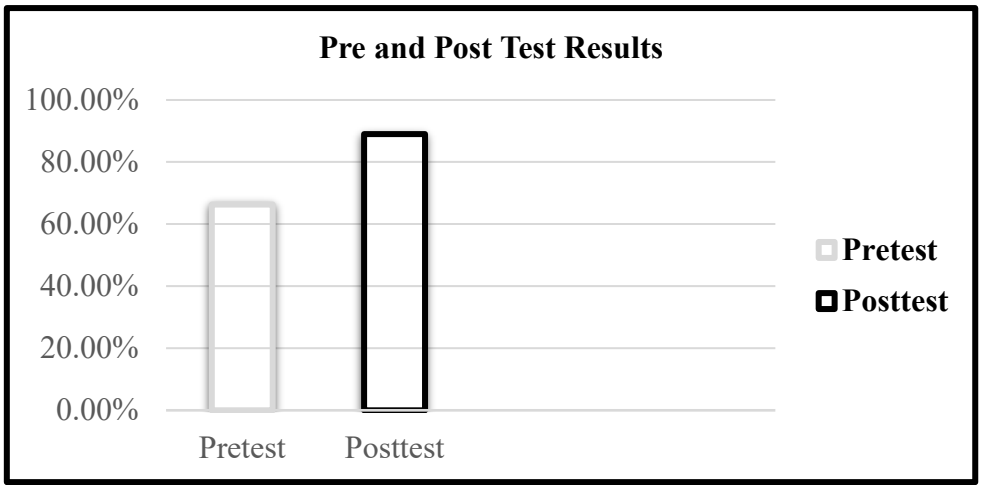

Figure 1.0 Pretest and Posttest Results of Experimental Group

This is the bar charts displaying the results of the pretest and posttes.: The bar chart shows that 66.3% of the students scored in the range that represents their pretest performance, while 33.7% scored outside of that range. The posttest chart indicates a significant improvement, with 89% of students scoring better after using the Google Read-Along app, compared to 11% scoring outside of this improved range.

The comparison of the pretest and posttest percentages reveals a significant improvement in students' reading skills after using the Google Read-Along application. The pretest percentage was 66.3%, while the posttest percentage increased to 89%, demonstrating a 22.7% improvement. This substantial gain indicates that the Google Read-Along app played an effective role in enhancing the reading skills of upper-primary ESL students in a rural classroom setting. The app's features, such as audio support, visual cues, and interactive quizzes, likely contributed to increased student engagement and confidence. By allowing students to practice at their own pace in a comfortable, low-pressure environment, the app helped bridge gaps in reading comprehension and fluency. The increase in the posttest mean suggests that the app effectively supported students' development, making it a valuable tool in improving reading skills in rural ESL classrooms.

Pretest and Posttest of Control Group in Mode, Mean and Median

The table compares the reading skills of participants before (PRE) and after (POST) using the traditional method of reading which is reading using books. Here's an analysis of the data:

Table 2.0
Pretest and Posttest Results of Control Group

	PRE	POST
N	30	30
MEAN	6.97	8.73
MEDIAN	7.50	8.00
MODE	6	8

The analysis of the data reveals notable improvements in reading skills after using Traditional Reading Method. The mean reading skill score increased from 6.97 (PRE) to 8.73 (POST), showing a positive improvement of 1.76 points in the participants' average performance. Similarly, the median score rose from 7.50 to 8.00, indicating a 0.5-point upward shift in the

central tendency, which reflects better reading proficiency across the group. Additionally, the mode, which was 3 before the intervention with multiple modes existing, increased to 8, demonstrating that higher reading comprehension scores were more frequently achieved after using the application. These results collectively highlight the application's effectiveness in enhancing reading skills.

To analyze and compare the effectiveness of the Google Read-Along application versus the traditional method of reading, we can evaluate the differences in pretest and posttest data for each method based on the measures of central tendency mean, median, and mode. The analysis of the data for the Google Read-Along application highlights significant improvements in reading skills among participants. The mean reading score increased from 6.63 in the pretest to 8.90 in the posttest, demonstrating a substantial improvement of 2.27 points, which reflects a notable enhancement in the overall performance of the group. The median, which represents the central score in the dataset, rose from 6.00 to 9.00, indicating a remarkable shift of 3.00 points toward higher reading proficiency for most participants. Similarly, the mode, which represents the most frequently occurring score, increased from 6 to 8, showing that higher reading scores became more common after the intervention. These results suggest that the Google Read-Along application had a significant and positive impact on improving reading skills, outperforming traditional methods in boosting participants' overall and central reading performance. The Google Read-Along application shows a significant improvement across all measures, with the mean increasing by 2.27 points, the median rising by 3 points, and the mode increasing by 2 points. This indicates that the application substantially enhanced reading skills for most participants.

The analysis of the traditional method of reading shows moderate improvements in participants' reading skills between the pretest and posttest. The mean reading score increased from **6.97** to **8.73**, reflecting an improvement of **1.76 points**, which indicates a general enhancement in the overall performance of the group. The median score, which represents the midpoint of the data, increased from **7.50** to **8.00**, showing a smaller but noticeable improvement of **0.5 points**, suggesting a slight upward shift in the central tendency of the scores. Additionally, the mode, which was initially **3** (with multiple modes existing, the smallest shown), increased to **8**, demonstrating that higher reading scores became more common after the intervention. While these changes indicate the effectiveness of the traditional reading method in improving reading skills, the overall impact is comparatively moderate and less pronounced than alternative methods like the Google Read-Along application. The traditional method also led to improvements in reading scores, with the mean increasing by 1.76 points, the median rising by 0.5 points, and the mode increasing by 5 points. However, the magnitude of improvement is smaller compared to the Read-Along application, especially in terms of mean and median.

The comparison between the Google Read-Along application and the traditional method of reading reveals that the Read-Along application had a more substantial impact on improving reading skills. The mean score improvement for the Read-Along application was 2.27 points, significantly higher than the 1.76 points observed for the traditional method, indicating a greater overall enhancement in reading performance. Similarly, the median score increased by 3.00 points for the Read-Along application, compared to only 0.5 points for the traditional method, demonstrating a more substantial shift in the central tendency and showing that the

intervention had a more pronounced effect on the typical participant's reading skill level. Although the traditional method showed a larger increase in mode (5 points) compared to the Read-Along application's mode improvement (2 points), the Read-Along application consistently elevated scores to higher levels, as reflected in its higher mean and median. These results suggest that the Google Read-Along application is more effective than the traditional method in fostering overall and central improvements in reading skills.

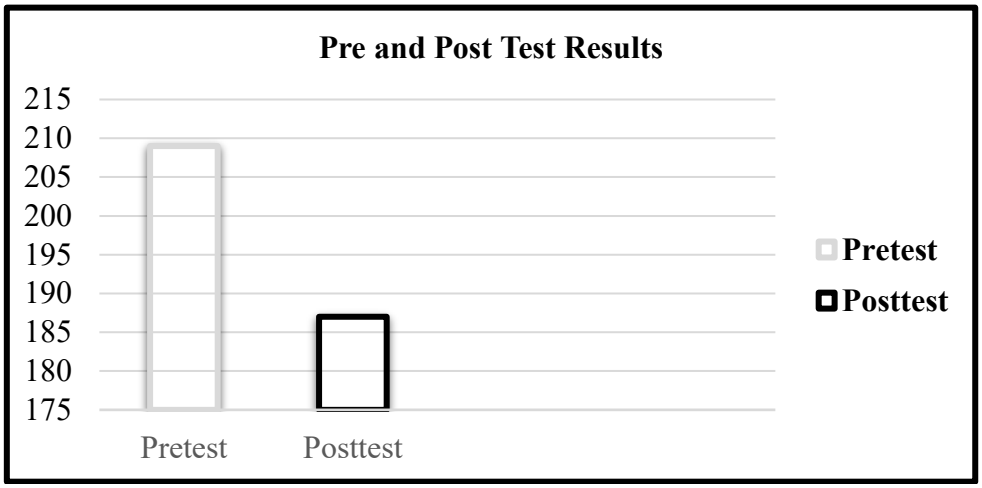

Figure 2.0 The Total Score of Pretest and Posttest of Control Group

The analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores of 30 participants reveals a total pre-test score of 209 and a post-test score of 187, resulting in a percentage change of -10.53%. This negative change indicates a decline in performance after the application of the traditional reading method. Such a decrease suggests that this method may not have been effective in enhancing the participants' reading or comprehension skills. The results could point to potential shortcomings in the approach, such as insufficient engagement, lack of adaptability to individual learning needs, or ineffective reinforcement of concepts. Further investigation might be needed to identify specific factors contributing to the decline and to explore alternative teaching methods that could better address the participants' learning requirements.

The data strongly support the conclusion that the Google Read-Along application is more impactful in improving reading skills than the traditional method. The larger improvements in mean and median for the Read-Along group demonstrate its ability to elevate overall and central performance levels more effectively. Furthermore, the posttest scores for the Read-Along application consistently trend higher, highlighting its superior effectiveness in enhancing reading skills.

Perceptions of English Head Panel and Teachers on the Effectiveness of Google Read-Along application in the ESL Classroom

Teacher A, with eight years of experience teaching upper primary ESL students, provides insightful feedback on the Google Read-Along application's effectiveness in a rural classroom setting. She highlights the app's significant impact on improving reading fluency, especially for beginners, through its combination of audio and visual support, which aids comprehension and pronunciation. "The app helps them hear the correct pronunciation and follow along with the text, which builds confidence," she noted. She shared that the decision to incorporate Google Read-Along into her classroom was driven by the challenge of students struggling with

reading comprehension, particularly with new vocabulary and fluency. “I decided to try Google Read-Along to give them extra support and flexibility to practice at their own pace,” she explained. The app’s individualized learning, immediate feedback, and engaging features were identified as key benefits, fostering increased student confidence, particularly for shy learners at their own pace. However, Teacher A acknowledges challenges such as access to devices and varying content difficulty levels. She recommends further improvements, including voice recognition and personalized learning pathways, and emphasizes the need for educator training to fully utilize the app’s potential. She also suggests involving parents to support the app’s use at home. Overall, the interview underscores the positive effects of the app on student motivation, engagement, and reading skills, while highlighting areas for future enhancement and research.

The interview provides valuable insights into how Google Read-Along is being used in an ESL classroom, particularly in a rural setting. Teacher B, an experienced ESL teacher, shares his observations and reflections on the app’s impact on student engagement, reading skills, and challenges faced, especially in a rural area with limited resources. The interview covers multiple dimensions of using technology in education, such as student engagement, skill development, barriers to implementation, and potential improvements. Teacher B has been teaching ESL for seven years and works with upper primary students aged 9-12. The school is in a rural area, and resources are limited, which makes the access to traditional reading materials scarce. His students are diverse in terms of language proficiency, which presents challenges in effectively addressing their varying needs. The teacher discovered Google Read-Along through a professional development session and chose to integrate it because of its accessibility, free nature, and suitability for students in rural areas with limited internet access. Teacher B uses Google Read-Along during reading sessions, where students pick a book, read aloud, and receive real-time feedback on pronunciation and fluency. Afterward, students summarize what they’ve read to reinforce comprehension. This approach encourages independent practice, providing immediate feedback and building confidence in reading aloud.

The app has led to noticeable improvements in student enthusiasm towards reading. Prior to its use, many students were reluctant to read aloud, often avoiding it or reading quietly.“The app provides both auditory and visual support, which is very helpful for my students,” she remarked. Like Teacher A, Teacher B observed improvements in both fluency and comprehension, especially for students who were reluctant to read aloud.The interactive nature of the app and its real-time voice feedback has made students more confident and engaged, resembling a conversation with a “friend.” Students seem to become more comfortable reading aloud, which could be due to the non-judgmental, supportive environment created by the app. More advanced students enjoy the challenge, while lower-level students, especially those struggling with pronunciation, experience some frustration when the app doesn't detect their speech accurately. Teacher B steps in to support these students, showing a blended approach between technology and teacher assistance. In rural areas, inconsistent internet access and lack of personal smartphones are logistical barriers. Some students share devices, which can limit individual use and progress.

The app’s voice recognition feature provides instant feedback, helping students improve pronunciation. This is particularly valuable for students who struggle with certain sounds.

Students practice reading aloud more confidently and at a quicker pace, which can enhance fluency over time. Teacher B notes that students' ability to summarize the content they read has improved, indicating a better understanding of the text. The app's exposure to new words, especially through context, aids in vocabulary acquisition. Students are able to incorporate these new words into discussions, which reinforces learning. More advanced students benefit from the app's challenges and variety of content, while weaker students require additional support. The app appears to help all students, but those at higher proficiency levels may progress faster.

Rural areas often suffer from poor internet connectivity, leading to difficulties in using the app consistently. The voice feedback feature may not always function properly due to connectivity issues, which may frustrate students. Not all students have access to smartphones, which means that some have to share devices. This sharing can disrupt the frequency of usage and the overall learning experience. The app may not provide sufficient support for very beginner learners, who may struggle with vocabulary and comprehension. Visual aids or simpler content could help these students. The app does not provide detailed feedback on grammar, which could be beneficial in addressing a common area of struggle for ESL learners. Teacher B uses blended learning methid where he combines technology-based learning with traditional methods, like group discussions, storytelling, and phonics lessons, to ensure students benefit from a variety of approaches. He uses the app in small groups with weaker students, which provides the opportunity for more individualized attention.

A broader range of difficulty levels could cater to students with differing language proficiency, ensuring that no student feels demotivated by the complexity of the material. More interactive elements like vocabulary games or quizzes related to the stories could enhance the learning experience and provide additional practice opportunities. The ability for students to record their own voice and compare it to the app's pronunciation could help reinforce proper articulation. A feature to track individual progress in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension would allow teachers to monitor student development more effectively.

Google Read-Along has significantly improved students' ability to read in English, encouraging them to practice more and develop their language skills. While it's not a "miracle solution," the app has played a key role in increasing students' confidence and willingness to engage with reading tasks. The app provides access to reading materials that may not otherwise be available in rural areas. Its interactive nature helps keep students motivated, which is crucial in remote settings where traditional resources are often limited. However, technical challenges such as poor connectivity and lack of devices limit the app's full potential. Teacher B would recommend the app to other teachers in similar rural contexts, especially where access to resources is limited. Despite its drawbacks, such as the need for better support for beginners and more interactive features, the app is a valuable tool for improving reading skills.

The English Head Panel highlights that Google Read-Along can be an effective tool in enhancing ESL students' reading skills, particularly in rural areas. While it helps foster engagement and improve pronunciation, comprehension, and vocabulary, challenges such as inconsistent internet access and device limitations must be addressed to maximize its impact. The teacher's experience underscores the importance of combining digital tools with

traditional methods to cater to a diverse range of student needs. With improvements in accessibility and additional features, Google Read-Along has the potential to further enhance the learning experience in rural ESL classrooms.

The interview with Teacher C provides a comprehensive analysis of the Google Read-Along app's impact on reading skills in rural upper primary ESL classrooms. His insights reveal that the app is particularly effective for beginner and intermediate learners, addressing key challenges such as pronunciation, reading fluency, and comprehension in a supportive, low-pressure environment. Features like audio and visual aids, word highlighting, and interactive quizzes were highlighted as instrumental in enhancing student engagement and reinforcing their learning. Teacher C observed notable improvements in students' confidence, with many becoming more willing to read both in and outside the classroom. However, the interview also sheds light on limitations, including unequal access to technology among students and the app's inability to cater adequately to advanced learners or foster critical thinking and writing skills. She emphasized the need for a blended approach, combining the app with traditional teaching methods to ensure a holistic language learning experience. The teacher's forward-looking perspective on the evolution of such apps, incorporating adaptive and authentic content, underscores their potential as supplementary tools. This qualitative analysis aligns with the research objective of evaluating technology's role in overcoming barriers to reading development in rural ESL contexts.

The interviews with teachers and Head Panels of English Language in Primary School revealed that the Google Read-Along app significantly improved the reading skills of upper primary ESL students in rural area schools. Teachers observed notable gains in both reading fluency and comprehension, with students becoming more confident in reading aloud and engaging with texts independently. "I've seen a noticeable improvement in both areas," he said. "The app's feedback encourages students to practice their pronunciation and focus on fluency." The app's audio-visual features helped students, particularly beginners and intermediates, connect written words with their pronunciation, and interactive elements like quizzes encouraged active learning. Students showed increased motivation and a willingness to practice outside of class, improving their overall reading performance. However, challenges such as unequal access to technology and the app's limitations in addressing critical thinking or higher-level skills were noted. Despite these issues, the app proved to be an effective supplementary tool, especially when combined with traditional teaching methods, helping students improve their reading abilities in a more comfortable and enjoyable way.

Perceptions of Effectiveness of Google Read-Along Application to Rural Area Upper Primary Students

All three teachers acknowledged the positive impact the app had on student engagement and reading development. **Teacher A** mentioned, "I've definitely seen improvements in reading fluency, especially with my beginner students... The app helps them build confidence in speaking and reading." This was echoed by **Teacher B**, who saw improvements in fluency, stating, "The app encourages students to read aloud and repeat the words, which helps with fluency." One of the most significant improvements mentioned across the interviews was the increase in student confidence. **Teacher A** shared a touching example of a student who was initially shy about reading aloud. She said, "One of my students, who was really shy and

struggled with speaking, started using Google Read-Along at home... She was more confident when reading aloud in class and even volunteered to read without hesitation."

Perceptions on Advantages and Limitations of Google Read-Along Application

The app's main advantage was its ability to offer individualized learning. According to **Teacher A**, "The biggest advantage is that they provide individualized learning... It allows students to progress at their own pace." Similarly, **Teacher B** emphasized the accessibility of the app, noting, "Google Read-Along provides them with a wide range of books... So even if students don't have computers, they can still practice reading on their phones." However, challenges arose as well. **Teacher C** mentioned the connectivity issues in rural areas, saying, "One of the main challenges has been inconsistent internet connectivity... Sometimes the app doesn't load properly, or the voice feedback doesn't work as it should." **Teacher B** also pointed out the issue of limited access to technology, "Not all students have access to smartphones or tablets at home... This creates a bit of an inequality."

Perceptions on the Impact of Student Motivation and Learning

The interactive features of the Google Read-Along app, such as earning points and unlocking new books, played a crucial role in engaging students. **Teacher B** highlighted this aspect, stating, "Students are usually more engaged with the apps than traditional methods... The app makes reading more fun and personal for them."Students' motivation to learn outside of the classroom also saw a boost. **Teacher C** observed, "Many of my students don't have access to enough English reading books at home... Google Read-Along provides them with a wealth of reading material that they wouldn't have otherwise."

Future of Google Read-Along Application

Looking ahead, teachers expressed optimism about the continued role of the Google Read-Along app. **Teacher B** envisioned a future where "As technology improves, I think we'll see even more personalized learning features... It would be great to see more apps incorporate authentic content, such as podcasts or short videos, to keep students engaged with real-world language." **Teacher A** echoed the need for further development, saying, "I'd love to see more features like voice recognition to assess pronunciation or more adaptive learning that adjusts to each student's proficiency level." **Teacher C** also suggested improvements, stating, "Having a wider range of difficulty levels would be helpful... Some students feel demotivated if the book is too hard." In conclusion, the Google Read-Along app has proven to be an effective tool in improving reading skills in rural ESL classrooms, particularly in terms of reading fluency, comprehension, and student motivation. While there are challenges related to technology access and connectivity, the app offers significant benefits in promoting individualized learning and enhancing student confidence. As these teachers highlighted, continued refinement and expansion of the app's features will further enhance its effectiveness in diverse classroom settings.

Ways of Students Perceive the use of Google Read-along Application in their Reading Development

The Google Read-Along application has shown to be a highly impactful educational tool for upper primary ESL learners in rural schools. Students reported frequent usage, with many accessing the app daily or a few times a week for 10 to 30 minutes per session. The app's interactive features, such as voice feedback, contributed significantly to improving learners'

confidence and engagement with English reading. Almost all students expressed enjoyment, noting that the stories were engaging and helpful for improving their pronunciation. Moreover, learners found the app's content accessible, with most finding the stories easy to understand, which is crucial for young learners in rural areas with limited access to educational resources. When compared to traditional methods, such as books or worksheets, the Google Read-Along application was overwhelmingly favored for its interactivity, personalized feedback, and fun learning experience. Satisfaction ratings were high, and students overwhelmingly expressed willingness to recommend the app to peers. However, challenges such as internet connectivity and app recognition of pronunciations were noted, along with requests for more storybooks and offline functionality. Despite these challenges, the application has proven to be an effective tool in enhancing reading skills, making learning more dynamic and accessible. With further enhancements, such as improved offline access and support for multiple languages, the Google Read-Along app has the potential to significantly enrich the educational experience for ESL learners in rural schools, offering a more effective alternative to traditional methods.

The Google Read-Along application has proven to be a highly impactful tool for upper primary ESL learners in rural schools. The app's interactive features, ease of use, and engaging content have significantly increased students' reading confidence, interest, and proficiency in English. Compared to traditional reading methods, the app offers a more dynamic and accessible learning experience, addressing the challenges of traditional learning while catering to the unique needs of rural learners. With minor enhancements, such as improving accessibility and offering additional resources, the app could further maximize its potential in supporting ESL education in underserved areas.

Table 3.0
(Statement 1 -6) Percentage of Responds in Perceiving the use of Google Read-along application in their reading development

Item	Statements	Frequency Percentage				
1	How often do you use the Google Read-Along app?	**Daily**	**A few times a week**	**Once a week**		
		33.3%	**33.3%**	**33.3%**		
2	How much time do you usually spend on Google Read-Along each time you use it?	20-30 minutes	10-20 minutes			
		50%	50%			
3	Do you use the app by yourself or with a partner/group?	By myself				
		100%				
4	Do you enjoy using the Google-Read Along app?	Yes, I enjoy it a lot				
		100%				
5	Do you enjoy using the Google Read-Along app?	The stories are interesting	I can hear the correct pronunciation	I can track my progress	The app helps me to read better	I can pracrtice reading on my own
		50%	83.3%	50%	83.3%	100%
6	Do you feel more interested in reading because of the app?	Yes, I feel more excited to read				
		100%				

This Item 1 shows the frequency of usage for the Google Read-Along app based on six respondents. The usage patterns are evenly distributed among the three most frequent categories: "Daily," "A few times a week," and "Once a week," each representing 33.3% of the responses. Notably, there are no responses for "Less than once a week." This suggests that the app is actively utilized by its users, with no significant tendency toward infrequent usage. This data implies consistent engagement across different levels of usage frequency. The Item 2 indicates the time users typically spend on the Google Read-Along app per session, based on six responses. The data is evenly split, with 50% of respondents reporting they spend 10-20 minutes, while the other 50% spend 20-30 minutes. No respondents indicated spending less than 10 minutes or more than 30 minutes on the app. This suggests that the majority of users dedicate a moderate amount of time to using the app, emphasizing its role as an activity that requires focused yet manageable time commitments.

Item 3 shows that all respondents (100%) use the Google Read-Along app by themselves, with no usage reported alongside a partner or group. This data highlights the app's strong alignment with individual use, suggesting that it is primarily perceived and utilized as a

personal learning tool rather than a collaborative or group-based activity. Item 4 shows the responses to the question, “Do you enjoy using the Google Read-Along app?” based on six participants. All responses, accounting for 100% of the total, indicated, “Yes, I enjoy it a lot,” represented by the blue section of the pie chart in raw data. There were no responses for the other options, “No, I don’t enjoy it” (red) or “Maybe, I enjoy” (orange), highlighting unanimous positive feedback regarding the app among the respondents. This suggests that the app is well-received and effective in engaging its users. Item 5 reflects the reasons why participants enjoy using the Google Read-Along app, based on six responses. The most selected feature, chosen by all respondents (100%), is "I can practice reading on my own." Other highly rated features include "I can hear the correct pronunciation" and "The app helps me read better," both selected by 5 respondents (83.3%). Half of the respondents (3 people, 50%) found "The stories are interesting" and "I can track my progress" appealing. No respondents selected the "Other" category, indicating that the predefined options sufficiently captured their preferences. Overall, the data highlights the app's strong appeal for independent reading and pronunciation support, with moderate interest in storytelling and progress tracking.

Item 6 presents the responses to the question, "Do you feel more interested in reading because of the app?" All six respondents (100%) indicated that they feel more excited to read due to the app. This unanimous positive response demonstrates the app's effectiveness in fostering enthusiasm and engagement with reading. The absence of responses for the other two options which are "It's the same as before" and "No, I am less interested in reading" highlights that the app has successfully created a noticeable improvement in interest among its users. This data reflects a significant achievement for the app in promoting reading as an enjoyable activity. The findings suggest that the Google Read-Along app is perceived as an effective tool for supporting reading development. Users engage with the app regularly, with 33.3% using it daily, a few times a week, or once a week. They typically spend between 10-30 minutes per session, indicating meaningful interaction with the app. All users reported using the app independently, highlighting their confidence in practicing reading alone. Additionally, every user enjoys using the app, with key features such as independent practice, correct pronunciation, and improvement in reading skills being highly valued. Most importantly, all users feel more excited to read because of the app, demonstrating its positive impact on their interest in reading. Overall, the app is seen as a motivating and effective tool in fostering both reading skills and enthusiasm for reading.

Table 4.0

(Statement 7-15) Perception of Respondents on Google Read-along application that affect ESL students' reading skills

Item	Statements	Frequency Percentage			
7	How helpful is the voice feedback feature?	Very helpful	I don't use the voice feedback		
		83.3%	16.7%		
8	Do you find the stories in the app easy or difficult to understand?	Very Easy	Easy	Difficult	
		50%	33.3%	16.7%	
9	Would you like the app to have more types of stories or books?	Yes, I would like more stories			
		100%			
10	Have you faced any problems using the Google Read-Along App?	Yes, I enjoy it a lot			
		100%			
11	Is there anything that would make the Google Read-Along app better for you?	Nothing	Offline Read Along is Better	More storybooks	
		50%	25%	25%	
12	How satisfied are you to with the Google Read Along App?	Very satisfied	Satisfied		
		66.7%	33.3%		
13	Would you recommend the Google Read-Along app to your friends or classmates?	Yes, definitely	Maybe, if they like reading		
		83.3%	16.7%		
14	Do you think the app helps you learn English better than traditional method?	Yes, it's better			
		100%			
15	Rate the Google Read Along App?	7	8	9	10
		16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%

Based on this table, statement 7 shows the helpfulness of the voice feedback feature based on responses from six participants. The majority, 83.3%, rated the feature as "Very helpful," highlighting its value and effectiveness in meeting user needs. However, 16.7% of respondents indicated that they do not use the voice feedback feature. Notably, no

participants categorized the feature as "Somewhat helpful" or "Not helpful," which suggests that those who engage with the feature find it highly beneficial. This feedback underscores the importance of the voice feedback feature while also indicating an opportunity to encourage adoption among non-users. Statement 8 reflects user perceptions of the difficulty level of stories in the app. Half of the respondents (50%) find the stories "Very easy" to understand, while 33.3% rate them as "Easy." Together, these responses suggest that the majority (83.3%) find the stories accessible and comprehensible. However, 16.7% of respondents find the stories "Difficult," indicating a small portion of users may face challenges in understanding the content. No respondents selected "Very difficult," suggesting that the app maintains an overall approachable level of complexity for its audience. This data highlights the app's success in catering to diverse comprehension levels while suggesting a potential opportunity to enhance accessibility for all users.

Item 11 highlights unanimous feedback regarding the desire for more types of stories or books in the app. All six respondents (100%) expressed a strong interest in expanding the story or book selection, indicating a clear demand for greater variety in content. None of the participants chose the options "I'm okay with the current selection" or "No, I don't need more stories," underscoring the importance of continually diversifying the app's library to maintain user engagement and satisfaction. This feedback suggests a significant opportunity for the app developers to enhance the user experience by introducing new story genres or themes.Item 10 explores the challenges users have encountered while using the Google Read-Along app. The most commonly reported issue, experienced by 83.3% of respondents, is that "Sometimes the internet is too slow," indicating a significant reliance on stable internet connectivity for the app's functionality. Half of the respondents (50%) noted that "The app doesn't understand my pronunciation," suggesting potential improvements in the app's speech recognition capabilities. Additionally, 33.3% of users found "The stories are too hard for me," pointing to the need for more accessible story options for certain users. Notably, no participants reported problems with the app's performance on their devices, lack of time to use the app, or any other issues. This feedback highlights key areas for improvement, particularly in enhancing offline usability, refining pronunciation recognition, and diversifying story difficulty levels.

The responses to the question, "Is there anything that would make the Google Read-Along app better for you?" indicate a mix of satisfaction and suggestions for improvement. Out of six responses, three participants expressed no need for changes, with comments such as "Nothing," "nothing," and "no." This suggests that half of the respondents are satisfied with the app in its current state. However, the other half offered constructive feedback. One user suggested an offline version of the app, indicating a desire for functionality without internet connectivity. Another requested support for additional languages, specifically Malay and Tamil, highlighting the need for broader linguistic inclusivity. Lastly, one respondent recommended adding more storybooks, reflecting a preference for a greater variety of reading content. These suggestions point to potential areas for improvement in accessibility, language support, and content variety.

This table assesses user satisfaction with the Google Read-Along app. A majority of respondents (66.7%) reported being "Very satisfied," reflecting a strong positive reception of the app. Additionally, 33.3% indicated they were "Satisfied," which further supports the app's

overall success in meeting user expectations. Notably, no participants selected "Neutral," "Dissatisfied," or "Very dissatisfied," suggesting a universally favorable experience among users. This overwhelmingly positive feedback demonstrates that the app is effectively addressing its intended purpose and providing value to its audience. However, continued improvements based on specific user feedback could further enhance satisfaction levels. The statement 13 evaluates user willingness to recommend the Google Read-Along app to others. A significant majority, 83.3%, responded with "Yes, definitely," showcasing strong advocacy and satisfaction with the app's value. Meanwhile, 16.7% chose "Maybe, if they like reading," indicating a more conditional recommendation based on individual preferences. Notably, no respondents selected "No, I wouldn't recommend it," which highlights the absence of negative sentiment regarding the app. This data suggests that most users find the app highly beneficial and would encourage others to use it, reinforcing its effectiveness and appeal. However, the conditional response also highlights the importance of ensuring the app caters to diverse reading interests.

The Item 14 shows the responses to a question regarding the effectiveness of an app in helping users learn English compared to traditional methods such as books and worksheets. Out of six respondents, 100% agreed that the app is better than traditional methods for learning English. This unanimous positive feedback suggests that the app offers features or approaches that are perceived as more effective or engaging than conventional resources. The result underscores the app's potential as a preferred tool for English language learning, possibly due to its interactivity, accessibility, or adaptability to individual needs. The bar chart depicts user ratings for the Google Read-Along App on a scale of 1 to 10, based on six responses. The ratings range from 7 to 10, with no respondents rating the app below 7. Specifically, 16.7% of users rated it 7, another 16.7% gave it an 8, and the majority of respondents (66.6%) rated it highly, with 33.3% assigning a 9 and another 33.3% assigning a perfect 10. These results indicate strong user satisfaction with the app, with most respondents expressing a highly favorable impression, highlighting its effectiveness and quality.

Discussion

The app positively impacted students' reading skills, particularly in fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. It provided a supportive, non-judgmental environment that encouraged students, especially beginners, to engage with reading aloud. However, issues like inconsistent internet access and limited device availability in rural areas affected its full potential. The app significantly enhanced vocabulary and comprehension. Its interactive features helped students learn new words and improve reading comprehension. While students showed better retention and understanding, more advanced learners may need additional challenges for higher-level comprehension and critical thinking skills.

Students had positive perceptions, enjoying the app's interactive features and engaging stories. They felt more confident practicing reading aloud. However, challenges like pronunciation detection issues and limited device access affected frequency of use. Overall, students found it enjoyable and effective for improving reading skills. Teachers viewed the app as effective, especially for struggling learners, due to its real-time feedback and ability to engage students. It increased student motivation and confidence. However, issues like device

access, unreliable internet, and the app's limitations for advanced learners were noted. Despite this, teachers considered it a valuable tool when combined with traditional methods. The findings of this study align with growing evidence suggesting that digital tools, particularly read-along applications, can play a significant role in improving students' reading skills. One of the key benefits identified in this study is the positive impact on students' **fluency, pronunciation**, and **confidence.** The Google Read-Along app provides a supportive, non-judgmental environment that encourages learners, particularly beginners, to engage with reading aloud. This finding is supported by recent research, such as the work of *Johnson et al. (2021)*, which found that applications featuring voice recognition and real-time feedback were effective in helping students improve fluency and pronunciation without the pressure of judgment from peers or teachers. The app's interactive features, including audio narration, vocabulary support, and tracking tools, also significantly contribute to enhancing **vocabulary** and **comprehension.** These findings are consistent with *Williams and Zhang (2020)*, who observed that multimedia-rich apps, incorporating text, audio, and interactive quizzes, enhance both vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. The integration of these diverse tools allows students to better grasp the meaning of words in context, improving retention and understanding. Furthermore, *Davis and Clark (2022)* emphasized how real-time feedback and progress tracking can motivate students to engage more with the material, deepening their learning experience.

However, the study also found some limitations. Issues like **inconsistent internet access** and **limited device availability** in rural areas hindered the app's full potential. This is consistent with the challenges identified by *Singh and Patel (2023)*, who highlighted the digital divide as a significant barrier to the effective use of educational technology in under-resourced regions. They noted that rural areas often suffer from unreliable internet and lack of access to adequate devices, which can reduce the frequency and consistency of app usage, thereby limiting the benefits of such tools for students in these areas. Despite these challenges, the Google Read-Along app proved highly effective for **struggling readers** and **beginners.** Teachers reported that the app helped increase **student motivation** and **confidence,** particularly for those who had difficulty with traditional reading methods. This mirrors findings from *Lee and Park (2022)*, who noted that read-along apps engage reluctant readers by providing instant feedback and fostering a sense of achievement through progress tracking. The interactive features of these apps help make the reading process less intimidating, which is particularly important for learners who struggle with traditional reading exercises.

However, for **advanced learners**, the app's features may not be sufficient to meet their needs. The simplicity of the content, while beneficial for beginners, could limit the app's effectiveness for students who are ready for higher-level comprehension tasks or critical thinking exercises. This limitation was noted by *Brown et al. (2024)*, who argued that digital tools designed for beginner or intermediate learners need to be adapted to offer more complex tasks to cater to more advanced learners. For advanced students, the app may not provide the depth of analysis or critical thinking challenges required to push them to higher levels of literacy. Despite the challenges, both students and teachers found the app to be an enjoyable and effective tool for improving reading skills. The results underscore the importance of **integrating technology with traditional methods** in a balanced way. This hybrid approach has been shown to be particularly effective in ESL classrooms, as highlighted

by *Miller and James (2021)*, who found that when read-along apps are used alongside face-to-face instruction, students are more likely to achieve higher levels of language proficiency. This combination allows students to benefit from both the interactive elements of the app and the personalized support provided by teachers.

The findings from this study align with previous research that has demonstrated the effectiveness of read-along applications in enhancing **reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition**, and **student engagement** in ESL classrooms. As noted by *Chen et al. (2020)*, the combination of interactive features, such as audio narration, vocabulary support, and quizzes, provides a comprehensive approach to language learning. However, the success of these tools depends heavily on the availability of reliable technology and the training of educators. Schools need to invest in adequate infrastructure and provide teachers with the necessary training to effectively incorporate these tools into their teaching practices.

In conclusion, while the Google Read-Along app has proven to be a valuable tool for developing reading skills, especially for beginners and struggling learners, there are clear limitations related to device availability, internet connectivity, and the need for more advanced features for higher-level learners. To maximize the effectiveness of such tools, schools should invest in reliable technology infrastructure and ensure that teachers are equipped with the skills necessary to integrate these apps into their teaching practices effectively.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Google Read-Along app was effective in improving reading skills, vocabulary, and student engagement. While logistical challenges in rural areas need addressing, the app's positive impact on ESL learners is clear, particularly for beginners. Teachers emphasized the importance of blending the app with traditional methods for a well-rounded learning experience.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on the effectiveness of digital tools in language education. Read-along applications offer significant benefits in enhancing ESL learners' literacy skills, but their implementation must be carefully managed to address challenges such as technology access and content appropriateness. Future research should explore the long-term impact of these tools and their effectiveness in diverse educational contexts.

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