Hello English Application in Teaching Grammar for Junior High School

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
	In the digital era, modern methods have transformed the learning process, offering various tools to enhance education. One such tool is the *Hello English* application, which serves as a learning medium for students. Grammar learning, often considered tedious when taught through traditional books, can become more engaging with this application. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Hello English* application in improving students' understanding of grammar. The research employed a pre-experimental design with eighth-grade students from SMP T as the population. A sample of 25 students was selected from a total of 51. Data were analyzed using paired sample t-tests, with validity and reliability assessed through a Likert scale and Cronbach's alpha. A normality test was conducted prior to analysis. The results revealed a significant improvement in grammar understanding. The paired sample t-test showed a t-value of 10.719 with a p-value of 0.01 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a meaningful difference between pre-test and post-test scores. These findings demonstrate that the *Hello English* application effectively enhanced students' grasp of the simple present tense, proving its value as a grammar teaching tool for eighth-grade students at SMP T in the 2024/2025 academic year.

INTRODUCTION

The arrangement of words to form a coherent phrase is known as grammar. As stated by Coghill and Megendaz (2003), "A language's grammar is the body of rules that control its structure." Grammar determines how language is organized into meaningful units. For grammar to be effective, it must follow specific rules or formulas; otherwise, communication becomes unclear or ineffective when unstructured words are used in conversation. Dykes (2007) described grammar as "a language for discussing language," implying that learning grammar is connected to acquiring vocabulary, sentence structures, and methods of expression. Similarly, Lin (2020) highlighted the importance of English grammar as a tool for

efficient language acquisition, emphasizing its role in analyzing the structure and evolution of language, including its instrumental, regulatory, interactional, and representational purposes. Nagarathinam (2020) further argued that understanding grammar is fundamental to appreciating the value of language.

From the explanations above, it is evident that understanding grammar is both useful and essential, especially when taught to students. Without knowledge of grammar, students cannot use language correctly. Murcia and Freeman (1999) emphasized that teaching grammar is crucial because it affects students' proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Thornbury (2002) noted that understanding the rules of grammar enables students to comprehend written and spoken English, making it an essential tool for conveying meaning. Despite its importance, the ability to understand grammar remains a challenge. Bahera et al. (2024) reported several issues in Indian public schools, particularly in grammar instruction, due to the late introduction of English and grammar lessons. Students often encounter grammar books only in grade IX, contributing to poor language skills.

Learning grammar is not easy for students, who often experience difficulties. Grammar is central to language teaching and learning, yet it remains one of the most challenging aspects for both teachers and learners. Students may feel bored when taught grammar through traditional, unengaging methods. Therefore, innovative approaches are necessary to overcome these challenges. One such approach involves leveraging media that attract students' interest. In this experimental research, the *Hello English* application is used to improve students' grammar skills. Created by Culture Alley, *Hello English* is an interactive and personalized tool for learning English as a second language. This application offers various features designed to enhance students' grammar abilities and encourage their learning.

Butar (2018) found the *Hello English* application highly effective for junior high school students, especially in teaching simple present tense, and noted its motivational impact through the use of technology. Additionally, Maylan (2018) observed that the application improves students' understanding of basic grammar content and listening skills by helping them comprehend material more accurately. Based on these findings, this research aims to

investigate whether there is a significant improvement in students' understanding of the simple present tense after being taught using the Hello English application.

Grammar and Teaching Grammar

Grammar is a fundamental aspect of language, yet it carries various interpretations depending on context. Kolln and Funk (2012) note that grammar is a common and familiar term but often misunderstood due to its nuanced meanings. Harmer (2007) defines grammar as the study of how words take on different forms and are arranged in sentences. Thornbury (2002) elaborates that grammar involves rules for constructing sentences that convey meaning, while Utari (2012) emphasizes its role in forming coherent sentences. These definitions collectively highlight grammar's role in organizing words into meaningful structures.

Teaching grammar in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is essential for language acquisition. Sugiharto (2005) suggests that grammar instruction facilitates language learning and should be integrated with culturally relevant materials to enhance learning outcomes (Hua & Li, 2015). Incorporating language awareness in grammar teaching is equally important, as noted by Nugroho (2018).

The primary goal of grammar instruction, according to Kolln and Funk (2012), is not only to teach effective communication but also to ensure correctness by adhering to language rules. Purpura (2001) highlights that grammar underpins the four primary language skills —listening, speaking, reading, and writing— serving as a foundation for all language-related tasks. Teaching grammar, as Brown (2007) explains, involves creating the necessary conditions and strategies to guide students in learning. Similarly, Ellis (2006) advocates for instructional techniques that engage students' attention during grammar lessons.

Despite its importance, teaching grammar poses challenges. Azam (2014) acknowledges that grammar instruction is complex yet vital in language education. Andriani (2021) identifies common issues teachers face, such as students' poor grammar proficiency, which hampers comprehension and sentence construction during practice activities.

Tense and Present Tense

Tenses play a critical role in understanding time references in English. Greenbaum and Nelson (1998) define tense as the grammatical indication of when an event occurs, reflected in verb forms. Swan (2005) asserts that tenses help distinguish whether events take place in the past, present, or future. Yule (2015) further explains that tenses connect verb forms to the time they represent.

Of the various tenses, the present tense is fundamental in English. Hewings (2005) describes the simple present tense as a tool to express general truths, habitual actions, or ongoing states. These tenses are essential for conveying information that is universally or continually true. Napratilora (2019) underscores the significance of learning tenses, especially the present tense, as foundational to mastering English grammar.

Mobile Applications and English Learning

Mobile applications have become increasingly significant in language learning. Liu (2014) highlights that mobile apps allow users to overcome time and location constraints, making English learning more accessible. These applications cater to various aspects of English learning, such as vocabulary, grammar, writing, speaking, and listening. Among these apps, *Hello English* stands out for its user-friendly interface and interactive features designed to enhance grammar proficiency.

Hello English Application

Hello English, launched by CultureAlley in 2014, has gained popularity as an effective tool for English language learners. According to Patni (2018), its primary purpose is to improve English communication skills through diverse features and support for multiple delivery languages.

Research has demonstrated the app's effectiveness in teaching grammar. Butar-Butar (2018) found that Hello English was particularly beneficial for teaching the simple present tense,

motivating students and making grammar lessons engaging through its use of technology. Similarly, Kurniawati (2018) observed that the app's structured approach allows students to learn grammar step by step, from basic to intermediate levels. Its offline accessibility further enhances its usability.

Maylan (2018) noted that *Hello English* aids students in mastering the simple present tense, particularly in listening tasks, by improving their comprehension and accuracy. Simatupang (2020) emphasized that the app's interactive content and visually appealing interface prevent classroom boredom, motivating students to develop their grammar skills.

Overall, the *Hello English* application presents an innovative approach to teaching grammar by integrating technology with interactive learning, making it a valuable tool for improving students' English proficiency.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study employed a pre-experimental design, specifically a one-group pretest-posttest approach (Creswell, 2015), to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Hello English* Application in teaching Simple Present tense. Twenty-five eighth-grade students from Class VIII B at SMP T were selected through convenience sampling, which Nikolopoulou (2023) defines as a non-probability sampling technique where participants are chosen based on their accessibility to the researcher. Proper consent was obtained from all stakeholders, including school administration, parents, and students, ensuring ethical compliance throughout the research process.

The study was conducted over 12 meetings of 45 minutes each, utilizing the *Hello English Application* as the primary teaching tool. The research variables consisted of the *Hello English Application* as the independent variable and students' Simple Present tense understanding as the dependent variable. Learning materials were directly sourced from the application, and assessment was conducted through pre and post-tests comprising 40 multiple-choice questions (22 from the application and 18 researcher-developed items), with each question worth 2.5 points.

The data analysis employed a paired sample t-test to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. Throughout the research, ethical considerations were prioritized, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality, and adhering to educational research guidelines while supporting the academic integrity of the study.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The Results of Normality

The normality test aims to determine whether the sample data comes from a normally distributed population. Data that is good and feasible to use in this study is normally distributed data. distributed normally; in this study researcher used a normality test with the Shapiro-Wilk test. Here are the test results.

Table 1

The Results of Normality

	Normality Shapiro-Wilk	
	Pre-Experimental Design	
	Statistic	Sig.
Pre-test	.931	.091
Post-test	.938	.136

Based on Table 1 regarding the normality test using Shapiro Wilk, the significance of the pretest value in the experimental class was $0.091 > 0.05$, while the post-test value was $0.136 > 0.05$, it can be concluded that the regression method in this study has fulfilled the assumption of normality. After the data is normally distributed, the requirements for the t-test can be carried out.

Descriptive Analysis

During the research at SMP T, the researcher used a test instrument with 40 multiple-choice questions. This test was conducted to measure students' understanding of simple present using the *Hello English* Application. The researcher conducted the experiment in class VIII B

consisting of 25 students, 10 female students and 15 male students, for range and category results were obtained directly from the criteria for achieving learning objectives at SMP T. The researcher can conclude that the pretest and post-test scores using the *Hello English application* experienced a considerable increase of 30, meaning that the teaching of simple present tense using the *Hello English* application can be said to be successful at SMP T. The summary of pre-test and post-test results can be seen in Table 2, the complete results in Table 3, and the calculation of the pre-test and post-test can be seen in Table 4.

Table 2
Summary of Pre-test and Post-Test Results

Experimental Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Gained Score
Minimal	28	40	12
Maximal	80	98	18
Mean	47.40	77.40	30
Total	1.185	1.935	750

The results of the descriptive analysis of the experimental class's pre-and post-tests were shown as follows:

Table 3
Post-test Scores Analysis in Pre-Experimental Design

Range Score	Category	Experimental Design (Pre-test)		SD
		Frequency	Mean	
90-100	Very good	-	-	
80-89	Good	1	80	-
70-79	Fair	2	71.25	1.768
<69	Poor	22	43.75	11.745
Total		25		

The table showed that analysis of the results of the pretest scores in class VIII B in the fair category and the remaining 22 students were in the poor category. The researcher concluded that before being given treatment, students at SMP T were in the poor category in learning simple present tense.

Table 4
Post-test Scores Analysis in Post-Experimental Design

Range Score	Category	Experimental Design (Pre-test)		SD
		Frequency	Mean	

90-100	Very good	5	93.50	2.850
80-89	Good	8	84.25	2.673
70-79	Fair	7	74.50	2.784
<69	Poor	5	55.00	9.354
Total		25		

The results of the analysis of post-test scores for class VIII B as the experimental class are in Table 4 that 5 students were in the very good category, 8 students in the good category, 7 students in the fair category, and the last 5 students in the poor category. In conclusion, many students whose abilities improved after getting treatment. Based on the explanation above, the average value of the experiment post-test is greater at 77.40 than the average value of the pre-test which is 47.40. In the treatment class, there was a difference between the pretest before treatment and the post-test after treatment which is about 30 (gain score). Then, from these results, there was no significant enhancement in the grammar understanding of simple present tense after being taught through the *Hello English* application.

Statistical Analyses of Reading Test Results

In this research, t-test analysis was conducted on pre-test and post-test data using SPSS v.27. The researcher used a paired sample t-test to assess the mean value of students' understanding of grammar enhancement on simple present tense using the *Hello English* application before and after the treatment.

Hypotheses Testing

After the normality test was conducted and confirmed that the data was normal, the application of *Hello English* application in class VIII B of SMP T was tested using a paired sample t-test. Significant enhancement in students' understanding of grammar in simple present tense was determined using the paired sample t-test. The table below shows the statistical analysis of the experimental class.

Tabel 5.

Paired Sample T Test

Variable		Experimental		Mean Diff.	T-Value and Pre-Sig-Within
	Pre-test	Post-test			

Grammar	47.40	77.40	30.000	-10.719 (.001)

Based on the table above, it showed that the significant value was 0.01. Which means that it was lower than 0.05 (0.01 < 0.05). It meant that H_0 was **rejected,** and H_a was **accepted**. It could be concluded that there was a significant enhancement.

Discussion

Based on the findings and statistical analysis of this study, several interpretations can be made. The experimental class received treatment that focused on learning grammar using the *Hello English* application. The treatment used material in the Simple Present Tense. After the implementation of the Simple Present Tense learning as a treatment, there was a noticeable improvement in students' understanding of grammar related to the Simple Present Tense. This finding is in line with the research conducted by Anwar (2021) titled "*The Effect of Hello English Application in Teaching Simple Present Tense for English as a Foreign Language.*" Anwar's research also explored the Simple Present Tense in students' grammar understanding using the *Hello English* application. The results of his research showed a significant improvement in students' understanding of the Simple Present Tense.

In this study, the researcher used a pre-experimental design that involved only one class. The instruments used in this study included pre-tests and post-tests. The pre-test was administered before the treatment, and the post-test was given after the treatment. This is supported by Arikunto (2010), who states that this method allows for more accurate results because the researcher can compare the outcomes with the conditions before the treatment was given. This indicates that the design is effective in assessing the impact of the intervention conducted.

Statistical analysis of the test results showed a significant increase in student achievement between students who were taught using the *Hello English* app and those who did not. There are several factors that may cause why learning using the *Hello English* application is effective when applied. First, after the researcher conducted the learning research using the materials available in the *Hello English* application, it clearly motivated students to engage in

learning, as students typically learn in school using textbooks, whereas, during this treatment, they learned using their mobile phones. This is supported by Cohen (2007), who states that learning applications with interactive elements can enhance student engagement in the learning process. Second, another reason for the improvement in students' understanding of the Simple Present Tense is that the researcher provided direct practice through the *Hello English* application. The questions given were in the form of multiple-choice and included a game. Through the *Hello English* application, it was evident that it made students easier for students to understand the concept of the Simple Present Tense.

In addition, the researcher did not forget to remind students to keep studying at home using the *Hello English* application, so that students got used to using the *Hello English* application as a learning medium. This was in line with Iskandar's (2019) perspective, which stated the importance of realizing meaningful education and not only focusing on academic or cognitive achievements at school but also the process of achieving learning at home. In addition, the researcher also occasionally helped students who did not understand the meaning of the questions given. This approach created a supportive learning environment where students could actively engage with the material and receive additional guidance when needed.

In this study, there was a noticeable improvement in students' understanding of grammar. This was due to the fact that students were very active, enthusiastic, and confident in their learning. During the treatment, the researcher observed that students were very happy using the *Hello English* application. This was because the *Hello English* application was not boring. Similarly, Khubyari and Narafshan (2016) stated that the use of the *Hello English* application can eliminate boredom during reading and help students understand the material better. This indicates that the application is not only effective in teaching but also enjoyable for students.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concluded that the use of the *Hello English* application can make a significant enhancement in the process of students' grammar understanding. This happens because the *Hello English* application makes students very active, enthusiastic, and engaged during the learning process. The *Hello English* application is a good tool for ehance students' grammar understanding. This statement can be proved from the results of the pre-test and post-test conducted by the researcher. Therefore, the researcher

concludes that the *Hello English* application is very effective in achieving grammar understanding at SMP T.

CONCLUSION

The pre-test scores of students before using the *Hello English* application were 47.40, while the post-test scores after using the application were 77.40. These results show that the post-test scores were higher than the pre-test scores (77.40 > 47.40). Additionally, statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test through SPSS v27 revealed a t-count value of 10.719 and a significance value of 0.01. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, indicating a significant difference in students' understanding of grammar in the simple present tense before and after using the *Hello English* application. Consequently, the *Hello English* application was found to be effective in improving grammar and is recommended for use in grammar teaching.

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