

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ELSA SPEAK APPLICATION TO IMPROVE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION ACCURACY OF NINTH GRADES AT SMPN 1 GONDANG

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Abstract. *This study examines the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak app in improving English pronunciation accuracy among ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Gondang. Recognizing the important role of pronunciation in effective English communication and the potential of technology to facilitate learning, this study aims to address students' doubts and errors in English pronunciation. This study used a quantitative pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test approach. The sample consisted of 38 ninth-grade students from SMPN 1 Gondang, who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected through oral pre-test and post-test, focusing on vowel sounds, consonants, diphthongs, word stress, and intonation, and analyzed using SPSS version 27 for normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis testing. Findings showed a significant improvement in students' pronunciation skills, with the mean score increasing from 60.65 in the pre-test to 73.82 in the post-test. Statistical analysis, including a paired sample t-test, confirmed this significant difference, indicating the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak app. This study implies that integrating technology-based applications such as ELSA Speak can be a valuable and effective tool in the English language learning curriculum, improving students' pronunciation accuracy, motivation, and confidence in speaking English.*

Keywords: *ELSA Speak application, English pronunciation accuracy, Pre-experimental research design, Improved pronunciation ability, Quantitative research method*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini menguji efektivitas aplikasi ELSA Speak dalam meningkatkan akurasi pelafalan bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa kelas sembilan di SMPN 1 Gondang. Menyadari peran penting pengucapan dalam komunikasi bahasa Inggris yang efektif dan potensi teknologi untuk memfasilitasi pembelajaran, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengatasi keraguan dan kesalahan siswa dalam pengucapan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain pra-eksperimental kuantitatif dengan pendekatan pre-test dan post-test satu kelompok. Sampel terdiri dari 38 siswa kelas sembilan dari SMPN 1 Gondang, yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui pre-test dan post-test lisan, dengan fokus pada bunyi vokal, konsonan, diftong, tekanan kata, dan intonasi, dan dianalisis menggunakan SPSS versi 27 untuk uji normalitas, homogenitas, dan hipotesis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kemampuan pelafalan siswa, dengan nilai rata-rata meningkat dari 60,65 pada pre-test menjadi 73,82 pada post-test. Analisis statistik, termasuk uji-t sampel berpasangan, mengkonfirmasi perbedaan yang signifikan ini, yang menunjukkan keefektifan aplikasi ELSA Speak. Penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa mengintegrasikan aplikasi berbasis teknologi seperti ELSA Speak dapat menjadi alat yang berharga dan efektif dalam kurikulum pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, meningkatkan akurasi pelafalan, motivasi, dan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: Aplikasi ELSA Speak, Akurasi pelafalan bahasa Inggris, Desain penelitian pra-eksperimental, Peningkatan kemampuan pelafalan, Metode penelitian kuantitatif

1. LATAR BELAKANG

Pronunciation is a critical aspect of learning English, impacting speaking skills and contributing to clear communication, student confidence, listening skills, and cultural understanding. It is considered a main focus of English learning. In the current era of globalization and technological advancements, pronunciation can be learned in a fun, easy, and flexible way, notably through applications like ELSA Speak. ELSA Speak, an English language learning platform, utilizes artificial intelligence (AI) to help users improve speaking and pronunciation skills. It provides accurate feedback, explains correct pronunciation, and offers various exercises, including words, phrases, and sentences. The application also includes phonetic guides and allows users to learn anywhere.

However, observations at SMPN 1 Gondang revealed that many students hesitate to speak English due to fear of making pronunciation mistakes. Students frequently mispronounce English words, especially those with similar sounds but different meanings. Teachers face constraints in providing effective and engaging pronunciation instruction due to a lack of facilities and fun teaching methods. This highlights a gap in providing accessible and enjoyable methods for improving pronunciation skills.

The novelty and urgency of this research lie in addressing this specific problem by investigating the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak application as a technological solution that offers learning anytime and anywhere. While previous studies have explored technology for pronunciation improvement, such as the CAKE application, YouTube videos, Spotify, and Joox, this research specifically focuses on the effectiveness of ELSA Speak with a quantitative pre-experimental design. This study aims to determine how effective the ELSA Speak application is in improving students' pronunciation skills and to understand students' perceptions after using it.

2. KAJIAN TEORITIS

Review of Related Theories

Pronunciation is defined as how one pronounces words in a language, including both segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (stress, intonation, rhythm) aspects. The importance of pronunciation is emphasized as it affects the clarity of communication and builds learner confidence. Factors that affect pronunciation accuracy include the influence of

mother tongue, learning experience, and habit. The ability to produce correct vowel and consonant sounds, as well as rhythm, intonation, and stress, is essential for natural, native-like pronunciation. Technology such as Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) can improve pronunciation skills with a focus on segmental pronunciation and social interaction. Pronunciation teaching aims to help students speak clearly to reduce the risk of communication failure. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) such as the ELSA Speak app plays an important role in pronunciation teaching as it effectively improves learners' skills and motivation. ELSA Speak utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide accurate and real-time feedback on the user's pronunciation, as well as offering various exercises and phonetic guidance. The app also provides intonation and stress training features for words or phrases.

Previous Research

Several previous studies have examined the use of technology to improve pronunciation skills. Kadek Berli Ara Sujana's research (2024) showed a significant improvement in pronunciation skills using the Cake application on grade 6A students of SDN 1 Baktiseraga. Riski Sulistiyaingsih (2024) found that YouTube videos effectively improved the pronunciation skills of STMIK Widya Pratama students. Andini Amalia Ilyas (2023) showed that Spotify can improve pronunciation skills through lyrics and playlist features. Ari Astutik (2019) examined the effectiveness of the Joox application in improving the pronunciation of first-semester students at Wijaya Putra University. The most relevant is Dina Rismawati's (2023) study, which showed the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak app in improving the pronunciation of students of SMP Negeri Kuningan, with a significant increase in students' scores.

Research Hypothesis

Based on the theoretical review and previous research, it is assumed that the use of the ELSA Speak application will improve students' English pronunciation accuracy.

3. METODE PENELITIAN

This study used a quantitative method with a pre-experimental design, specifically a one-group pre-test and post-test approach. This design aims to assess the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak app in teaching English pronunciation to ninth-grade students of SMPN 1 Gondang. Measurements were made of changes in students' pronunciation skills before and after using the application. The research model used can be described as O1 - X - O2, where O1 is the pre-test, X is the treatment (use of the ELSA Speak application), and O2 is the post-test.

The study population was all ninth-grade students of SMPN 1 Gondang, totaling 337 students spread across 10 classes. The research sample was selected using the technique of purposive sampling, namely class 9A, with a total of 38 students. The selection of this class was based on the student's basic understanding of English, recommendations from the vice principal and English teacher, as well as the students' stable attendance and readiness.

The main data collection technique was through oral pre-test and post-test. A pre-test was administered before students started using the ELSA Speak app to evaluate their initial pronunciation skills. After the treatment period using the ELSA Speak app, an identical post-test was given to assess the improvement of pronunciation skills. The research instrument was twenty animal-themed English vocabulary words that students had to pronounce, with 20 minutes per session, and the reading process was recorded. The assessment covered three main aspects: intonation, word stress, and pronunciation (vowels, consonants, and diphthongs) using a scoring rubric adapted from Brown and Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin.

Instrument validity was ensured through expert judgment by experts in English language teaching and linguistics, as well as alignment with international pronunciation standards such as the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and ELSA Speak application criteria. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 27. Normality tests were conducted with Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk, indicating that the data pre-test and post-test were normally distributed (Sig. > 0.05). The homogeneity test was conducted with Levene's Test, and the results showed the data was homogeneous (Sig. value > 0.05). Hypothesis testing was conducted using paired sample t-test to compare pre-test and post-test

scores, with the criteria for acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a) if the t-value or significance (2-tailed) is less than 0.05.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research uses a Pre-Experimental design, and the sample taken is one class. In this study, the media used by students to improve pronunciation skills is the Elsa Speak Application. This study used 38 samples from grade IX junior high school. Data obtained from pre-test and post-test scores.

Pre-Test and Post-Test

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub judul kesatu.

1. Sub-Sub judul (Sub judul level 3)

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub-Sub judul.

a) Sub-sub-subjudul (Sub judul level 4)

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub-sub-sub judul.

Sub judul Kedua (Sub judul level 2)

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub judul kedua.

1. Sub-Sub judul (Sub judul level 3)

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub-Sub judul.

a) Sub-sub-sub judul (Sub judul level 4)

Berikut ini penjelasan untuk Sub-sub-sub judul.

Dst.....

5. KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

Kesimpulan ditulis secara singkat yaitu mampu menjawab tujuan atau permasalahan penelitian dengan menunjukkan hasil penelitian atau pengujian hipotesis penelitian, **tanpa** mengulang pembahasan. Kesimpulan ditulis secara kritis, logis, dan jujur berdasarkan fakta hasil penelitian yang ada, serta penuh kehati-hatian apabila terdapat upaya generalisasi. Bagian kesimpulan dan saran ini ditulis dalam bentuk paragraf, tidak menggunakan penomoran atau *bullet*. Pada bagian ini juga dimungkinkan apabila penulis ingin memberikan saran atau rekomendasi tindakan berdasarkan kesimpulan hasil penelitian. Demikian pula, penulis juga sangat disarankan untuk memberikan ulasan terkait keterbatasan penelitian, serta rekomendasi untuk penelitian yang akan datang.

UCAPAN TERIMA KASIH (Jika Diperlukan)

Bagian ini disediakan bagi penulis untuk menyampaikan ucapan terima kasih, baik kepada pihak penyandang dana penelitian, pendukung fasilitas, atau bantuan ulasan naskah. Bagian ini juga dapat digunakan untuk memberikan pernyataan atau penjelasan, apabila artikel ini merupakan bagian dari skripsi/tesis/disertasi/makalah konferensi/hasil penelitian.

DAFTAR REFERENSI

Referensi berisi daftar jurnal, buku, atau referensi lain yang diacu dalam naskah yang terbit dalam 5 tahun terakhir dengan jumlah minimal 75% dari seluruh referensi yang digunakan. Mayoritas referensi adalah sumber primer yaitu jurnal ilmiah/prosiding. Jumlah referensi secara keseluruhan yang diacu minimal 20 buah, dan sebanyak 75%-nya berasal dari publikasi jurnal ilmiah/prosiding hasil penelitian. Penulisan referensi secara alfabetis dan mengikuti gaya penulisan American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition. Manajemen penulisan referensi (dan kutipan) sangat disarankan menggunakan aplikasi Mendeley. Contoh penulisan referensi berdasarkan APA 6th Edition sebagai berikut:

Artikel Jurnal (satu, dua, atau lebih dari dua penulis)

- Hidayati, S.N. (2016). Pengaruh Pendekatan Keras dan Lunak Pemimpin Organisasi terhadap Kepuasan Kerja dan Potensi Mogok Kerja Karyawan. *Jurnal Maksipreneur: Manajemen, Koperasi, dan Entrepreneurship*, 5(2), 57-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30588/SOSHUMDIK.v5i2.164>.
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Sumber dari internet tanpa nama penulis (tuliskan nama organisasi/perusahaan)

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Catatan Kaki

Catatan kaki atau footnote tidak dapat digunakan untuk menulis referensi. Footnote hanya digunakan untuk memberikan informasi atau keterangan umum untuk memperjelas tulisan pada suatu halaman. Footnote ditulis dengan spasi tunggal dengan jenis huruf times new romans ukuran 10 pt dan diberikan penomoran, serta ditempatkan pada bagian akhir teks halaman terkait.

Penempatan Tabel

Tabel 1. Frekuensi Umur dalam tahun

Umur (dalam tahun)	Frekuensi
15 – 19	3
20 – 24	6
25 – 29	10
30 – 34	5
35 – 39	2

Sumber: SOSHUMDIK (2022).

Penempatan Gambar



Keterangan: Gambar harus jelas dan *fix* (tidak pecah).

Sumber: SOSHUMDIK (2022).

Gambar 1. Grafik pengunjung pada suatu website

Cara penulisan referensi di dalam naskah

Penulisan sitasi (*body notes*) sesuai dengan standar American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition. Berikut ini adalah contoh sitasi di dalam sebuah paragraf yang mengacu pada contoh daftar referensi di atas:

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bentuk pengalaman belajar. Siswa antara satu dengan lainnya melakukan analisis, pemaknaan, penjelasan, penyipulan, dan tindak lanjut dari pengalaman belajar yang dilalui (Rusman, 2011).