

The Effectiveness of English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) Application to Improve Students' Pronunciation Ability at SMP Kristen Tateli

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Received: 4 Desember 2024

Accepted: 23 Desember 2024

Published: 26 Desember 2024

Abstract : The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether or not the eighth-grade students at SMP Kristen Tateli's speaking abilities were enhanced by using the ELSA talk animated program to learn English. Pre-experimental research using pre- and post-tests in a single class was the main focus of this study. The class VIII sample consisted of 23 pupils. During the speaking ability exam, data were collected for the pre- and post-test dialogues. It may be inferred from the study's findings that students' pronunciation skills which encompass grammar, content, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency can be enhanced by the ELSA Speak application. This is seen by the students' average pre-test score of (58,35), which rises to (80,83) in the post-test. This indicates that the ELSA Speak application's efficacy in helping pupils learn English can enhance their pronouncing skills in the eighth grade at SMP Kristen Tateli.

Keywords: *Pronunciation, ELSA Speak Application, Improved, EFL*

INTRODUCTION

Humans use language as a tool for communication to exchange information, thoughts, and feelings (Liando et al., 2023). Language is a means of conveying concepts from one person with a distinct understanding to another. People in this world are able to communicate their needs, wants, ideas, and feelings through language. One tool for sharing knowledge that someone possesses is language. Because it will be challenging for someone to comprehend the meaning of words without the usage of language (Tuilan et al., 2020). Language, according to Liando

et al. (2023); Liando et al., (2022); Widjono (2007:15), is a system of spoken sounds that individuals use as symbols to communicate. Living things need society to survive. To meet their everyday needs, they must coexist and communicate with one another. In 2020, Paranduk and Karisi in order to communicate with each other, people construct terms that, either directly or indirectly, everyone can understand. It is becoming a commonplace aspect of everyday life worldwide. Communication requires language and almost always takes place in a social context. For this reason, understanding and appreciating the relationships that exist between a language and its speakers is essential to effective communication. Lengkoan (2017).

One language that connects all countries in the twenty-first century is English. These days, learning English is crucial as it's a universal language that's typically utilized for communication with individuals around the world. Contemporary youth and students utilize English in their everyday lives, while some of them continue to combine English with their native tongue. They desire to learn English and incorporate it into their daily lives because they believe that utilizing it is cool (Tuilan et al., 2020). English is a language that is widely spoken. English is used as the principal language of communication in almost every country (Liando et al., 2022). English has been embraced by many countries as their official or predominant language. English is used in practically every aspect of life, including academia, commerce, trade, and travel. According to Moge (2019), it is rumored to be Indonesia's first foreign language.

The four skills that students must master when studying English are speaking, writing, listening, and reading (Tuilan et al., 2020). As mentioned by Norbert (2002, p. 167), speaking is one of the four skills that are thought to be the most challenging to acquire when learning a language. Since pronunciation is an essential part of spoken repetition, the instructor always participated in pronunciation lessons, especially when teaching English orally. Mokoginta, Rorimpandey, and Lolowang (2024) state that there can be a variety of reasons why pupils struggle with learning English through hearing. While some students can have trouble

understanding accents and dialect variances, others could find it challenging to speak at the same rapid pace as native speakers. Common obstacles include a limited vocabulary, a lack of outside-of-class listening practice, and the inability to distinguish between intonation and sounds. One of the fundamental abilities needed to acquire oral language skills in speaking, listening, and writing English is pronunciation. It is hard for someone to speak English if they do not possess sufficient pronunciation skills. Misunderstandings can result from incorrect pronunciation. In order to communicate effectively with others, we need to be able to pronounce words correctly in English and to pick up on and comprehend the pronunciation of others in other languages. According to Mokoginta, Rorimpandey, and Lolowang (2024), there are new potential to use digital platforms in the learning process in this era of technical advancement and social media.

Vu Van launched the English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) software company in San Francisco, California, in 2015. It uses speech synthesis and artificial intelligence (AI) to improve and perfect English pronunciation Pillar (2013). The lunchtime product is the original ELSA, which is a smartphone app. Speak. It allows users to improve and practice their articulation. In addition, the software is easy to use and entertaining. Pronunciation is the act of speaking a word or a language. Moreover, Paulston & Burder (1976) claim that it has to do with how humans construct languages out of sound. The pronunciation statement refers to the way meanings are expressed through sounds. Yates, 2002. As a result, proper pronunciation is essential in communication because every word is easy to understand. Through a series of periodic examinations, the ELSA Speak smartphone app helps users train and improve their pronunciation and intonation skills. Moreover, Taqy (2021) asserts that ELSA Speak is an application that makes English speech easier. English with confidence and clarity. Most people can determine their degree of English proficiency by taking an accurate and useful test.

The majority of students are familiar with technology and the internet, according to research by Mokoginta, Rorimpandey, and Lolowang (2024). The Tiktok application is the most widely used tool for games, information, and even learning media because users think it can help with problem-solving and listening instruction. According to the aforementioned claim, research is the same as this research, which involves facilitating the instructional process connected to resolving student difficulties through the use of application media, the internet, and gadgets.

In language training, the conversation class is a bit of a mystery, according to Brown (2001, p. 267). Students who struggle with speaking face a number of challenges as a result, starting with humiliation and growing fear of speaking until they start to doubt their ability to communicate at all. This was the reason why the researchers were inclined to look at students' pronunciation. Furthermore, as stated by Sholeh & Muhaji (2015), a spoken word or phrase needs to be understandable and clear in order for the audience to understand it. To understand what the other person has to say, everyone needs to have something decent to say.

Moreover, it could facilitate better communication between two people. Teachers utilize several media types in the teaching-learning process, one of which is audio-visual resources, especially those found on cellphones.

Based on the background of the study, writer intend to study more about 'The Effectiveness of English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) Application to Improve Students' Pronunciation Ability at SMP Kristen Tateli'.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Method

This study employs a quantitative methodology to assess the impact of its findings on the student participants. Pretest-Posttest Design was the experimental study method that was employed. The researcher in this study administered a pronunciation pretest to the pupils. Following that, kids received specialized instruction using the ELSA program for learning. The final posttest exam was

administered to the pupils following their treatment. The following are some examples of the research design:

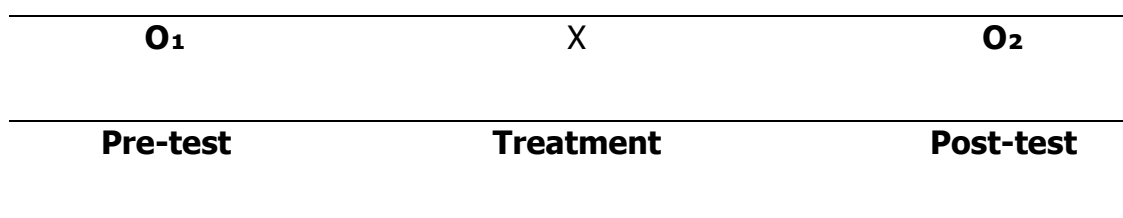
Gray (2000:389)

The plan called for a lesson where the researcher would give out the pre-test, help the students use the ELSA application, and then give out the post-test. By comparing the pre- and post-test findings, the effectiveness of the ELSA application was ascertained before and after it was used.

Population and Sample of The Research

Population

According to Widiyanto (2010: 5), a population is a collection of goods or other



entities from which research findings can be extrapolated. The SMP Kristen Tateli second grade pupils for the academic year 2023–2024 comprise the group under study.

Sample

According to Erikan (2015), the purposive sampling technique, commonly referred to as judgment sampling, is deliberately choosing participants based on their personal characteristics. Using a sample of 23 students from SMP Kristen Tateli's class VIII A, the researcher conducted the study.

Research Variable

There are two different types of variables in this research: independent and dependent variables. The efficacy of ELSA application is the independent variable in this study, whereas student pronunciation is the dependent variable.

Instrument of The Research

Pre- and post-tests, which are oral assessments, were employed in this study as research tools.

Pre-Test: The investigator posed a query concerning "going on vacation."

Post-Test: To assess the students' speaking abilities, the researcher administered a post-test following treatment.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the test instrument should be known by the researchers prior to administering it to the study's sample of students. In order to determine whether the test was valid or reliable depending on the instrument utilized, the researchers administered a tryout exam to other students. Thus, an analysis was conducted to determine the test's validity, reliability, degree of difficulty, and discriminating power once the trial result was obtained.

Procedure of Collecting Data

The following steps were taken by the researcher in order to collect data:

a) Pre-test

The researcher gave a summary of the ELSA application and some information about the participants' proficiency in speaking English. Pre-test questions were centered around the topic of "Going on vacation." Students had two minutes to rehearse before telling a narrative.

b) Treatment

Two therapies were planned by the researcher. Following a description of the ELSA application, the researcher offered some application-related queries. Ninety minutes were needed for this procedure.

c) Post-test

A post-test is an assessment given to participants as a gauge following treatment. The researcher gives a post-test to the students at the most recent meeting to find out how much their speaking skills have improved. The efficacy of the research done to ascertain the individuals' knowledge after therapy is evaluated using a post-test. The questions on the pre-test and post-test are identical.

The following table illustrates how the test is evaluated using a rubric derived from Brown (1988) to gauge each student's unique improvement:

Catego ry	Vowel	Consona nt	Word stress	Senten ce stress	Fluenc y
5	Pronounc es vowel correctly all the time (30)	Pronounc es consonants correctly all the time (25)	Places stress on the right syllable of multisyllabi c words all the time (20)	Place stress on focus words and other key words all the time (15)	Has complete fluency in the language such his speech is fully accepted (10)
4	Pronounc es vowels	Pronounc es consonant	Places stress on the right	Place stress on focus words	Able to use the language

	correctly most of time (24)	correctly most of time (20)	syllable of multisyllabi c words, but misplaces it on a few words (16)	and other key words most of time (12)	fluently on all levels normally pertinent to profession al need (8)
3	Make in consistent vowel errors (18)	Make in consistent consonant errors (15)	Place stress on the right syllable of multisyllabi c words, but miss place it on certain words (12)	Place stress on focus words and other key words sometimes (9)	Can discuss particular interests of competen ce with reasonabl e ease (6)
2	Pronounc es some vowels incorrectly consistently (12)	Pronounc es some consonant incorrectly consistently (10)	Place stress on the right syllable of multisyllabi c words, but miss place it on large	Frequent misplace stress on focus words and other key words (6)	Can handle with confident, but not with facility (4)

number of words.

(8)

1	Vowel errors are frequent (6)	Consonant errors are frequent (5)	Frequently miss places stress on multisyllabic words (4)	Sentence stress is rarely identified (3)	Frequent repetition always do correction on spoken ability (2)
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Brown (1988) divided the requirements for students' pronunciation proficiency into five groups, which are as follows:

Scores	Categories
85-100	Very good
75-84	Good
60-74	Fair
40-59	Bad
0-39	Very bad

Data Analysis

The author performed a paired sample t test to see if there has been a significant improvement in the pronunciation of the students' words. The t-test (sample paired test) was employed for the hypothesis test).

The result of the hypothesis can be interpreted as follows:

Ha: If Sig. (p-value) ≤ α = 0.05, it means hypothesis is accepted

Ho: If Sig. (p-value) ≥ α = 0.05, it means hypothesis is not accepted

Description: *H_a*: There is improvement by using ELSA speak application on students' pronunciation ability

H₀: There is no improvement by using ELSA speak application on students' pronunciation ability

The researcher used the SPSS (Statistic Product and Statistical Solution) version 22.0 application to evaluate the mean score, standard deviation, and t-test results in order to quantify the pre- and post-test data

In research method, space 1.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The study's conclusions were associated with the pupils' pre- and post-test scores. Before receiving treatment, students take a pre-test using the ELSA Speak program to gauge how well they can pronounce dialogue passages. After receiving treatment, a post-test is administered to compare the pronunciation skills of the pupils. After administering a pre- and post-test, the results of the students were acquired. Based on the pre- and post-test results, data analysis was produced. The pronunciation scores of the pupils on the pre- and post-tests shows the following results.

Table 1. Data description

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	23	40	78	58,35	9,133
Post-Test	23	65	95	80,83	7,414

Table 2 The Students' Score Pre-Test

No	Students' Initial	Score	Classification
1.	AK	70	Good
2.	CM	48	Bad
3.	DT	40	Bad
4.	EB	53	Bad
5.	GL	60	Fair
6.	JL	58	Bad
7.	JH	43	Bad
8	KL	64	Fair
9.	MS	53	Bad
10.	MS	58	Bad
11.	MK	73	Good
12.	MR	78	Good
13.	MK	64	Fair
14.	RT	60	Fair
15.	RL	52	Bad
16.	RT	62	Fair
17.	RD	53	Bad
18.	SR	60	Fair
19.	SS	58	Bad
20.	VH	70	Good
21.	YB	53	Bad
22.	NS	52	Bad
23.	FR	60	Fair
	Total		1342
	Mean Score		58.35

Table 3 The Percentage of students' Pre-test Score

Score	Classification	Frequencies	Percentage
85-100	Very good	0	-
75-84	Good	4	17%
60-74	Fair	7	31%
40-59	Bad	12	52%
0-39	Very Bad	0	-

Table 4 The Students' Score Post Test

No	Students' Initial	Score	Classification
1.	AK	80	Good
2.	CM	75	Good
3.	DT	64	Fair
4.	EB	78	Good
5.	GL	87	Very good
6.	JL	69	Fair
7.	JH	84	Very good
8.	KL	75	Good
9.	MS	78	Good
10.	MS	92	Very good
11.	MK	89	Very good
12.	MR	87	Very good
13.	MK	75	Good
14.	RT	80	Good
15.	RL	82	Good
16.	RT	84	Good
17.	RD	95	Very good
18.	SR	78	Good
19.	SS	82	Good
20.	VH	78	Good
21.	YB	92	Very good
22.	NS	80	Good
23.	FR	75	Good
	Total		1859
	Mean Score		80,83

Table 5 The Percentage of Students' Post-test Score

Score	Classification	Frequencies	Percentage
85-100	Very good	7	31%
75-84	Good	14	61%
60-74	Fair	2	8%
40-59	Bad	0	-
0-39	Very bad	0	-

Table 6 Paired Sample t-test

Paired Differences									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of The Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pre-Test	-	10,317	2,151	-	-	-	10,449	2	<.001
Post-Test	22,478	7	1	26,940	18,017			2	1

Table 4.6 displays the two-tailed significance value of 0.001, indicating the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H1) and the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that students' pronunciation can be improved by utilizing the ELSA Speak Application.

Discussion

Using the ELSA Speak program, the researcher was able to improve the pronunciation skills of the students. Using a variety of ELSA Speak capabilities, the

researcher employed video chat to assist students in expressing their thoughts in response to images or videos.

Speaking is a person's means of expressing their emotions and ideas. Speaking ability is one of the many components of English classes that are essentially vital. We must become fluent in one language because speaking is necessary in daily life. The findings of the researcher's data analysis are covered in this section. The researcher took the following three actions to obtain the study's results:

Pre-testing is the first stage in conducting this research. The procedure of explaining taking a vacation was used to administer the pre-test. The pre-test results indicate a mean score of 58.35, indicating poor pronunciation skills among the pupils. It was discovered that the pupils' pronouncing skills in this instance remained severely deficient. According to the pre-test results, not a single kid received a good or very good categorization. Lack of confidence and disinterest in learning English are two issues faced by pupils who do not speak the language well. The researcher comes to the conclusion that students are still not very interested in picking up English as a second language in the modern day. This step's objective is to use the ELSA Speak application to measure the kids' scores prior to receiving treatment. Using the ELSA Speak application, the researcher applied for two treatments to be given to the students in this second step. In the first session, the researcher gave students instructions on how to utilize the ELSA Speak program. Two cellphones were employed by the researcher as teaching media tools because the face-to-face research at SMP Kristen Tateli did not let pupils to carry cellphones to school. The researcher instructed students to follow the ELSA Speak application's discourse in the first treatment. Next, one by one, the students were called by the researcher to engage in direct practice by reading the dialogue text.

The researcher asked students to follow the dialogue text in the ELSA Speak program in order to replicate the same occurrence in the second treatment. Subsequently, the investigator instructed the pupils to rehearse at home and transmit the outcomes using WhatsApp. Each of these interventions aims to teach students

while simultaneously examining whether the ELSA Application may help them become more proficient in speaking English and with pronunciation.

The researcher measured the students' pronunciation following the treatment by administering a post-test after it was completed. The identical procedure as in the pre-test is repeated by the researcher. Students received an average score of 80.83 based on the data gathered by the researchers. The student's post-test mean score is considered good. The pupils exhibit their proficiency in speaking at this level.

Based on the scores, it can be said that the ELSA Speaking application improves students' pronunciation. A few pupils who received the treatment twice shown a notable improvement. It has been demonstrated that students find learning to speak in English enjoyable and that the ELSA Speak application is very simple to use. With its various features that make learning English easier, the ELSA Speak application helps pique students' interest in learning the language.

The pre-test results of 23 students had a mean score of 58.35, as shown in Table 4.2. Table 4.4's post-test results show that nearly all students' scores improved to mean scores of 80,83 after receiving treatment.

According to Table 4.6's Pre-test and Post-test comparison results, students can improve their word pronunciation with the aid of the ELSA Speak program. Students' interest in learning English, especially speaking, can be piqued by using the ELSA Speak program.

Conclusion

The ELSA Speak application can help eighth grade students at SMP Kristen Tateli enhance their pronunciation skills, according to the study's findings and the topic of discussion. Pre- and post-test results are used by the ELSA Speak application to demonstrate how students' English ability has increased. The findings of the data analysis show that students find it simpler to master pronunciation and English speaking proficiency when they utilize the user-friendly and highly targeted ELSA Speak application. Additionally, the pupils pick up some new words.

One of the languages that must be learned in the modern era in order to support oneself later on is English. The author believes that using a medium for English instruction could be motivational. We may conclude that junior high school students can improve their speaking skills with the ELSA Speak Application based on the research findings and the topic of discussion. Using the ELSA Speaking Apps, the pre- and post-test data were used to determine how well the students were speaking English. It is evident that junior high school students can easily study English on their phones by utilizing the user-friendly ELSA Speak Apps.

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