

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

In this study, the researcher examines several parts are presented in this chapter. The first part is the background which elaborates the reasons why the researcher is exploring the features in ELSA Speak that the students perceive as beneficial to pronunciation, and the strategies used by English Language Education Department (ELED) students to learn pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak is presented. The following part discusses the research questions for this study. Then, the researcher explores in more detail about the research objectives of the study or purposes to be investigated. The part related to the significance of the study discussed in the next section. Finally, the chapter organization discusses the content of each chapter in this study.

### **Background of The Research**

In learning English, there are several aspects that must be understood. According to Miangah and Nezarat (2012), English has three main aspects to learn including phonetic, grammar, and vocabulary. The branch of linguistics known as Phonetics and Phonology examines how people speak or make sounds. As with any other components of the English language, learning Phonetic and Phonology is crucial. According to Maslakhatin and Lianawati (2017), one of the English skills that Indonesian students must grasp when they want to study the language is pronunciation. According to Rahmania and Mandasari (2021), it is important to learn pronunciation to communicate and understand meaning in communicating with other people, who have different accents. The importance of learning pronunciation for students is to make it easier to communicate in English. According to Prashant, P. D. (2018), pronunciation plays an important role in speaking English to express our ideas. In learning English pronunciation there are several challenges. According to

Tambunsaribu, G., & Simatupang, M.S. (2021), Indonesian students face challenges in learning English pronunciation. It was found that: 1) English has many different sounds for a vowel (for example: the letter 'a' is pronounced as [æ], [ɒ], [ə], etc.); 2) Indonesian does not have silent consonants and vowels (for example: g, h, k, and e without sound); 3) The plosive consonants are not pronounced clearly in Indonesian, such as the words no, duck and cause, etc. According to Apriyanti and Ayu (2020), if the students have a willingness to develop their pronunciation, they could learn autonomously by taking the advantage of technological development. If they can pronounce the language correctly, the interlocutor was understanding what they are trying to say. In learning English pronunciation in the digital era, most people choose to study autonomous. According to Chaing (2019), three terms that best represent autonomous learning are conscious, active, and passionate learning. Learning English autonomously can be achieved in various ways, one of which is by using technology.

Nowadays, most people use smartphones to communicate with each other. They can do anything including communicating, texting, and doing online learning. However, as members of society, people must continue to interact, especially if they are learning a language. Various applications that can be used to train language to improve skills are available for them, one application is the ELSA Speak. ELSA Speak is an application for learning English that helps students to speak English more fluently. Some studies have been done by researcher. According to Samad and Ismail (2020), ELSA Speak, which stands for English Language Speech Assistant, is one of the tools that can support education in the era of 4.0. ELSA Speak is equipped with some features that can help learners pronounce words, phrases, and sentences with an American accent better. According to Darsih and Asikin (2020), the ELSA Speak provides more than 1,200 lessons and more than 60 topics for users to practice pronunciation, starting from practicing pronunciation of English words, phrases,

and sentences. ELSA Speak uses English as the base language and users can choose the target language, according to what they want to learn.

Learning pronunciation autonomously is not an easy task, so students need assistance to give them guidance and feedback. ELSA Speak is one of the applications that provide instant feedback which help students learn autonomously. It can attract students to learn a new language because this application makes it easy for them to learn a language with various features available. According to Darsih et al. (2020), students may speak English fluently, simply, and with confidence by using the English Learning Speech Assistant (ELSA) Speak program. Students were also receiving exercises that are tailored and interactive according to the topic they were choose and offer natural learning methods, so that students can benefit from it.

In speaking English, students must pay attention to the pronunciation and articulation in the language correctly, so that there are no mistakes in understanding the meaning. According to Yuruk (2020), one of the fundamental requirements for learner competence is pronunciation, which also requires consideration in language education. The ELSA Speak is a solution to facilitate autonomous learning of correct pronunciation in a foreign language. According to Sarmita et al. (2019), students can tell someone does not speak English well just by listening to him speak. Therefore, learning pronunciation in English is very important so that there are no mistakes in understanding sentences in communicating with each other.

ELSA Speak as an application can be an interactive autonomous learning platform to facilitate learning to speak English correctly. ELSA Speak can be accessed through a website on a desktop or laptop, smartphone, or tablet. This application is available for free, but there are also some features that can be accessed only through a premium account. According to Becker and Edalatishams (2019), ELSA Speak has seven Best English Pronunciation features

that support students in speaking English fluently and clearly. The feature offered by ELSA Speak is an interactive dictionary, which helps users understand how to pronounce language words or phrases correctly. According to Becker and Edalatishams (2019), the ELSA Speak was developed with artificial intelligence (AI) which provides feedback. Students can learn to pronounce words, phrases, and sentences in English, then the AI technology in the ELSA Speak provides an assessment of how accurate students' pronunciation is. According to Becker and Edalatishams (2019), the AI (artificial intelligence) technology in this application analyzes students' voice recording based on pronunciation, intonation, and fluency. According to Becker and Edalatishams (2019), ELSA Speak provides daily mini-training sessions to help students become more proficient in speaking English. Users must first sign up for an ELSA Speak learner account before they may access the application.

The subjects in this study were students of the English Language Education Department (ELED) who had attended Capita Selecta on Linguistics (CSL) course and had studied material on the ELSA Speak. Based on the researcher's observation at an English Language Education Department (ELED) of a private university in Yogyakarta, at least the course utilizes ELSA Speak in teaching and learning. This course is Capita Selecta in Linguistics. There are materials about the ELSA Speak in this course. Then, English Language Education Department (ELED) introduces the application to encourage students to improve pronunciation skills. Therefore, the emergence of enthusiasm from English Language Education Department (ELED) students to start using the ELSA Speak, because this application is practically used in class and outside the classroom. It turns out that many students already have applications and create accounts, but some do not.

Based on the previous research above, this research has similarities which also discuss the elements of pronunciation that ELSA Speak does to support students in learning pronunciation. The two previous studies discussed show to find out and understand the use of the ELSA Speak application by students, students' answers in interviews were used. However, there are still many differences between previous research and this research. This study uses English Language Education (ELED) students as participants who are different from previous studies and have different perspectives on research objectives. In addition, this study also has another focus on the features in ELSA Speak that the ELED students perceived as beneficial for their autonomous learning in pronunciation and the strategies implemented by ELED students to learn pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak.

So, the researcher is interested in exploring the features implemented in ELSA Speak which are considered useful by ELED students for their pronunciation in autonomous learning, and to explore ELED students' strategies for learning pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak. From these observations, ELSA Speak brought about a significant change in outcomes for students, teachers, and other researchers. There are several studies that agree with this. According to Hung et al. (2021), ELSA Speak significantly improves students' English pronunciation skills. so that it will make it easier for students, teachers, and other researchers to learn pronunciation using the ELSA Speak application. From the results of these observations, the researcher is interested in conducting further research related to "Using ELSA Speak as an Autonomous Learning Platform in Pronunciation Among English Language Education Department Students" at a private university in Yogyakarta.

### **Identification of The Problem**

Autonomous language learning through online platforms mostly uses English as the language of instruction. ELSA Speak can be one of the tools that users can used to achieve their goal of mastering a new language, including mastering English. In ELSA Speak the user

can choose the level that was be done to study. In addition, in the ELSA Speak users can saw the feedback and scores obtained according to the ability to pronounce the correct language. The researcher observed that the practice features in ELSA Speak can make users interactive and competitive in mastering foreign languages, especially English.

The researcher found that the target score can reduce the understanding of users who are not English Language Education Department (ELED) students because they have to achieve the target score without focusing on their understanding of the concept of use. To get more scores, users can learn more by doing it repeatedly so that the pronunciation in speaking becomes more precise and correct, so that it looks like a native speaker. Therefore, a good strategy to get more scores and the highest ranking, it is not easy for users, it takes time to be smooth and precise. In this way, many problems were discovered during the researcher's observation of non-ELED users. First, increasingly competitive users do not spend their time regularly mastering the language, they do not use a good strategy for understanding a new language using ELSA Speak, and they do not know much about pronunciation in the language. Second, users who use ELSA Speak is a challenge for students to autonomous learning, students do not know which practice features in practice give them the benefit of learning the target language in pronunciation, many features are still not used, so it needs to be explored again, lack of understanding strategies when autonomous learning, because it requires a strong intention, responsibility with oneself.

### **Delimitation of The Problem**

This research took place at a private university in Yogyakarta. Specific features of ELSA Speak which will be the focus of investigations in this study include, Various lessons and levels, instant feedback, and APA Symbols. The researcher chose this feature, because it is based on observations made on ELED students that this feature is more often used in learning pronunciation independently, and this feature helps students improve their

pronunciation, because it is equipped with feedback that can detect errors automatically, so that students can monitor how far the improvement is obtained in learning pronunciation. The researcher used a qualitative approach, with descriptive as a design. To explore ELED Students experiences using ELSA Speak. There are three criteria for participants in the research. First, six-participant from ELED Students batch 2020 at private university in Yogyakarta. Second, students have taken the CSL course. Students have been material about the ELSA Speak application in the second semester, and got a minimum grade of B in that course. Thrid, students who use the ELSA Speak application at least three Months. The findings of this research demonstrate the features in ELSA Speak that the ELED students perceived as beneficial for their autonomous learning and how the strategies implemented by ELED students to learn autonomously using ELSA Speak.

### **Research Question**

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates two research question. The research questions have been formulated as follows:

1. What are the features in ELSA Speak that the ELED students perceived as beneficial for their autonomous learning in pronunciation?
2. What are the strategies used by ELED students to learn pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak?

### **Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the research are:

1. To explore the features in ELSA Speak that the ELED students perceived as beneficial for their autonomous learning in pronunciation.
2. To explore the strategies implemented by ELED students to learn pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak.

## **Significance of the Problem**

The findings of the research are expected to provide benefits and knowledge for students, teachers, and future researchers:

### ***Students***

This research helps provide information about the application of ELSA Speak. In addition, this application is expected to be used by students as a consideration whether they should use the ELSA Speak in learning English. So that this research can be used as a reference for learning strategies and mastering language pronunciation using ELSA Speak as an autonomous language learning platform.

### ***Teachers***

The research findings are anticipated to prompt discussion about the types of exercises in the practice features in the ELSA Speak can be used as an autonomous language learning tool for teaching. Thus, teachers can consider using ELSA Speak in their learning in the classroom. Teachers can also use this research as a reference to better understand learning strategies using the ELSA Speak.

### ***Future Researchers***

This research can help other researchers to get information about using ELSA Speak as an Autonomous Learning Platform It is also hoped that it can serve as a further reference for those who want to study the same topic based on different points of view and goals.

## **Organization of the Research**

This research consists of five chapters. The research is introduced in chapter one of the present. The chapter makes several important points. The first chapter describes the



research background the motivations behind the selection of a research topic, research identification, problem boundaries, research questions, research objectives, which examine various exercises in practice features and methods, and research significance. The research's importance then highlights the advantages for groups of people.

The Literature Review in chapter two. This provides a pronunciation skill, autonomous learning, learning pronunciation using online platform, ELSA Speak, features that can be used to learn pronunciation autonomously using ELSA Speak, strategies used by students to learn pronunciation with ELSA Speak autonomously, review of related study, and conceptual framework. This chapter also explains the theory related to the study. The third chapter is methodology. In this chapter, the researcher also explains how to analyze the data. The fourth chapter contains findings and discussion. This chapter presents the results of data analysis. The fifth chapter contains conclusions and recommendations. This chapter provides the summary of the research and recommendations from researcher. Recommendations are given to students, teacher, and future researchers.