Chapter One

Introduction

The researcher explains several points discussed in this chapter. First, the research background explains general information about the research topic, research context and problems at the research location, review of previous research and gaps in previous research, and the researcher also mentions the importance of the research and research objectives. The researcher identifies problems that occur at the research location. The research limitations explain the scope and the focus of this research.

Backgrounds of the Research

Speaking is the most critical factor in communicating in English. If someone says incorrectly, it can have fatal consequences and can create errors in communication. Khamkhien (2010) argued that Speaking ability creates a first impression when someone shares with others. He added that speaking is widely thought to be the most important of the four language skills because, it is the primary way of communicating and forming relationships with people (as cited in Vu, 2023, p. 430).

Speaking English fluently can open up many opportunities in areas such as education, work, travel, and personal growth. Robert and Meenakshi (2022) argue that speaking skills can help people grow in their careers and give more benefits to people in terms of education and business. Speaking skills are an essential part of education because they can help students express their thoughts and ideas effectively. This allows students to communicate clearly and confidently, enabling students to participate effectively in class discussions and presentations. Robert and Meenakshi (2022) also stated that with speaking skills students can contribute to class discussions and debates, and students will be able to give better presentations than before after practicing speaking skills.

To practice speaking skills, English students can use the technology. Based on a study conducted by De Jong et al. (2012) with this very sophisticated era and rapidly developing technology, language learners no longer need to learn the components of speaking skills in a course or study with a teacher. Students can use various types of technology to learn speaking skills, with different experiences. Santosa et al. (2021) also stated technology in education is very important for the transition of learning which provides a different dimension.

The use of technology is very important for language learning. Technology really helps students in finding information and solving problems in learning. According to Agustian and Salsabila (2021) utilizing technology in language learning is the right thing in the current era of modernization, especially since distance learning requires students to be more creative and look for lot of information from various learning platforms. Student can use Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL begin with a study by Twarog and Pereszlenyi in the 1980s that studied languages and supported learning those languages over the telephone. The previous researcher used the telephone to provide support and feedback to distance language learners (Hashim et al., (2017). Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an approach that helps and enhances language learning through the use of mobile devices (Valarmathi 2011 as cited in Rahmawati et al., 2023, p, 2).

MALL offers several advantages for language learners. MALL provide students with easy access to language learning resources, such as online dictionaries, language apps, podcasts, and language learning games. It also allows students to practice anytime and anywhere if students have their mobile devices with them. The convenience and portability of mobile devices make it possible for learners to fit language learning into their busy schedules and learn on the go. Arvanitis and Krystalli (2021) added that Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) provides more opportunities for students to develop all six communication skills, including comprehension and production of written speech, comprehension and

production of spoken language, aural interaction, and aural and written mediation. Several the applications in MALL support students for practicing speaking skill are ELSA Speak, Duolingo, Hello Talk, and Babble. This Study will focus on ELSA Speak as one of the tools to help students learn and practice their speaking skill.

ELSA Speak is an application that can help students practice speaking skills. According to Darsih and Asikin (2020) ELSA Speak is an application that utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) and voice recognition to help improve pronunciation in English. With ELSA Speak technology, it can detect user pronunciation errors with an accuracy of more than 95%. Samad and Ismail (2020) also argue that ELSA Speak is one of the learning media that supports education in the 4.0 era, designed with various features that aim to improve students' American pronunciation through practicing various correct words, phrases and sentences. ELSA Speak is also equipped with a microphone icon that students can use directly to practice speaking as if their voice has been heard. According to a study by Dhivya et al., (2023) ELSA improves speaking proficiency by allowing students to listen precisely and repeat content as needed. Therefore, receptive listening competence causes better speaking skills. Darsih and Asikin (2020) also added that Users can practice their pronunciation of words, phrases, and English sentences by accessing more than 1,200 lessons covering more than 60 themes on ELSA Speak.

Currently, some students majoring in English Language Education Department (ELED) at an Islamic Private University in Yogyakarta have used ELSA Speak application to help with the language learning process especially the speaking skill. One of the courses in the English Language Education Department that requires students to use the ELSA Speak application to practice English speaking skills is the Capital Selecta on Linguistics course. Learning to use the ELSA Speak application requires time adaptation for students. Even though the teacher has explained how to use it, there are still difficulties for students,

especially, when students try to say several words and what the student says is always wrong, the result is that the student cannot continue to the next step. Also based on the researcher experience, not all students were successful in using the ELSA Speak application to practicing their speaking skills, because students are inconsistent and only practice for the formality of attending a class. However, there are also many students who have succeeded in practicing their speaking skills because, students use different strategies in using the ELSA Speak application.

There have been several previous studies regarding ELSA Speak, specifically in the context of speaking English. Apart from that, studies on ELSA Speak focus on various aspects such as the effect of using ELSA Speak on students' speaking abilities and Student perceptions on the use of ELSA. Studies that have been carried out oleh Aswaty and Indari (2022), Pangastuti (2021), Zakiah and Gumelar (2023) conclude that the use of ELSA Speak proves that there has been a significant increase in student performance and the value of students' speaking abilities. In addition, other researchers also mentioned that ELSA Speak effectively improves students' proficiency in speaking and articulating English words. Another research on the ELSA Speak focus on the student's perception on the use ELSA Speak by Anes et al.(2023), Yosintha and Rekha (2022) conclude that students like the ELSA speak learning application. The students have been motivated to learn independently through this tool because it is more flexible and can be used anywhere and anytime.

Although there has been many research regarding the use of ELSA Speak, most of the previous research focuses on the effect of ELSA Speak on students' speaking skills. In this research, the focus on challenges face and strategies use ELSA Speak by students English Language Education Department in using ELSA Speak, especially for practicing their speaking skill. In addition, this research specifically targeted prospective English teachers rather than focusing on students or individuals in a general educational context.

Through this research, the aim to be achieved in this research is to determine students' perceptions on using ELSA Speak as a language learning application and to assess language learning challenges faced and strategies for using ELSA Speak to practice their speaking skill. Hopefully the results of this research will be useful for students who are still unsure or want to start using the Elsa Speak application to help with language learning especially to practice their speaking skill. For the teachers, this research is expected to become an input on a new strategy for using ELSA Speak to teach speaking skills.

Identification of the Problem

ELSA Speak is one of the learning media to practicing speaking skills which is applied to English Language Education Department Students Class of 2022. Because of this, there are several topics that can be investigated on the use of ELSA Speak are follow. The first issue that can be research on this topic is the English Language Education Department 2022 students experienced using the ELSA Speak application to practice English speaking skills, whether after practicing speaking skills using the ELSA Speak application, the students' abilities improved or there was no change. The second is the challenges in practicing English speaking skill using ELSA Speak, after students English Language Education Department using ELSA Speak to practice speaking skills. Then, the researcher investigated the strategies applied in overcoming challenges when practicing English speaking skill using ELSA Speak.

Delimitation of the Research

This research be limited to students' perceptions about practicing English speaking skills using ELSA Speak in terms of challenges in using ELSA Speak for practicing English speaking skill and strategies to overcome the challenges in using ELSA Speak for practicing English speaking skill. This research take place on English Language Education Departments in Yogyakarta. The participants in this study use the third semester students' class of 2022

who had used ELSA Speak in the Capita Selecta on Linguistics Course. Thirdly, the researcher only uses six English Language Education Department (ELED) students' batch 2022 to avoid data saturation. Finally, the only research method which is used in this study is qualitative method. Qualitative method to construct the research descriptive as a design to obtain accurate and comprehensive results based on the user experience of the ELSA Speak application.

Research Question

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated two research questions regarding student perceptions on the use of ELSA Speak for practicing English speaking skills:

1. What are the challenges faced by students of the English Language Education Department in using ELSA Speak to practice their speaking skills?

2. What are the strategies used by students of the English Language Education Department to solve the challenges in using ELSA Speak to practice their speaking skills?

Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions above, this research has two objectives:

1. To explore the challenges faced by students of the English Language Education Department in using ELSA Speak to practice their speaking skill.

2. To explore the strategies used by students of the English Language Education Department to solve the challenges in using ELSA Speak to practice their speaking skills

Significance of the Research

The research being conducted is expected to provide more benefits and knowledge for students, teachers, and further researchers.

Students

This research can help students to find out more about ELSA Speak. Students will know the challenges in using ELSA Speak and strategies to solve the challenges in practicing using ELSA Speak. Additionally, after reading this research, students can adjust their approach to get maximum results when practicing using ELSA Speak

Teachers

It is hoped that the results of this research can be a reference for teachers to inform students about the challenges and strategies to solve the challenges for using ELSA Speak. Apart from that, after reading this research, teachers can see students' perceptions of using ELSA Speak to practice speaking skills and the teacher will consider whether the ELSA Speak application is still suitable for use in class as a tool to practice speaking skills.

Institutions

It is hoped that the research provides insights into the effectiveness of technology in language learning, informs decisions on integrating such tools into the curriculum, and helps in tailoring teaching strategies to address students' challenges in language acquisition.

Future Researchers

The results of this research can be used by other researchers who are interested in exploring the use of ELSA Speak to practice English speaking skills. It is also hoped that the results of this research can become a reference from a different perspective for parties who will conduct research in the same field regarding the challenges and strategies for practicing speaking skills using ELSA Speak.

Organization of the Research

This research consists of three chapters. The first chapter describes the research background, the discussion started from about speaking skill, the part of speaking skill, how to practice speaking skill, media for supporting student for practice speaking skill. Furthermore, there are identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, research question, research objective, significance of the research, and organization of the research as the structure of this chapter. The research questions then highlight students' challenges and strategies for using ELSA Speak to practice English speaking skills.

Chapter two is a literature review. The discussion starts from understanding about speaking skills, components of speaking skills, then about ELSA Speak, and ELSA Speak features. In chapter two, the challenges and strategies used by students in practicing speaking skills using ELSA Speak are also mentioned. This chapter explains the theory related to the general description of ELSA speak as a learning media for practice English speaking skill.

Chapter three is methodology. This chapter discusses how the researcher conduct the research. Qualitative method is used for this research design. The research take place in English Education Department in an Islamic Private University at Yogyakarta. 6 participants that have experience in using ELSA Speak for practicing English speaking skill who took the Capital Selecta course in Linguistics. The data collection is using interview with instrument including pen, paper, and cellphone. The data is analyzed by transcribing, member checking, coding, and trustworthiness.

Chapter four is findings and discussions. This chapter presents the results of data analysis based on interviews with participants. Apart from that, in this chapter the researcher discusses the research results.

Chapter five is conclusions and discussion. This chapter gives general answers to research questions and offers researcher recommendations. Recommendations are made to teacher, students, and other researchers.