

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this research, several points are explained in this chapter. First, this research will discuss the background related to the research that are written, namely A Qualitative Exploration of Adult EFL Students Strategies in Mastering English Pronunciation Using Mobile Applications ELSA Speak; the research context and problems in this research; a review of previous research; essential things in research; and the purpose of this research. Finally, identify the problem and the research discussed in this case. With this, the research presented in terms of scope and focus. The research question, which will serve as a guide for analysis, will be shown in the next chapter. Of course, this research was conducted objectively and identifies certain objectives. After that, some crucial parts of this research will be highlighted clearly. Finally, chapter organization is presented with a description of each chapter.

Background of the Research

In learning English speaking is important. In speaking, there are important components that need to be considered to speak well and not cause misunderstandings when communicating with people. One component of speaking competence is pronunciation. Good pronunciation will lead to good speaking. When studying English as a foreign language, pronunciation is crucial. Individuals who pronounce words poorly often lead to misunderstandings in interpersonal communication, and in some instances, their bad pronunciation even results in tragic outcomes like scuffles (Wicaksana, 2022). This is not easy for some EFL students to learn. There are still many of them who are confused about pronouncing a word because they are only taught the four

skills in the 2006 curriculum, namely speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Students often find it difficult to pronounce words in English because learning English is very complex, and there are many factors that make students successful or unsuccessful in learning a language. Therefore, the use of Mobile Assistant Language Learning is very varied and can help EFL students master English pronunciation. One application that can be used is ELSA Speak. The ELSA Speak application helps users pronounce words more accurately in English by using speech recognition technology. The ELSA Speak application offers users more courses and subjects to practice on. Practice pronouncing words, phrases, and sentences in English first. One interactive dictionary is a component of the ELSA Speak program that will assist users on how to say the word or phrase they're trying to find (Anggraini, 2022).

According to Yosintha & Rekha (2022), learning pronunciation may be a challenge for many EFL students because studying pronunciation will be related to linguistic and pedagogical aspects. The causes of the pedagogical issues might include things like pedagogical priorities, poor teaching resources, time constraints, ambiguous teaching methodologies, and a lack of expertise in teaching pronunciation (Darcy, 2018; Dixon, 2018). Nowadays, using online resources to learn English can be very easy to access and free. That way, EFL students can utilize technology to learn English pronunciation. Many types of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) can be used to facilitate EFL students who want to master English pronunciation. MALL can usually be defined as a way of learning that makes it easier for students to manage their own learning by using portable devices such as smartphones, tablets, digital notebooks, and others (Cohen & Ezra, 2018; Hoi & Mu, 2021). Using the MALL application, students can learn material and practice English pronunciation skills anytime and anywhere independently. One of them is the ELSA Speak

application. According to Rismawati et al., (2021), ELSA Speak is a virtual language teaching program that can be used by individuals, language schools, universities, and companies throughout the world. It offers a variety of tools and features, such as speech recognition technology, a specially designed and tested curriculum, a free online dictionary, pronunciation, and intonation checker, and free assessment exams throughout the program, the ELSA Speak application is highly recommended for students looking to improve their speaking abilities (Karim et al., 2023).

Pronouncing words correctly in English presents special difficulties for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Though there is hope for assistance in this quest, there is still a lack of research on learners' perspectives on how ELSA Speak supports their pronunciation mastery and how they use the application in their learning process. Based on observations I made, some students still use this application randomly. Some of them only use the short speech analyzer feature and don't practice regularly so they can't use this application to its full potential. There are many features besides the speech analyzer, namely, study sets, dictionaries, course recommendations, and even games so that ELSA Speak application users don't get bored of learning.

Research related to the MALL application carried out by Yosintha & Rekha (2022). The study looked at how students felt about utilizing the online pronunciation training program, ELSA Speak. Students in the English Department participated in interviews and questionnaires to gather data. Most participants had positive opinions on ELSA Speak, although there were some unfavorable remarks as well. To address the requirements of students further, the researchers advise combining ELSA Speak with other resources, enlisting more teachers, and encouraging group projects.

The second research was conducted by Anggarini (2023), The study finds that the ELSA Speak application may enhance and support students' enthusiasm and pronouncing abilities. Thanks to the app, students may study English vocabulary and phrases independently. Students' pronunciation has improved, and their use of the software has been convenient for them. Three rounds of action research in the classroom were used in this study, which featured Easy English Course students. In general, the application effectively engages learners in learning a new language and enhances their motivation during pronouncing lessons.

Although there has been a lot of research concerned with integrating technology and online resources to improve pronunciation skills in EFL learners, most of the research focuses on the difficulties and ways to overcome the pronunciation skills they experience. In the current research, researchers focus on finding out how ELSA Speak can improve EFL student pronunciation students use and how students integrate the mobile application ELSA Speak as a medium to improve their English pronunciation.

There are several reasons why this research was conducted. First, the use of mobile applications is very often used in various fields, and learning and teaching activities also often implement the use of this technology. Using technology to improve pronunciation skills is an efficient way for EFL students. According to Shafwati (2022) If we pronounce English words incorrectly or inappropriately, it can lead to misunderstanding, even to the point where the conversation's intended message is lost because the word's or sentence's meaning is not correctly communicated. There are many online resource application media that can be used to improve

pronunciation skills. Technology in the form of educational media helps to make learning more interesting, successful, and enjoyable. It also helps to make teaching more fruitful by enhancing teachers' instructional skills (Wongsuriya, 2020). Different developers have developed many applications for smartphones and laptops that are very helpful to students in modeling pronunciation and practicing both theory and pronunciation of English words or sentences (Wongsuriya, 2020). These applications are used in the pronunciation course to make it easier for students to pronounce difficult words or sentences in English.

Second, the reason why EFL students must use online resources apps for their study is There is one online media application that is very often used by young people today. This application is called ELSA Speak; it goes beyond simple amusement with this software. The speaking class has not yet gotten extra attention when it comes to pronunciation. They thus require engaging educational materials, such as the ELSA Speak app, which may boost their motivation and expand their vocabulary, both of which will help them speak more fluently (Karim et al., 2023) This research aims to determine whether ELSA Speak can improve EFL student pronunciation and how students use this tool to improve their pronunciation skills.

Identification of The Problem

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners encounter unique challenges in mastering English pronunciation. While mobile applications like ELSA Speak offer potential support in this endeavor, the perceptions of learners regarding the ways in which ELSA Speak aids their pronunciation mastery and the strategies they employ to integrate this application into their learning process remain underexplored. Based on my observation, students still randomly used ELSA Speaks application without knowing how to use it systematically.

The second problem is that EFL learners, in their pursuit of improved pronunciation, may benefit from integrating technology, such as ELSA Speak, into their language learning journey. However, the extent to which ELSA Speak effectively supports learners' pronunciation mastery and the diverse strategies students employ to incorporate this mobile application into their learning routines have yet to be comprehensively understood. Based on the observation, some students used the same strategy in using ELSA Speak to support their pronunciation mastery. For example, students only use ELSA Speak in ability features or topics that directly teach correct pronunciation with speech recognition technology. even though there are many interesting features apart from daily learning. For example, there are dictionaries and game modes that students can use to improve their pronunciation skills.

Delimitation of the problem

Research related to the use of mobile applications such as ELSA Speak is wide in scope. In order to be focused, the current research will be limited to English second language learners or foreign language learner's perceptions of using ELSA Speak, especially English foreign language learners and L2 learners, about the strategies used by EFL students to improve pronunciation using ELSA Speak and how ELSA Speak can support their learning strategy to improve pronunciation. This research will take place in English education at one of the private Islamic universities in Yogyakarta. The participants in this study were students from the class of 2020 who were taking English education and had already taken linguistic classes. The findings in this study will be presented with the title Sounds of Progress: A Qualitative Exploration of EFL Learners' Strategies in Mastering English Pronunciation Using Mobile Application ELSA Speak.

Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research formulates two research questions about English second language learners and L2 learners' perception of the use of oral presentation to improve English speaking skills:

1. What are the benefits of the ELSA Speak application in improving English Pronunciation in EFL Students?
2. How do the students integrate ELSA Speak into their learning strategies to improve pronunciation?

The objectives of The Research

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

1. To explore what are the benefits of ELSA Speak features that can support EFL Students in improving English pronunciation.
2. To investigate EFL students' strategies for improving their pronunciation using ELSA Speak.

Significance of the research

The research carried out is expected to provide more benefits and knowledge for students, teachers, and future researchers.

Students

The mobile application ELSA Speak. This research was used to see what strategies EFL students use when they want to improve their English pronunciation by using the mobile application ELSA Speak. And how they use the tool to support learning in their pronunciation

mastering. This research can also be a reference for students who want to master pronunciation skills using references from technology.

For teachers

This research can be used to help students pronounce words fluently in English by integrating the mobile application ELSA Speak so that it is more effective and can be used anywhere and anytime.

For future research,

The results of this research can be used by other researchers who are interested in doing the same research in this field and can be their reference material. The results of this study also expect opinions from different perspectives for research in the same field.

Organization of the research

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter explains the research background, research identification, problem boundaries, research questions, research objectives, and research significance.

Chapter two contains the literature review. It defines the pronunciation and mobile application field to improve English-speaking skills. This section will explain theories related to the general overview of the strategy for mastering English pronunciation using the mobile application ELSA Speak.

Chapter three contains the methodology. This chapter explains how the research was carried out, including methods, instruments, participants, settings, and data collection techniques. It also explains how researchers analyze data.

Chapter four contains findings and discussion; this chapter present the results of the data analysis.

Chapter five contains conclusions and recommendations. This chapter provides general answers to research questions and recommendations from researchers. Recommendations will be given by teachers, students, and other researchers.