

The Effect of ELSA Speak Application on Students' Vowels Pronunciation Ability at SMK PGRI 1 Giri Banyuwangi

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ABSTRACT

English pronunciation is an important part of language teaching and learning as it affects the communicative competence and efficiency of the learner. One of the most important things in learning English is learning good and correct pronunciation. One of mobile application like ELSA Speak is designed to help students speak English easily, fluently, and confidently. The program features are designed to help students pronounce words such as vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and word stress correctly. The researchers conducted this research to find out whether there is effect or not of ELSA Speak application on students' vowel pronunciation ability of the X MPLB 1 at SMK PGRI 1 Giri Banyuwangi in the 2023/2024 academic year. There were 28 students as the respondents and this research used pre-experimental quantitative method. The pronunciation test was consisted of 24 words and there were 12 vowels used in this research. The research result showed that the mean scores obtained were 28.79 in pre-test, and 42.71 in post-test. The result of t-test is higher than t-table ($26.067 > 2.052$). It can be concluded that there is effect of ELSA Speak application on students' vowel pronunciation proficiency at SMK PGRI 1 Giri Banyuwangi in the academic year 2023/2024.

Keywords: Pronunciation; ELSA Speak Application; Vowels; Monophthongs

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the standard skills that must be mastered by students in addition to reading, listening, and writing (Syafik & Raihany, 2020). According to Brown (1994) and Burns & Joyce (1997) speaking is a tool to communicate and interact with others, by speaking people can obtain or share information, ideas, knowledge and others (Precisely, 2014). To speak in a foreign language in order to share understanding with others, attention to precise language details is required. Speakers must find the most appropriate words and grammar to convey meaning precisely and accurately, and must structure their discourse in such a way that it can be understood by the listener. Fluent English speakers can interact easily with many people, especially foreigners without misunderstanding in any situation. Although speaking is the most difficult aspect in English language teaching and learning.

But with a lot of practice, students get used to speaking English and become fluent, so students should do practice activities not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom. A person who speaks English fluently may have greater opportunities for further education (Fadhil et.al, 2025).

When someone speaks English, they should pay attention to the elements of the language, namely; vocabulary, grammar, fluency and pronunciation. English pronunciation is an important part of language teaching and learning as it affects the communicative competence and efficiency of the learner. One of the most important things in learning English is learning good and correct pronunciation. Pronunciation makes one's proficiency to pronounce a language more useful, especially when speaking orally to others (Cahyani, Chandra, & Arini, 2018). If students lack acceptable pronunciation, it can erode their confidence and limit their social interactions. Listeners judge a speaker's knowledge of the English language by their pronunciation. If the speaker's pronunciation is very poor, it has negatively affected their overall language ability. Poor pronunciation is very difficult to listen to and requires more effort and concentration from the listener. Different pronunciation had different meanings, mispronunciation led to misunderstanding in communication (Wangi and Lestari 2020). In pronunciation, it is also necessary to understand about suprasegmental and segmental features in order to improve the quality of pronunciation mastery. Suprasegmental features are stress, tone, and pause. While, segmental features are certain combinations of consonants and vowels.

Vowel sounds in English consist of three types of vowel sounds, namely pure vowels (monophthongs), diphthongs, and triphthongs. A monophthong is one simple type of vowel sound that does not require changing the tongue when speaking (Zahroh & Wiyanto 2020). The monophthongs indicates that the vowel is pronounced in exactly one tone and one mouth position. There are twelve monophthongs in English such as [i:], [i], [e], [æ], [a:], [ɒ], [ɔ:], [ʊ], [u], [ʌ], [ɜ:], [ə] (Sari, Herman, and Dwiputri 2023). Pure vowels or monophthongs themselves are divided into two, short vowels and long vowels. Short vowels are [i], [e], [æ], [ɒ], [ʊ], [ə], [ʌ]. While there are five long vowels, these are vowels that tend to be longer than short vowels. The long vowel symbol consists of one vowel symbol plus a long sign made of two dots [:] such as: [i:], [ə:], [ɪ:], [ɔ:], and [u:] (Setiyono, 2019). These long vowels are different from short vowels, not only in terms of length but also in terms of quality. When comparing pairs of similar long and short vowels, such as [i] and [i:], or [u] and [u:] or [ɒ] and [a:], the difference in quality caused by the difference in tongue shape and position, as well as lip position and length is obvious. Examples of words in vowel monophthong: [i:] "beet", [ɪ] "bit", [e] "bait", [ɛ] "bet", [æ] "bat", [a] "bought", [ɑ] "bot", [ɔ] "bought", [o] "boat", [ʊ] "book", [u] "boot", [ʌ] "but".

When learning or practicing pronunciation a student's use of learning media can facilitate the process of learning. The delivery of material by teachers through advances in information and communication technology, makes learning more interesting, fun and in accordance with student learning needs. So that students can easily accept the lessons given by the teacher. The benefits of learning for teachers are to provide guidelines for achieving learning objectives so that they can explain learning material in a systematic order and assist in presenting interesting material to improve the quality of learning. While the benefits of learning media for students, namely: can increase student motivation and interest in learning so that students can think and analyze the subject matter provided by the teacher well with a pleasant learning situation and students can understand the subject matter easily.

One of mobile application like ELSA Speak is designed to help students speak English easily, fluently, and confidently. The program features are designed to help students pronounce words such as vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and word stress correctly.

ELSA Speak (English Learning Speech Assitant), is designed by Vu Van in 2015 in San Francisco, United States. This app utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) and speech recognition to help improve and perfect English pronunciation. The ELSA Speak app can detect user mispronunciations in users with more than 95% accuracy (Dini et al., 2020). It can also receive advanced feedback to correct the mispronunciation. This feature is one of the things that distinguishes ELSA Speak from other applications. Therefore, this application is expected to help students to improve learning to speak English properly and correctly, by paying attention to each pronunciation in each word because a word that is mispronounced has changed the meaning of the word.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that speaking is a fundamental skill in language learning that enables effective communication and interaction. Mastering English pronunciation, including the correct use of vowel sounds and understanding segmental and suprasegmental features, is essential to speaking clearly and confidently. Poor pronunciation can hinder communication and affect a learner's self-confidence, so it is important to practice regularly and use effective learning aids. Integrating technology, such as mobile apps like ELSA Speak, can significantly assist students in improving their pronunciation, leading to better language proficiency and expanded opportunities in education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used pre-experimental quantitative as a research design. Sugiyono (2019) said that pre-experimental quantitative is a scientific research method to seek the effect of certain treatments on the subject under study under controlled conditions (Addilla & Wahyuni, 2024). Pre-experimental in this research is a type of research that tries to measure the effect of ELSA Speak application on students' vowel pronunciation proficiency. The purpose of experimental research is to determine the magnitude of the effect of the truth X on Y (Rahmi, 2021).

The respondents in this research are the students of class X MPLB 1 at SMK PGRI 1 Giri Banyuwangi. There are 28 students consisting of 4 male and 24 female. The researcher uses a purposive sampling technique in this research. According to Sugiyono (2019), purposive sampling is a method of sampling where participants are chosen according to specific considerations and predefined criteria in order to determine the samples to be included in the study (Addilla & Wahyuni, 2024).

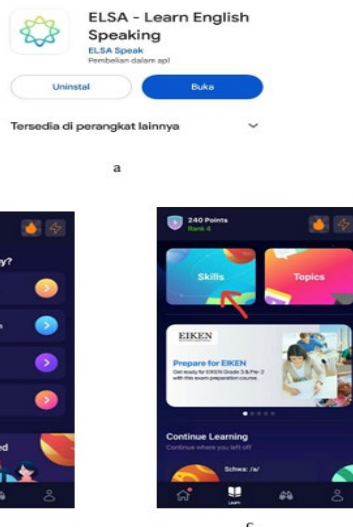
The instrument used is oral test in this research. The oral test was given before and after the teaching activity. The researchers used ELSA Speak application during pronunciation material. This study aims to determine the extent of students' proficiency in pronouncing English words before and after the treatment is administered. This test consists of 24 items, and 12 vowels, those are /ʊ/, /u:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɛ/, /ɒ/, /ɑ:/, /ə/, /i:/, /ɪ/, /ɔ:/, /ɜ:/. The assessment is not only on correct or incorrect pronunciation but also assesses the stress on the pronunciation of each word.

The scoring rubric for pronunciation is used to assess the respondents' ability in pronouncing vowels and word stress. A score of 2 is given for correct pronunciation

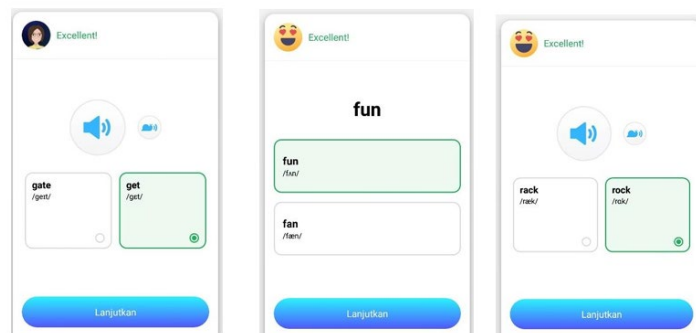
and stress, a score of 1 is given for incorrect or partially correct pronunciation and stress, and a score of 0 for incorrect both pronunciation and stress.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

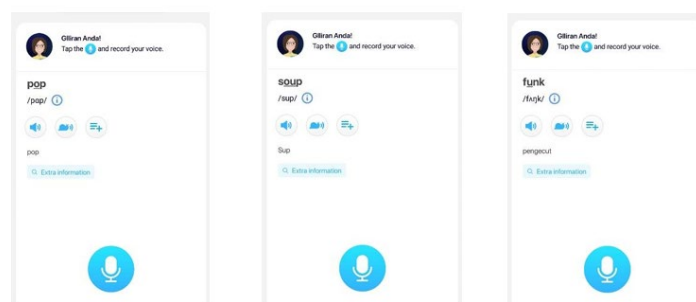
Based on the test analysis results, the students' pronunciation scores before using the English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) application showed that the pronunciation of students in class X MPLB 1 was not good. This is because most students do not know how to pronounce some words correctly. The T-test formula was used in this research by researchers to determine the difference in results. To calculate the T-test, researchers used the pre-test and post-test scores. In the pre-test, the mean score was 28,79.



Picture 1. The Front View of ELSA Speak Application



Picture 2. ELSA Speak Feature 1



Picture 3. ELSA Speak Feature 2

Table 1. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre Test	28.79	28	2.166	,409
	Post Test	42.71	28	1.410	,267

In the post-test, the mean score was 42,71. The result of the standard deviation on the pre-test was 2,16 and the post-test standard deviation was 1,41. After obtaining all the data, the researcher calculated the T-test. The T-test was analyzed and interpreted with a significance level of 5%, then the degree of freedom is = $N - 1 = 28 - 1 = 27$. It was found that the T-table was 2.052.

Table 2. Paired Samples Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of The Difference		t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre - Post Test	13.929	2.827	,534	-12.832	-26.067	27	,000

Then the result of the T-test analysis in this research is 26,067. The T-test value is higher than the T-table ($26,067 > 2.052$). This means that H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted and H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected. The majority of students experienced improvement in their pronunciations, this means that the use of ELSA Speak application learning media can improve students' pronunciation skills.

Pronunciation applications can provide a variety of advantages and positive effects for self-learning and participation in class (Haryadi & Aprianoto, 2020). Based on the data results, it is known that ELSA Speak application is one of the learning media offering creative and innovative learning, especially for pronunciation, it is proven that there is any effect on students' vowel pronunciation proficiency at SMK PGRI 1 Giri Banyuwangi”.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data results, the mean student score on the Pre-test was 28.79 and the mean student score on the Post-test was 42.71. So it can be seen that the students' pronunciation ability of class X MPLB 1 in pronouncing vowels has increased.

Researchers concluded that the majority of students were able to pronounce words correctly and clearly, this was due to the use of learning media which was able to help them in learning pronunciation, but there were also students who were not able to pronounce the words correctly due to lack of practice and lack of confidence yourself when pronouncing words in English.

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