

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the aim of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of the key terms.

#### **A. Background of the study**

Speaking skills are the most important aspect in learning a foreign language compared to other language skills because speaking fluently has become the main goal in learning a foreign language (Hanifa, 2018) .In speaking, students need sufficient vocabulary, pronunciation knowledge, correct intonation, skills and high self-confidence. The environment influences a person's language habits. If English is often heard or used in the surrounding environment, automatically learning English will no longer be difficult. It can be said that a student's ability to speak English is determined by how often and habitually the student uses English in everyday life.

The ability to speak English will increase if the learning model used is in accordance with needs. One learning model that can be used to help speaking skills is Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is one of the technological advances in this millennial era. MALL consists of smartphone applications that help students learn languages, especially in the 21st century (Loewen et al., 2019). In line with this, Davie & Hilber (2015) define MALL as the use of mobile devices to support language learning. MALL uses devices such as digital personal assistants (PDAs), regular cell phones, smartphones, tablet computers,

Android or MP3 players, all of which are used as educational tools. Therefore, smartphones can be used as a tool for learning languages.

According to Wang (2017), mobile applications are available to users 24 hours a day, allowing them to learn languages without being limited to formal or traditional learning contexts. Students will have the opportunity to learn it via mobile devices anytime and anywhere (Miangah & Nezarat, 2012). This means that currently students are free to study anytime and anywhere. Through advanced technology, mobile-assisted language learning provides a revolution in the teaching and learning process (Mohammadi & Safdari, 2015). This helps them develop new learning strategies that allow them to learn from applications downloaded on their cellphones or laptops so that their English skills improve, especially in speaking.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) refers to the utilization of mobile technology for supporting language learning. It is considered an effective tool for learning languages in an informal setting, allowing for accessibility to educational materials and affordability for learners (Ben-Itzhak, 2021). Through the use of mobile language learning applications, students gain experience exploring various materials outside traditional learning environments, allowing for personalized language skill development based on their individual learning needs (Cakmak, 2019). Cinnery (2006) explains the benefits of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), including its availability, portability, and lower costs when compared to Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

There are various learning applications provided on cellphones that can be operated both online and offline. There are some applications to learn speaking skill, like 1) Learn to Speak English with Busuu, (2) Hello English, (3) BBC Learning

English, (4) Learn English with Aco, (5) Memrise, (6) Duolingo, (7) HelloTalk, and (8) Rosetta Stone (Kuning, 2020). According to Wulandari et al. (2022), Cake App can help and facilitate students to practice their English speaking skills independently. Speaking skills are improved by the ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) Speak app (Maji et al., 2022). The researcher would like to utilize a few applications such as Cake App, Duolingo, ELSA Speak, Hello English, and Busuu App because those applications have the highest rate on Google Play Store which indicate them as popular Apps.

Several researchers take the same topic as this research . The first researcher is Fitria et al. (2023) The goal of the study is to learn how students feel about using Duolingo to improve their speaking skills in English and to investigate the ways in which learning with the Duolingo application can be improved. The second researcher is Wulandari et al. (2022) The purpose of the study is to determine if using cake application media can help junior high school students at Shalahuddin Malang improve their skills in speaking English. The third researcher is Anggraini et al. (2023) This research aims to increase students' speaking skill using Hello English application. The four researcher is Hanna et al. (2022) The purpose of the study was to determine how the Elsa Speak app affected speaking skills of the students. The last researcher is Citrayasa (2019) The objective of the study is to describe and interpret the students' personal experiences of learning English through the use Busuu application. There are similarities between previous research and this research. Both of them discussed mobile applications for learning speaking. Meanwhile, the differences between previous research and this study are methodology and participants. The previous studies mostly used qualitative method while this study conducts quantitative method. Moreover, the

previous studies used high school students for the participants while in this research will use university students instead.

The reason why the researcher chose certain mobile applications due to its common used by EFL learners to enhance their speaking skill. This research chooses few mobile applications as mentioned previously. The use of mobile applications is believed to enable learners to improve English speaking skill.

## **B. Research Problem**

In this study, the researcher is curious about the types of mobile applications to learn speaking. In short, the research question:

1. How are mobile application used by EFL student in learning speaking?
2. What mobile applications are most beneficial in helping students improve their English speaking?

## **C. The aim of the study**

1. To find out the use of mobile applications that student use in learning English speaking.
2. To find out which mobile applications are most beneficial in helping students improve their speaking English.

## **D. Significance study**

### *1. Theoretical significance*

This research provides several important meanings. Practically, this research is expected to provide information about various mobile applications that students can use to learn speaking skills.

## 2. *Practical significance*

### a. For English Teacher

As a means to improve students' English learning outcomes, especially speaking skills, this research is intended to inspire English teachers to use certain learning applications as innovative learning media.

### b. For the Students

It is hoped that the results of this research will help students find mobile applications that will help to improve their English skills. They can use various mobile application to learn English on their own by downloading them. With the use of several mobile applications, students can improve their speaking skills.

### c. For the Researcher

It is hoped that the results of this research can become a reference or basis for other researcher in conducting relevant research. It also provides various mobile applications that students usually use in learning to speak English. Future researcher can conduct research that focuses on the application of specific mobile applications to student learning.

## **E. Scope and Limitation**

Researcher focused on investigating the use of mobile applications in speaking learning. This limits the use of mobile applications in learning speaking skills and also limits the investigation of mobile applications to five types based on downloaded popular ratings. Such as Cake Application (4.9), Duolingo (4.8), ELSA Speak (4.8), Busuu Application (7.8), and Hello English (4.7).

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Mobile application**

Mobile applications are applications of software that in operation can run on mobile devices (smartphone, tablets, iPads, etc) and have on operating system that supports the software standalone. There are various types of mobile applications, namely:

#### **a. Cake Application**

The app offers real-life expressions chosen by language experts, speaking practice, and revision with quizzes. It also provides features like learning with videos, checking pronunciation with AI, and practicing speaking in real conversations. This app is designed to help improve English speaking skills through continuous learning and fun activities.

#### **b. Duolingo**

Duolingo is a free language learning app that provides a practical and fun way for learners to practice their English speaking skills. The app is powered by advanced technology, making the process of learning English even easier.

#### **c. ELSA Speak**

ELSA Speak is taken from the Elsa App Detail Information, which explains that ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) is an English pronunciation app that helps people speak English with confidence and clarity.

#### **d. English.Hello English**

Hello English is an English language-learning application that offers interactive modules to help users learn the language. It provides personalized courses for learning speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The app features over 475

interactive lessons, real-time translations, and English corrections. Users can also practice speaking by holding daily-use conversations and improve their spoken English skills.

e. Busuu Application

Busuu is a language exchange app with native speakers and experts in the language to be learnt. In the Busuu app, conversations can be had via chat mode (SMS), voice mode and video mode.

2. Speaking

Speaking is an important skill that allows individuals to articulate their thoughts and ideas through spoken language and to engage in effective communication with others. Through speaking, people can express their feelings or opinions directly and obviously. Given that English is an international language that pervades many facets of people's lives, speaking skills are really needed in this millennial era.

3. Learning Speaking

Learning speaking means a process of learning to speak better and becoming an expert in mastering speaking skills. Learning to speak has good benefits that will be felt if students enjoy the process and get the results. However, there are many ways to learn speaking, not only in the classroom but also independently.

4. EFL students

EFL student is someone who learns English in a region or country where English is not the primary language.

## 5. Useful mobile application

A useful mobile application is a tool that helps individuals acquire knowledge or develop skill through educational content, interactive features, and often on-the-go accessibility on mobile devices.