

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five sub chapters. They are background of the study, research question, research objectives, significance of research, and scope and limitation of research and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the study

Pronunciation is a science that studies techniques or procedures for pronouncing English vocabulary, so it is very important to pronounce vocabulary well and correctly when communicating. Otherwise other people will be confused about what you mean, which will ultimately result in a misunderstanding.

According to Hancock (2018), pronunciation is more than 'listen and repeat'. Pronunciation includes features of language (vocabulary and grammar) and skills (pronouncing and listening). Like vocabulary and grammar, we pronounce by noticing and understanding rules and patterns which lie beneath the surface of speech. For example, if an English word has two syllables, the stress is usually on the first syllable for nouns and adjectives, and the second syllable for verbs.

Our tongue, lips and jaw (vocal articulators) physically shape our pronunciation. When we learn our first language, we develop speech habits which we may not be conscious of developing. This is what makes pronunciation in a new language so difficult – we carry with us the speech habits from our first language. According to Derwing and Munro (2019) most people who learn a new language will keep accent features from their first language. However, an accent is not necessarily a problem. You can keep your accent and still be understood.

According to Botley (2017), English pronunciation is important where many sounds and words in English are difficult to pronounce correctly. Having good pronunciation can make our communication with interlocutors or native speakers easier to understand. Indonesian students are not accustomed to learning the pronunciation of English words. These learning habits need to be addressed immediately, as they require mastering both sides of the vocabulary: meaning and pronunciation. Even though you understand the meaning of the vocabulary, if the pronunciation is wrong then this will be a problem for the use of English. Therefore, in the teaching process most students want to speak English with good accent.

According to Alex (2024), Indonesian students especially students at SMAN 8 Kediri have difficulty in pronouncing English for several reasons, one of which is due to pronunciation problems, which can cause misunderstandings with native speakers and make it difficult to communicate with them. In the beginning, there are several reasons why it is difficult to pronounce English words correctly. First, some sounds in English may not exist in Indonesian, or Indonesians may be confused in their pronunciation. For example, the sounds [f] and [v], Indonesians might pronounce [v] when pronouncing [f], as in the word "Van" would become "Fan", which would create a big mess in speech. This may lead to differences in letter pronunciation between the two languages, as well as the exclusion of letters and sounds. Second, the vowel and consonant system in English contains many different sounds, as there are 44 phonemes that are considered by 24 consonants, 12 vowels, and 8 diphthongs. Moreover, English does not apply phonemic spelling rules, as is the case in Indonesian, for example the word 'simple' in English, according to the alphabet should be pronounced /si:mple/, but in reality, it is pronounced /sImpl/.

All of these problems become obstacles for Indonesian students to pronounce English words correctly. However, it is not impossible to learn it. Pronunciation skills can be developed by listening to native speakers and imitating their pronunciation or singing. In addition to its emphasis on rhythm, word stress, sentence stress, and intonation, many teachers consider it the best way to teach pronunciation to non-native students.

Currently, there are many software or apps that can be tools for learning English Pronunciation, such as ELSA SPEAK Application Software to learning Pronunciation. The process of learning not just be done in classroom yet it can be accessed outside class via online educational application (Ismail, Elihami & Mustakim, 2019). It means that learning media which are mostly digital-based can be done anywhere and anytime at will. ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) application was designed by Vu Van in 2015 and is centered in San Francisco, USA. It uses artificial intelligence (AI) and speech recognition to help improve and enhance English pronunciation (Pillar, 2013). ELSA is different from other applications that only focus on teaching vocabulary and grammar. ELSA uses voice recognition technology that can help users improve their English pronunciation (Vu Van, 2016). ELSA can scan precisely and accurately. Users can be given feedback that say which wrong or correct in pronouncing word. This is one of the things that makes ELSA different from other English learning applications. There are a lot of topic that can be used to be learning material.

The Elsa Speak application has been used in various contexts to improve students' pronouncing skills and pronunciation. A study conducted by Universitas Negeri Makassar found that using the Elsa Speak application significantly improved students' pronouncing skills, as indicated by a significant increase in pronouncing scores and a decrease in standard deviation values. Another study focused on improving students' pronunciation through the Elsa Speak application. Additionally, the application has been used in scientific approaches

to improve students' pronunciation, with the objective of finding out how the use of the Elsa Speak Application in scientific approaches significantly improves students' pronunciation accuracy. Overall, the Elsa Speak application has been recognized for its effectiveness in improving English language skills, particularly in the areas of pronunciation and pronouncing.

According to Van (2015), ELSA SPEAK Application is the world's smartest English pronunciation trainer that can listen to the way you pronounce words and sentences to pinpoint mistakes and provide accurate judgments. ELSA can provide specific suggestions for improving your English skills. ELSA SPEAK Application is also equipped with exclusive AI (artificial intelligence) and pronunciation recognition technology so that ELSA SPEAK Application can recognize how we speak and pronounce words in English. Apart from AI, ELSA SPEAK Application also has an English pronunciation trainer known as a coach to practice good and correct pronunciation. As well as having easy methods such as short dialogues as well as fun activities so that students don't feel bored when learning by using ELSA SPEAK Application and immediately get instant input from the application which is useful for correcting mistakes and providing justification for good and correct pronunciation.

Based on the above assessments, this study focuses on “Using ELSA SPEAK Applications to Improve student’s pronunciation mastery at SMAN 8 Kediri”.

B. Research Question

Based on the background study. The research question is How can ELSA SPEAK Application improve pronunciation mastery of the students at SMAN 8 Kediri?

C. Objective of The Research

Based on the research question above, the general objective of this study is to find out whether Elsa Speak Application as media could improve pronunciation skills of the students at SMAN 8 Kediri by using ELSA SPEAK Application.

D. Significance of The Research

The research results are expected to bring significant contributions to teacher, students and researchers.

1. Teachers

The result of this research is expected to be innovation in learning English by teaching pronunciation correctly using ELSA SPEAK Application.

2. Students

The result of this research is expected to improve students' pronunciation by using ELSA SPEAK Application.

3. Future Researchers

The result of this research is expected to tell some knowledge and experience in teaching and learning process, especially in teaching pronunciation using ELSA SPEAK Application.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

Actually, there are many applications that can be used in learning process especially learning pronunciation but in this research, researcher use ELSA SPEAK Application to improve pronunciation mastery to 11th Grade at SMAN 8 Kediri. This study is focused on Sound which means Indonesian people could not pronounce a word especially sound properly.

F. Definition of Key Terms

In order to clarify the key term used in this study, some definitions are put forward :

1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way a word or language is spoken. It is the pillar serves as the foundation of effective communication and determine the quality of one's English language mastery. It is also crucial component for communication and making sure people understand our message.

2. Teaching Pronunciation

Teaching is the act or profession of instructing and imparting knowledge or skills to other. Pronunciation is the way a word or language is spoken. Furthermore, teaching pronunciation is the act of instructing a word or language to speak.

3. Elsa Speak Application

Elsa Speak is an English application that helps businesses utilize AI-based tools to recognize speech, evaluate and give feedback on language pronunciation and fluency. In this study, Elsa Speak Application is used as media in teaching and learning in class of SMAN 8 Kediri at 11th grade.