The Effect of English Language Speech Assistant (Elsa) Application on Improving Students' Speaking Skills

Mega Claudia Putri[1], Hanafi[2], Nurkamilah[3]

English Language Education Program, Faculty Teacher Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Jember, Indonesia

Article Info

Abstract

This research aims to find out whether using the Elsa Application in learning English can improve the speaking skills of grade 8 students at SMPN 8 Jember. This research focused on pre-experimental research in one class pre-test and post-test. The population of this research is grade 8 students at SMPN 8 Jember in the 2023/2024 academic year, consisting of 224 students. The researcher took one class as a research sample, namely class 8 which consisted of 32 students. Data was obtained from speaking ability tests when retelling stories in the pre-test and post-test.

It can be concluded that the results of this study show that the use of the Elsa application can improve students' speaking skills which include grammar, comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. This can be seen in the students' average score on the pre-test, which was 60 and increased to 75.5 on the post test. This means that using the Elsa application in learning English can improve the speaking skills of grade 8 students at SMPN 8 Jember.

Introduction

Speaking skill is an important ability in communicating in English. Speaking skills can be very important because they are needed in conversational activities. Speaking ability in English is a productive skill related to a person's mastery of a topic through listening. Speaking skill refers to the ability to communicate effectively through spoken language. It involves expressing thoughts, ideas, and information clearly and coherently. Developing good speaking skills encompasses aspects such as pronunciation, vocabulary,

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grammar, and fluency, enabling effective verbal communication in various social and professional contexts. There are four factors that can influence pronunciation problems are: (1) mother tongue, (2) amount of exposure, (3) age factor, and (4) motivation and attention for good pronunciation (Jariyah, 2020).

The cause of the problems students face in speaking English is not only limited knowledge of the components of speaking skills including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency but also they have personal reasons, such as shyness, anxiety, confusion, deficiencies, confident, and afraid of making mistakes. According to Rahmi et al., (2024) it was found that there were several main problems with it speak especially in introducing yourself. The first is a lack of vocabulary. When students are speaking to introduce themselves, they are often silent because their vocabulary is large due to the teacher's lack of emphasis on memorizing vocabulary. The second factor is difficulty in producing words correctly. It was found that most of the students were wrong in pronouncing the words. Most students do not want to talk because they do not know how to produce the right words. This condition is caused by students rarely learning to spell words in English.

Elsa is an artificial intelligence (AI) application that focuses on the field of education, especially in terms of pronunciation. This application helps students hear, pronounce, proclaim, chant and affirm English words in spoken language. Base on the previous study, Elsa (English Language Speech Assistant) Speak Application gave positive effects on students' speaking ability. It showed by the improvement of students' speaking scores. According to Aswaty & Indari, (2022) the Elsa (English Language Speech Assistant) Speaking application is a suitable medium for teachers to use in teaching speaking.

The Elsa Application is highly recommended for students to improve their abilities speaking skills because it provides several facilities and features, including voice recognition technology, curriculum tailored to students needs, tested, free online dictionary, pronunciation and intonation examiners, and free assessment exams throughout the program. Elsa application is related to the current condition of students where every student must have a smartphone, making it easier for them to study anywhere and anytime.

The name Elsa is an abbreviation of the English phrase "English Language Speech Assistant". And means "English language assistant". With the desire to be a supporter of English learners around the world. This application focuses on practicing English speaking, especially pronunciation which can be downloaded and used on a smart phone. E~~LSA SPEAK~~ lsa application is supported by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Speech Recognition technology. The Elsa application can properly correct pronunciation errors made by students. Elsa is the world's best English application that helps us speak english is like American, using advanced speech recognition technology. So when using this application, students can easily practice their speaking skills and can immediately correct their mistakes.

The Elsa ~~Speak~~ application was created with the aim of helping users practice standard native pronunciation. With the perfect combination of artificial intelligence (A.I) and machine learning technology. Allows the system to analyze how users read English through speech recognition. The Elsa application easily finds out the user's pronunciation errors, then points out things that need to be corrected and guides the user to correct their mistakes in a specific but also very easy-to-understand way.

Method

The type of design used is a one-group pretest-posttest design: One case is observed at two-time points, one before treatment and one after treatment. Changes in desired outcomes are considered to be the result of the intervention or treatment. There was no control or comparison group.

In collecting data, the steps taken are as follows:

1. Pre-Test

At the first meeting, students were introduced to the ELSA Application and explained some information about speaking skills in English. Students are given a pre-test in the form of a topic about "My activities during the holidays". Students are given time to prepare and then tell a story for 2 minutes.

2. Treatment

Students will be asked several questions from the Elsa Application. This treatment takes 10 minutes.

3. Post-Test

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The post-test is a measure in the form of an assessment of the participants in the experiment after treatment. A post-test was held at the last meeting to determine the improvement in students' English speaking skills. Post-tests are used to measure the level of success of research carried out after the treatment process, to determine knowledge after receiving treatment. In the post-test, the questions given are the same as the pre-test.

The data collected consists of two data. The first data was obtained from research subjects, namely students. Meanwhile, the second data comes from observation photos. Data collection was carried out by conducting tests and conducting questions and answers. For the first stage, students are given instructions to create a short story and read it. In the second stage, students are given treatment using the Elsa application. The third stage, after students are given treatment, students are asked to re-read the text they read previously.

Findings and Discussion

These findings present the results of data collected through tests to see comparison of students after being given treatment using the Elsa Application. This research was carried out for 3 days in class and 1 week online, with 32 students attending, namely 17 male students and 15 female students. Students responded very well to this application and participated in this activity very well, the researcher explained clearly what the Elsa Application is and the benefits obtained by using the application regularly, the researcher also explained how to use the Elsa Application for free and explained its features in application. On the first and second days, researchers introduced the Elsa application and gave a pre-test to measure the extent to which students learned English, where many of them did not like English because it was difficult to understand.

The pre-test is carried out by students storytelling about their activities during the holidays by taking turns coming to the front of the class and will be assessed with the scores. Then on the third day the researcher provides treatment by explaining again the use of the Elsa application and continues for 1 week. Students are given treatment using Elsa application online. Students will get grades if they do assignments on the Elsa Application for 1 full week. With this score, researchers can easily find out whether students' speaking abilities have improved by practicing using the Elsa application for 1 week. After receiving treatment, the researcher gave a post-test storytelling about their activities during the holidays to reassess their speaking skills after practicing using the Elsa Application, then the pre-test and post-test scores that had been obtained were compared and will be be the
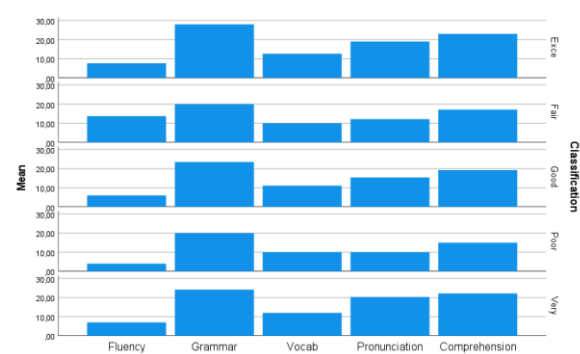
final result of this research. Student score assessments include vocabulary, grammar, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation. Data analysis was obtained based on the results of the pre-test and post-test.

The use of the Elsa application is very significant for grade 8 junior high school students. After receiving treatment, several students gave positive responses to the use of the Elsa application because some of these students regularly use this application. This finding is significant due to several reasons, such as according to students the duration of practice is sufficient study time, immediate feedback, and interactive activities.

Sufficient study time, students like this application because according to students the duration of the practice is sufficient, learning using technology has advantages, one of which is that students can learn to speak anywhere and anytime (Lesmana 2022). Immediate feedback, students can quickly receive feedback about their pronunciation in English which can easily help students correct mistakes quickly, the Elsa Application calculates the total pronunciation and which sound the student should correct, the Elsa Application also provides phonetic transcription of each word and evaluation of its initial pronunciation (Stevani et al., 2023).

Table 1. Total Score Classification

Pre-Test	Post-Test	Classification
0	5	Excellent
1	6	Very Good
0	13	Good
2	7	Fair
29	1	Poor

Graphic 1. Percentage of Student Post-test Scores

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Conclusions

The Elsa application shows an increase in students' English language skills as measured by the scores obtained through the pre-test and post-test. Based on the results of data analysis obtained after carrying out three steps, it can be seen that the Elsa application is easy to use with very detailed procedures so that students can more easily understand pronunciation and speak English fluently. Students also discovered some new vocabulary that they did not know. English itself is a language that must be mastered to support the future.

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