

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING ELSA: ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPEECH ASISSTANT AS A MEDIA IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION SKILL AT THE EIGHT GRADE OF SMPN 18 PURWOREJO IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2023/2024

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Abstract

People who speak with good pronunciations are more confident and easy to hear. In many cases, however, the pronunciation skills were disregarded by teachers. It can be argued, for instance, that the students themselves and teachers' capacities are almost entirely to blame for their low level of competence. These difficulties can be solved by the use of appropriate learning media. ELSA is a media for teaching the language and attracting young learners. Therefore, this research aimed to find out whether using ELSA application in teaching pronunciation is effective or not. The data was taken on the eighth grade students of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024. In order to achieve the aim of this study, the researcher used quantitative and quasi experimental research design. The researcher used test as the instrument. In collecting data, the researcher gave pre-test and post-test to the both groups. Treatment was given to the experimental class using ELSA while the control class was taught without using ELSA. The finding shows the asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000. The researcher used the significant level 0.05. The computation shows that the asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed) value was less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of ELSA application in teaching pronunciation on the eighth grade students of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024 is effective.

Keywords: ELSA, pronunciation, teaching

1 INTRODUCTION

English has evolved into a worldwide language that is extensively used around the world due to the fact that it can be utilized for conversations between native speakers and non-native speakers. Because English is a language that is not frequently used in the learner's local context, learning a foreign language indicates that somebody is motivated to study and master it. In Indonesia, English has been adopted as a foreign language and used in the curriculum of subjects taught to Indonesian students. In English, this language facilitates students' communication skills in the areas of speaking, writing, listening and reading. As English is a language used to facilitate communication and disseminate knowledge and information, it has been noted as an important subject for learning given the wide range of areas in people's lives where they rely on that language. Consequently, English has been decided to be included as one of the subjects taught at school levels up to university level in Indonesia.

Students need to develop four essential skills for learning English, which include: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing[1]. If the person can speak English very well, we could say that he's made a bigger improvement as an English learner. In general, speaking is made up of three main components such as pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary[2]. A lot of knowledge has been acquired in these types of problems. Learning pronunciation should be begun when a learner has started to learn a language not only acquiring a mother tongue but also learning a second or foreign language. However, at low level educational institutions such as elementary schools, junior high schools and senior high schools, pronunciation is often overlooked when learning English as a foreign language[3]. To help the learners read comprehension, majority of schools focus only on learning vocabulary. Actually, the English subject is most commonly assessed by means of a written test with very little assessment of speaking skills at lower level education institutions.

Pronunciation is one of among the most important factors in communication. Speaking skills and students' pronunciation skills are related[4]. Inaccurate word pronunciation can cause obstacles to communication by making it difficult to interpret textual settings. The goal of pronunciation instruction is not to ask the pupils to speak like native speakers. The real purpose of the oral communication should instead be an intelligible pronunciation[5]. Because it could assist in the development of four language skills, particularly speaking and listening, pronunciation is an essential component of learning English. When communicating with another person, they employ a broad variety of words and proper grammar. They continue to mispronounce a few things, however. Some factors may have contributed to this type of behavior[6].

This phenomenon is likely to be seen in the normal teaching and learning process, especially in speaking classes. They use a wide variety of words and good grammar when they communicate with another person. But there are still some things they're mispronouncing[7]. This type of behavior could be a result of certain factors. One of the causes may be a teacher's approach, which students find boring. This is due to the lack of enthusiasm among students for pronunciation. A lot of students think English is complicated and dull. The method is almost the same[8]. The teacher tends to be demanding that the students pay attention and take notes while they are in class. The interest of students in their studies is not demonstrated. They're silent, they don't respond at all in fear of being mispronounced[9]. It's an outdated way of learning, not an active way of learning as has been suggested recently.

The researcher has taken a different approach to this problem and applied English learning, in particular the use of phonetics. ELSA: English Language Speech Assistant, the newest useful technology that doesn't require teachers to prepare a lot of things. The acquisition of resources is possible in a variety of ways. Not only on textbooks, but also in the way we look at the Internet. For students, this could have an impact on the environment. In the light of these factors, there are a number of advantages to using ELSA for teaching English[10].

ELSA Speak application is one of the numerous devices and software programs that are now accessible for language learning[11]. Vu Van, a Vietnamese-American located in San Francisco, developed ELSA Speak (English Learning Speech Assistant) in 2015. This application is the smartest artificial intelligence technologies for language acquisition, especially for assessing pronunciation skills. Moreover, this program is accompanied by features such as Practice Daily Lesson, Improve Pronunciation, Study by Topic, Free Online Dictionary, and Free Assessment. It can be difficult to achieve good grades because the ELSA Speak application analyzes what students' pronunciation and gives them feedback, including their speaking grades[12]. This application will help all students to improve their English speaking and can be useful for our goal of mastering the language[13]. It provides important components for encouraging students to be more enthusiastic about their studies[14]. In addition, seven of the best English pronunciation apps from 2019 will be available in this app for students to learn clearly, smoothly and confidently[8].

Based on the opinion above, it is found that students do not understand the material which focuses solely on textbooks, as well as a lack of teachers' competence and teacher innovation in education. Thus, the use of ELSA is an interesting idea to study as it improves student's English language skills. Through ELSA application, the study aims to enhance pronunciation skill.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study uses quasi experimental research design by using pre-test and post-test with a quantitative approach. Experimental research is a type of study that focuses at how different treatments affect people in controlled conditions[15]. In addition, he identified the three main classifications of experimental research designs: pre-experimental, true experimental, and quasi-experimental. The researcher used quasi experimental research design because she tried a new technique in teaching pronunciation through ELSA application. The researcher compares the students' scores between class that was taught with ELSA application and class that was taught using conventional technique in teaching pronunciation. In this research the researcher put two classes, one class as dependent and the other as independent variable. The researcher used pre-test and post-test to see the effects of treatment.

The sampling technique in this research was purposive sampling due to time and cost limitations. The population in this study were 224 students who were divided into 7 classes. The researcher took two

classes of the eighth grade students of SMP N 18 Purworejo as the sample, which is class VIII A as experimental group and VIII B as control group.

At the first meeting, the researcher did the pre-test on the ELSA application and explained some of information about pronunciation skills in English. Experimental group used ELSA application on the topic going on vacation. Whereas, the control group was given a pre-test in the form of the topic conversation about asking and giving opinion during vacation on paper. Students were given time to prepare and then read the conversation in front of the class. The treatment was then given to the students to listen the native speaker pronounce based on ELSA. Whereas for control group, the researcher give examples of conversation and the target sound and how to pronounce it. Finally, the researcher checked the student's pronunciation to get the data used in research. The researcher scored the test using the following criteria:

$$Score = \frac{\text{students score}}{\text{score maximum}} \times 100$$

Table 1 Classification of students' achievement

Score	Classification
80-100	Excellent
66-89	Very good
56-65	Good
40-55	Fair
0-39	Poor

3 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

a. Data Description

On the 25th of July 2023, the researcher conducted a pre-test for the experimental class. The treatment was done by using ELSA application on 28th 2023. This research was conducted at SMPN 18 Purworejo in the eighth-grade students in the academic year 2023/2024. In this research, the researcher takes two classes as the sample. The classes that are chosen to be sampled are VIII A and VIII B of SMPN 18 Purworejo. Each class contains 32 and 32 Students. The total numbers of students are 64. The researcher collected data from the pre-test and post-test.

b. Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis is used to describe the variable of this research which is the use of ELSA application in teaching pronunciation. Descriptive statistics include the measurement of central symptoms (mean, median, and mode) tendency and measurement of variation group: (range, variance, and standard deviation)[16]. The result is as follows:

Table 2 Results of Descriptive Analysis

	Descriptive Statistics								
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Pre-test Experimen	32	35	35	70	1760	55.00	1.810	10.239	104.839
Post-test Experimen	32	40	45	85	2300	71.88	1.915	10.832	117.339
Pre-test Control	32	40	25	65	1455	45.47	1.897	10.728	115.096
Post-test Control	32	40	30	70	1735	54.22	1.697	9.597	92.112
Valid N (listwise)	32								

Based on Table 2, the experimental group's mean pre-test score was 55.00, while the mean post-test score was 71.88. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 10.23, while the standard deviation of the post-test was 10.83. Moreover, the range of the pre-test was 35 and the range of the post-test was 40.

Control group's mean pre-test score was 45.47 while the mean post-test score was 54.22. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 10.72 while the standard deviation of the post-test was 9.59. Moreover, the range of the pre-test and the range of the post-test was 40.

The normality test was utilized to find out whether or not the data were distributed normally. In testing the normality of the data, the researcher used IBM SPSS 25 by Kolmogorov Smirnov Statistics. The normality testing in this research was conducted using IBM SPSS 25 can be seen in the table below

Table 3 Test of Normality Kolmogorov-Smirnov Using SPSS 25

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Kelas		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Hasil Belajar Pronunciation Skill	Pre-test Exp	0.156	32	0.045	0.938	32	0.066
	Post-test Exp	0.180	32	0.010	0.920	32	0.021
	Pre-test Con	0.132	32	0.165	0.962	32	0.316
	Post-test Con	0.189	32	0.005	0.945	32	0.107

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The data can be said normal if the significance value is higher than the significance level (>0.05). Whereas, the data can be said abnormal if the significance value is lower than the significance level (<0.05). The computation above showed in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov column that the significance value of the post-test of the experimental group was 0.01 and the significance value of the post-test of the control group was 0.00. The significance values of the experimental group were lower than 0.05 and the control group was lower than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the data distribution of the experimental group was abnormal and the data distribution of post-test control group was abnormal.

The researcher computed the test of homogeneity using IBM SPSS 25 by applying F-test. The result of the F-test was as follows:

Table 4 Test of Homogeneity Variance

		Levene			
		Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Hasil Belajar Siswa	Based on Mean	1.101	1	62	0.298
	Based on Median	1.130	1	62	0.292
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.130	1	62.000	0.292
	Based on trimmed mean	1.260	1	62	0.266

From the result the test above, the data could be said that data are homogenous because the level of significance is 0.298. It is higher than 0.05 ($0.298 > 0.05$).

The researcher is going to discuss the hypothesis testing result. The calculating Wilcoxon signed Rank Test formula to decide which hypothesis that will be accepted or rejected.

Table 5 Result of Wilcoxon signed Rank Test

Test Statistics^a		
	Post-test Experimen - Pre-test Experiment	Post-test Control - Pre-test Control
Z	-4.957 ^b	-5.032 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

From the SPSS computation, the result of SPSS shows the asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) is $0.000 < 0.05$. If the asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) is less than 0.05, the data is significantly different[16]. It can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the experiment and control group data. It means that the hypothesis null (HO) is rejected, and the hypothesis alternative (Ha) is accepted. Therefore, the researcher concluded that using ELSA application is effective to enhance pronunciation skill on the eighth grade of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024.

4 DISCUSSIONS

1. The students' pronunciation skill of the eighth grade of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024.

a. The Students' Pronunciation Skill of Experimental Class

The highest score of the post-test was 85 and the lowest was 45. The mean of the post-test score was 71.88 and the median was 70. The standard deviation of the post-test was 10.83 and the variance was 174.97. The mean score was included in the interval 55 to 71.88. It means that the students in the eighth grade of VIII A of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024 have good results on their pronunciation skill post-test. From 32 samples, no students (0%) belonged to a very good level, 13 students (41%) belonged to good level, 9 students (28%) belonged to an average level, 7 students (22%) belonged to a poor level and 3 students (9%) belonged to a very poor level.

b. The Students' Pronunciation Skill of Control Group

The highest score of the post-test was 65 and the lowest was 30. The mean of the post-test score was 54.22 and the median was 55. The standard deviation of the post-test was 9.59 and the variance was 220.06. The mean score was included in the interval 45.47 to 54.22. It means that the students in the eighth grade of VIII B of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024 have good results on their pronunciation skill post-test. From 32 samples, no student (0%) belonged to a very good level, no student (0%) belonged to a good level, 2 students (6%) belonged to an average level, 9 students (28%) belonged to a poor level and 21 students (66%) belonged to a very poor level.

2. The effectiveness of using ELSA: English Language Speech Assistant as a media to enhance students' pronunciation skill.

Based on the computation of mean score, the value of mean score of post-test in experimental group was higher than the mean score of post-test in control group ($71.88 > 54.22$). It means that there were significance differences between experimental group and control group post-test results. Based on the presented data, it can be seen that asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was 0.000. This means that the null hypothesis (HO) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted[16]. The researcher consults the asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was lower than significance level 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). In addition, the researcher concluded that the using ELSA application was effective to enhance pronunciation on the eighth grade students of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024.

5 CONCLUSIONS

A significant improvement in the language skills of students as a result of discussion findings has been identified. Although most of their English pronunciation skills were poor, it should be concluded that ELSA is effective in teaching pronunciation. This conclusion is supported by the results of post-test in experimental and control group about students' pronunciation skills. Based on the computation of mean score, the value of mean score of post-test in experimental group was higher than the mean score of post-test in control group (71.88 > 54.22). While the asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was lower than significance level 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05) it can be concluded that there is a significant value difference between the class using ELSA application in learning pronunciation and the class not using ELSA application. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. It means that using ELSA application is effective for pronunciation on the eighth grade of SMP N 18 Purworejo in the academic year of 2023/2024 is effective.

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