

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION USING THE ELSA SPEAK
APP AT MTs 3 MUHAMMADIYAH SUMBERREJO**

SKRIPSI



Presented to

IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:

MOCHAMMAD SUEB GUMELAR

NIM 22120048

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ART EDUCATION

IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO

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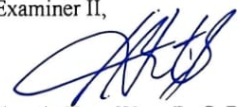
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MOTTO

*ALLAH TIDAK PERNAH BERKATA SEMUANYA MUDAH, TETAPI DUA KALI
ALLAH MENEGASKAN BAHWA “DISETIAP KESULITAN PASTI ADA
KEMUDAHAN”*

(AL INSYIRAH AYAT 5-6)

*“BILA AIR YANG SEDIKIT DAPAT MENYELAMATKANMU (DARI RASA
HAUS), TAK PERLU MEMINTA AIR LEBIH BANYAK YANG BARANGKALI DAPAT
MEMBUATMU TENGGELAM.”*

“MAKA SELALU BELAJAR CUKUP DENGAN APA YANG KAU MILIKI”

-RM.IMAM KASOEPANGAT

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- a. Dr. Junarti, M.Pd., As the Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- b. Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd., as the Dean of the Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
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May Allah give a great reply to all. To support further development, the author sincerely welcomes suggestions and constructive feedback. Finally, the author entrusts everything to Allah, aiming for usefulness, especially for writers and readers alike.

ABSTRACT

Mochammad Sueb Gumelar. 2026. Program. Improving Student Pronunciation Using The ELSA SPEAK App At MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo. Skripsi, English Education Departement Faculty of Languages and Art Education IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Lecturer: 1) Mrs. Ayu Fitriarningsih, S.Pd., M.Pd, 2) Mrs. Oktha Ika Rahmawati S.Pd., M.Pd

Keywords: Classroom Action Research, ELSA Speak App, English Pronunciation , Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, Pronunciation Accuracy

Pronunciation is an essential aspect of speaking that affects the intelligibility of oral communication. However, many students at MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo had difficulties in pronouncing English sounds accurately. This study aimed to investigate the implementation of the ELSA Speak App and its effectiveness in improving students' English pronunciation . The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on Kemmis and McTaggart's model involving two cycles. The participants were 32 eighth-grade students. Data were collected through Pronunciation tests, classroom observations, field notes, and documentation, then analyzed using descriptive quantitative and qualitative methods.

The findings showed that the ELSA Speak App provided immediate feedback and repeated practice, creating a more interactive learning environment. Students' mean Pronunciation score improved from 59.59 in the preliminary study and continued to increase through Cycle I and Cycle II. Classroom observations also indicated higher participation, confidence, and motivation. These findings suggest that the ELSA Speak App is an effective technology-based medium for improving students' English Pronunciation at the junior secondary school level.

ABSTRAK

Mochammad Sueb Gumelar. 2026. Program. Improving Student Pronunciation Using The ELSA SPEAK App At MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo. Skripsi, English Education Departement Faculty of Languages and Art Education IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Lecturer: 1) Mrs. Ayu Fitrianiingsih, S.Pd., M.Pd, 2) Mrs. Oktha Ika Rahmawati S.Pd., M.Pd

Kata Kunci: ELSA Speak, pengucapan (pronunciation), Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, pembelajaran berbasis teknologi, keterampilan berbicara.

Pengucapan adalah aspek penting dalam berbicara yang memengaruhi kejelasan komunikasi lisan. Namun, banyak siswa di MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo mengalami kesulitan dalam mengucapkan bunyi bahasa Inggris dengan akurat. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki implementasi ELSA Speak App dan efektivitasnya dalam meningkatkan pelafalan bahasa Inggris siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan Classroom Action Research (CAR) yang didasarkan pada model Kemmis dan McTaggart yang melibatkan dua siklus. Para peserta adalah 32 siswa kelas delapan. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes pelafalan, observasi di kelas, catatan lapangan, dan dokumentasi, lalu dianalisis menggunakan metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif deskriptif.

Temuan menunjukkan bahwa ELSA Speak App memberikan umpan balik langsung dan latihan berulang, menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih interaktif. Skor rata-rata pelafalan siswa meningkat dari 59,59 pada studi awal dan terus meningkat hingga Siklus I dan Siklus II. Pengamatan di kelas juga menunjukkan partisipasi, kepercayaan diri, dan motivasi yang lebih tinggi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa ELSA Speak App adalah media berbasis teknologi yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pelafalan bahasa Inggris siswa di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama.

DEDICATION

All praise and gratitude are devoted to Allah SWT for His mercy, guidance, and blessings, which have given me the strength and opportunity to complete this thesis. I realize that this achievement would not have been possible without the prayers, guidance, and support of many people. Therefore, I dedicate this thesis to:

1. My beloved parents,. Thank you for always being the safest place I can call home, no matter the circumstances. Thank you for your endless prayers, unconditional love, immeasurable sacrifices, and unwavering trust and support that have accompanied me throughout every step of my journey. This achievement is a reflection of your love, perseverance, and sincerity. May Allah SWT always bless you with good health, happiness, and abundant blessings.
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way I think, learn, and grow, enabling me to reach this significant milestone in my academic journey.

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5. Myself. Thank you for staying strong, continuing to strive, and never giving up despite every challenge. This thesis is a reminder that perseverance, patience, faith, and prayer can lead me to achieve my goals. May this achievement become the beginning of a better journey filled with success and blessings.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned:

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In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION USING THE ELSA SPEAK APP AT MTs 3 MUHAMMADIYAH SUMBERREJO

It is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list in accordance with the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scientific ethics are found regarding the authenticity of this work, I **personally** accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am ready to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, ..JUMATI..... 17 Juli 2024



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PREFACE

Praise be to Allah SWT, the Almighty, for His endless blessings, mercy, and guidance, which have enabled the researcher to complete this undergraduate thesis entitled **"IMPROVING STUDENT PRONUNCIATION USING THE ELSA SPEAK APP AT MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo."** This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements for obtaining the **Bachelor's Degree in English Education** at the English Education Study Program, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the assistance, guidance, encouragement, prayers, and support of many individuals. Therefore, the researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the completion of this study.

The researcher realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect and may contain limitations. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly appreciated for the improvement of this academic work. It is hoped that this thesis will provide valuable insights for readers, particularly students, lecturers, and future researchers in the field of English Education, and serve as a useful reference for studies related to Improving Pronunciation.

Finally, the researcher prays that Allah SWT will bless and reward all those who have supported the completion of this thesis. Hopefully, this study will make a meaningful contribution to the development of knowledge, especially in the field of English language education.

Bojonegoro 10 Agustus 2026



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In the 21st century, English language skills are one of the main skills that students must have. As a lingua franca, English serves to bridge communication between individuals from various cultural backgrounds and countries. Therefore, mastery of the English language, especially in the aspect of pronunciation, is very important so that the message conveyed can be understood clearly and effectively. In the context of global communication, among the four main skills in learning English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking skills have a high urgency because they serve as the main medium of oral communication. However, speaking skills cannot be separated from their basic components, which are Pronunciation or pronunciation. Pronunciation is a fundamental element that determines the clarity, fluency, and clarity of the message in communication. Thomson (2018) emphasized that the quality of Pronunciation is a key factor in achieving effective communication, because phonological errors can interfere with understanding despite grammar and vocabulary speakers are adequate. Similar findings were put forward by Saito (2020), which shows that the accuracy of sound greatly affects comprehension so that incorrect Pronunciation can still be an obstacle to communication.

In various contexts of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), including Indonesia, the challenge of improving students' Pronunciation skills is still one of the main problems faced by educators, especially at the junior secondary education level such as at MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo. Students generally have difficulty in pronouncing long and short vowel sounds, final consonants, consonants not found in Indonesian, the process of acquiring foreign pronunciation s does not take place automatically, but requires intensive practice, proper modeling, and consistent and accurate feedback. Levis (2018) states that learners need exposure to clear phonological models and directed training in order for their speech production to reach a stable level of comprehension. In addition, Thomson and Derwing (2015) affirm that consistent Pronunciation practice, accompanied by explicit feedback, has a significant impact on improving segmental and suprasegmental accuracy learners. Recent research has also shown that the difference in sound system between the first language and the target language remains a major factor influencing sound production; Saito (2021) explained that phonological distance between languages directly determines the level of difficulty learners have in producing new sounds. Unfortunately, at the junior high school level, Pronunciation is still often considered an additional part of learning to speak, resulting in an inadequate teaching time and strategy. This condition has an impact on the low ability of students to produce accurate and easy-to-understand English sounds.

These challenges are increasingly seen in the context of national education in Indonesia. Most schools, including madrasas, still apply conventional Pronunciation teaching methods that focus on explaining phonetic theory and

limited drilling. Meanwhile, the diversity of mother tongues possessed by Indonesian students, such as Javanese, Sundanese, Madura, and others, also affects the acquisition of English pronunciation. Phonological disturbances from the mother tongue often lead to Pronunciation errors such as omission of final consonants, inaccurate Pronunciation of vowels, as well as difficulties in distinguishing fricative sounds such as /θ/ and /ð/. According to Gilakjani (2011), these obstacles or limitations cannot be overcome only with a classical approach without the support of learning media that allows for repeated practice and personalization. Saito (2015) also emphasized that phonological transfer from the first language is one of the main causes of Pronunciation difficulties in EFL students.

The use of artificial intelligence-based technology in English learning is now an important strategy to meet learners' needs for intensive, targeted, and accurate feedback-supported practice activities. One form of innovation that plays a role in improving Pronunciation skills is the Elsa Speak App, an application developed by Vu Van and Dr. Xavier Anguera in 2015, which departs from personal experience related to communication challenges due to unclear English accents. Against the background of Anguera's expertise in speech recognition and language processing, this application is designed as an AI-based learning medium that is able to provide detailed acoustic analysis of the user's speech production. Since its launch, the ELSA Speak App has experienced significant growth and won numerous international awards, including recognition from SXSWedu and Forbes, and has been used by millions of users in more than 195 countries. The

features offered are increasingly diverse, including thousands of Pronunciation exercises, intonation development, automatic fluency assessment, to estimated speech test scores such as IELTS with the support of machine learning algorithms. In practice, the ELSA Speak App relies on speech recognition technology to assess each element of Pronunciation and provide direct correction of phonological errors, creating a practice process that is personalized, adaptive and accessible at any time.

The effectiveness of using this app is strengthened by various recent empirical findings that show its contribution to improving English language skills. Afni (2023) reported that continuous practice with the ELSA Speak App was able to improve Pronunciation accuracy through real-time phonetic correction that was consistently given. Similar findings were also conveyed by Amir and Nur (2022), who recorded significant improvements in suprasegmental aspects, including emphasis patterns and speech rhythms. In addition, Dewi (2023) shows that the use of this application not only has an impact on Pronunciation improvement, but also helps reduce speaking anxiety and increase students' confidence. Rahmawati (2021) also emphasized that the direct feedback and standard Pronunciation model in the ELSA Speak App make it easier for learners to identify phonological errors and monitor their progress through application-based assessments. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak App is influenced by external factors such as device availability and internet network quality, as well as the user's ability to understand technology-based features. Overall, the combination of AI technology and the repetitive practice system implemented by the ELSA Speak App makes it

a prospective learning tool to improve English speaking skills, especially in the realm of Pronunciation that requires continuous practice, objective analysis, and flexibility of practice outside of formal learning environments.

However, research on the effectiveness of the use of the ELSA Speak App at the junior high school level in Indonesia, especially in the context of madrasahs, is still limited. Each educational institution has unique characteristics that can affect the results of the use of learning technology, ranging from student backgrounds, availability of facilities, teachers' digital competencies, to curriculum integration. Therefore, contextual research in certain educational institutions is still urgently needed to provide more relevant empirical evidence locally.

The results of the initial observation of MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo show that most students still have difficulty in pronouncing certain sounds in English, especially in segmental aspects such as long and short vowels, final consonants, and some sounds that are not found in Indonesian or the student's regional language. In addition, suprasegmental aspects such as intonation and word stress placement are also often inappropriate, which reduces students' speech comprehension. This condition is exacerbated by limited in-person learning time and a lack of structured individual training opportunities. Teachers have limitations in providing personalized feedback to all students, while students need repetitive practice to correct their Pronunciation mistakes. The gap between the needs of students and the availability of traditional learning methods emphasizes the need for technology-based learning innovation.

Based on these problems, the integration of the ELSA Speak App as a Pronunciation learning medium is considered relevant to be applied in MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo. These apps can serve as learning supplements that provide students with the opportunity to practice their Pronunciation independently, get instant feedback, and monitor their progress in a more measurable way. In addition, the use of the ELSA Speak App is also in line with the direction of digital transformation in the world of education which encourages the use of technology as an effective and efficient learning support.

this study was conducted to investigate empirically the extent to which the use of ELSA Speak App can improve students' Pronunciation skills in MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution through adding insights into the effectiveness of technology in Pronunciation learning, as well as practical contributions for educators in designing more innovative learning strategies that meet the needs of students. In addition, the results of this research can also be input for curriculum development and integration of digital media in English learning at the madrasah level.

The reason for conducting this research is because it is necessary to get a comprehensive picture of how the ELSA Speak App is applied in Pronunciation learning at MTs Muhammadiyah 3 Sumberrejo, as well as the extent to which the application is able to have a real impact in improving students' Pronunciation skills. In addition, the selection of this title is also driven by the importance of understanding students' responses to the use of learning technology, because the success of digital media implementation is greatly influenced by the level of

acceptance, motivation, and comfort of students. By examining the application, effectiveness, and response of students at the same time, this study is seen as able to provide a complete understanding of the potential of ELSA Speak App as a Pronunciation learning medium and produce empirical findings that are relevant for the development of English in the madrasah environment.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background of the problems that have been described, related to the Improvement of Student Pronunciation using the ELSA Speak App at MTs Muhammadiyah 3 Sumberrejo, the formulation of the problems in this study is as follows:

1. How is The ELSA Speak App implemented in Pronunciation learning in English classes?
2. What extent can the ELSA Speak App improve student Pronunciation accuracy?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. Describing the ELSA Speak App implementation in Pronunciation learning in English Classes.
2. Investigating the ELSA Speak App in improving student Pronunciation accuracy

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of English language teaching scholarship, particularly in the field of technology-assisted Pronunciation instruction. The findings enrich the empirical literature on the effectiveness of *mobile-assisted language learning* (MALL) in improving Pronunciation skills among junior secondary school students, especially within the context of Islamic junior high schools (madrasah tsanawiyah), which has received relatively limited attention in previous research.

In addition, this study reinforces theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that emphasize the importance of input, feedback, and repeated practice in the acquisition of phonological competence. The use of the ELSA Speak application, which is equipped with *automatic speech recognition* (ASR) and instant corrective feedback, provides empirical evidence that artificial intelligence-based technology can function as an effective source of accurate phonological input and immediate feedback in Pronunciation learning.

This research also contributes to the theoretical understanding of the role of learner autonomy and digital learning in enhancing students' speaking competence. The findings indicate that the integration of the ELSA Speak application encourages students to take a more active role in their own learning process, thereby supporting constructivist learning theory and the concept of learner autonomy in language education.

Thus, from a theoretical perspective, this study not only confirms previous findings but also extends the application of Pronunciation learning theories to the context of madrasah-based education through the utilization of AI-based digital technology.

2. Practical Significant

Practically, this study provides direct benefits for various stakeholders involved in the English language learning process.

A. For English teachers, the findings offer an alternative and innovative instructional medium for teaching pronunciation . The ELSA Speak application can assist teachers in overcoming time constraints and difficulties in providing individual Pronunciation feedback, as the application automatically evaluates and corrects students' pronunciation .

B. For students, the use of the ELSA Speak application offers opportunities to practice English Pronunciation independently, flexibly, and repeatedly. The instant feedback provided by the application helps students recognize their Pronunciation errors and gradually improve their accuracy, thereby increasing their confidence in speaking English.

C. For schools, particularly MTs 3 Muhammadiyah Sumberrejo, this study can serve as a reference for developing technology-based learning policies. The results support the integration of digital media as a supplementary tool in English language instruction that aligns with technological advancements and the learning needs of students in the digital era.

D. For future researchers, this study can be used as a reference for further research related to Pronunciation learning, the use of AI-based applications, or the implementation of mobile learning in different educational levels and contexts. This research also opens opportunities for the exploration of other variables, such as learning motivation, students' attitudes, or overall speaking competence.

Overall, the practical benefits of this study are expected to contribute to improving the quality of English Pronunciation instruction through the use of the ELSA Speak application as a relevant, effective, and contextually appropriate learning medium in the madrasah tsanawiyah setting

E. Definition of Terminologies

To avoid misunderstanding, the key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the way words are spoken correctly by producing appropriate English sounds, including vowels, consonants, stress, rhythm, and intonation. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), Pronunciation is an integral component of communicative competence because it affects the intelligibility and comprehensibility of spoken language. In this study, Pronunciation refers to the students' ability to pronounce English words accurately and understandably after learning through the ELSA Speak App.

2. ELSA Speak App

ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) Speak App is an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based mobile application designed to help English learners improve their pronunciation . The application analyzes learners' speech using automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology and provides immediate feedback on Pronunciation accuracy, stress, intonation, and fluency. In this study, the ELSA Speak App serves as the primary instructional media to support students' Pronunciation practice both inside and outside the classroom.