The Use Of ELSA Speak in Improving English Speaking Skills at Tenth Grade Students of SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam

Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Siswa Kelas X SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam

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Abstract

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui efektivitas penggunaan aplikasi ELSA Speak dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam dengan jumlah populasi 404 siswa. Dua kelas dari siswa kelas sepuluh dipilih sebagai sampel, masing-masing terdiri dari 33 siswa sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan kelompok kontrol. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain kuasi-eksperimen, serta pre-test dan post-test sebagai instrumen pengumpulan data. Hasil uji t sampel berpasangan menunjukkan bahwa kedua kelompok mengalami peningkatan setelah perlakuan, namun kelompok eksperimen mengalami peningkatan yang lebih signifikan. Nilai rata-rata post-test kelompok eksperimen adalah 70,73, sedangkan kelompok kontrol memperoleh nilai rata-rata 65,03, dengan selisih rata-rata sebesar 5,697. Uji t sampel independen menunjukkan nilai t-hitung sebesar 4,217 dengan derajat kebebasan (df) 64. Nilai t-tabel pada taraf signifikansi 0,05 adalah 2,000. Karena nilai t-hitung lebih besar dan nilai signifikansi (0,000) lebih kecil dari 0,05, maka hipotesis alternatif (Ha) diterima. Artinya, terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan antara kedua kelompok, dan hipotesis nol (H₀) ditolak. Kesimpulannya, penggunaan aplikasi ELSA Speak secara signifikan meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa kelas sepuluh di SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam.

Kata kunci: ELSA Speak, keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris

Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak application in enhancing students' English speaking skills. The research was conducted at SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam with a population of 404 students. Two tenth-grade classes were selected, consisting of an experimental group and a control group, each with 33 students. This study applied a quantitative method using a quasi-experimental design, with pre-tests and post-tests as data collection instruments.The results of the paired sample t-test showed that both groups improved after the treatment, but the experimental group improved more significantly. The mean post-test score of the experimental group was 70.73, while the control group scored 65.03, with a mean difference of 5.697. The independent sample t-test indicated that the t-obtained value was 4.217 with a degree of freedom (df) of 64. The t-table value at a 0.05 significance level was 2.000. Since the t-obtained value was higher and the significance level (0.000) was lower than 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. This means there was a significant difference between the two groups, while the null hypothesis (H₀) was rejected. In conclusion, the ELSA Speak application significantly improved the English speaking skills of tenth-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam.

Keywords: ELSA Speak, English Speaking Skills

INTRODUCTION

English is a global language that requires mastery of four key skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among them, speaking is considered the most crucial for effective communication, especially in real-life contexts (Rao, 2019; Sadiku, 2015). Speaking allows individuals to express ideas, build confidence, and interact meaningfully with others (Safitriani & Jayadi, 2021). Accurate pronunciation is essential to avoid misunderstandings, particularly in communication with native speakers (Maghdalena & Wahyuningsih, 2024).

However, many English learners face challenges in speaking. These include lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and preference for using their mother tongue (Tang in Riadil, 2020; Kurniati et al., 2020). At SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam, students rarely use English in daily life. Limited exposure and few practice opportunities, especially in vocational schools, contribute to weak speaking skills, particularly pronunciation.

During classroom observations, the writer noted that students were often hesitant to participate in speaking activities due to fear of making mistakes and lack of fluency. This highlights the need for tools that support independent and engaging speaking practice.

One solution is the use of ELSA Speak, an AI-powered mobile application designed to improve English pronunciation and speaking skills. ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) provides personalized feedback using Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology, allowing users to practice at their own pace (Loewen et al., 2019). Studies have shown that ELSA Speak significantly enhances students' speaking performance and boosts motivation (Nguyen & Pham, 2022; Sari et al., 2023).

Yuliawati and Suryadi (2023) found that high school students in Serang gave positive responses toward ELSA Speak. Similarly, Maghdalena and Wahyuningsih (2024) reported increased fluency and motivation among users. A study by Elsani et al. (2023) showed that students' average speaking scores improved from 65.06 to 70.61 after using the app, with significant results from paired t-tests ($p < 0.05$).

Based on these findings, the writer is motivated to conduct a study entitled: The Use of ELSA Speak in Improving English Speaking Skills at Tenth Grade Students of SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used an experimental method with a quasi-experimental design, specifically the pretest-posttest non-equivalent group design. According to Creswell (2018), quasi-experimental designs are suitable when participants cannot be randomly assigned to groups, but the writer intends to compare the effectiveness of a treatment between existing groups.

The writer selected two intact classes to serve as the experimental and control groups. Both classes were given a pretest to assess their initial speaking abilities. The experimental group received the treatment using the ELSA Speak application, while the control group did not. After the intervention, both groups completed a posttest to evaluate the impact of the treatment.

The population of this study is all of the tenth grader of SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam. The sample in this study was selected using the purposive sampling method. This technique differs from

convenience sampling in that the researcher does not simply select individual who are readily available, but rather uses informed judgment to choose participants who are considered most likely to yield relevant and valuable data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p.90)

In this study, two classes were chosen based on their similar English proficiency levels, as assessed by their previous academic performance. Both classes were taught by the same teacher to ensure consistency in teaching methods, learning materials, and classroom environment. TKJ 1 served as the experimental group (which used the ELSA Speak application during the treatment), and TKJ 2 as the control group (which did not use the application).

Technique for Analyzing the Data

The data in this study were analyzed using SPSS with the Paired Sample t-test and Independent t-test.

1. The Paired Sample t-test was used to determine whether there wass a significant improvement in the speaking skills of students in both the experimental and control groups before and after the treatment by comparing the pre-test and post-test results within each group.

2. The Independent t-test was used to identify whether there was a significant difference in speaking achievement between the experimental group, which used ELSA Speak, and the control group, which did not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak application in improving students' speaking skills. The research design involved two groups: an experimental class and a control class. Both groups were given the same oral pre-test to assess their initial speaking proficiency levels.

Based on the paired sample t-test results, both groups showed improvement in their speaking scores after the treatment, but the experimental group experienced greater progress. The experimental class who were taught by using ELSA Speak app showed significance different in the students speaking skill between control class who were not taught by using ELSA Speak App.

Frequency and Mean score of Students Speaking Skill

Level of Category	Experimental Class				Control Class			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	F%	Mean	F%	Mean	F%	Mean	F%	Mean
Very Good	-	-	3 (6.06%)	20.167	-	-	-	-
Good	-	-	18 (57.57%)	18.111	-	-	9 (27.27%)	17.888
Enough	6 (18.18%)	15.083	12 (36.36%)	16.417	7 (24.24%)	15.928	16 (48.48%)	16.375
Poor	23 (69.7%)	13.282	-	-	25 (75.75%)	13.04	8 (24.24%)	14.187
Failed	4 (12.12%)	10.75	-	-	1 (3.03%)	10.5	-	-
Total	33 (100%)	39.115	33 (100%)	54.694	33 (100%)	39.468	33 (100%)	48.451

To find out whether or not there was a significant difference in students' speaking skills between the experimental and control groups, the writer analyzed the post-test scores of both groups by using an Independent Sample t-test.

The Result of Independent Sample t-test both Experimental and Control Class

Variable	Post-Test		Mean difference	df	t-obtained	t-table	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean Exp	Mean Control					
Speaking Skill	70.73	65.03	5.697	64	4.217	2.000	.000

The Independent Sample t-test results also demonstrated a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. The mean post-test score of the experimental group was 70.73, while that of the control group was 65.03, with a mean difference of 5.697.The experimental group, which used ELSA Speak during the learning process, showed improvements that were not random, but rather the result of the treatment—specifically, the integration of ELSA Speak into their speaking practice.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Paired Sample t-test and Independent Sample t-test, it can be concluded that using the ELSA Speak application had a significant positive effect on students' English speaking skills. The Paired Sample t-test in the experimental class showed significant improvement in all five aspects of speaking: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The greatest improvement was in vocabulary, likely due to ELSA Speak's interactive features and AI-based feedback that help students learn and apply new words in real contexts.

The Independent Sample t-test also confirmed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' post-test scores, proving the effectiveness of ELSA Speak in speaking practice. Although students initially felt unfamiliar and hesitant, they gradually became more confident and motivated to practice independently. Personalized learning paths, instant feedback, and game-like elements in the app increased students' engagement and confidence.

However, some students still needed additional teacher guidance and practice. Overall, combining ELSA Speak with teacher support effectively improves students' speaking abilities and motivation. These findings align with previous studies (Maghdalena & Wahyuningsih, 2024; Yuliawati & Suryadi, 2023; Pangastuti, 2021).

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