

## The Use of English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA Application) to Improve Student's English Speaking Skill

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the use of the English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) application to improve students' speaking skills of eleventh grade at SMK Muhammadiyah 15 Jakarta Academic Year 2025/2026. This research method is classroom action research that followed Kemmis and McTaggart model. This research comprises of two cycles and each cycle consists of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was conducted from 05 August 2025 - 14 August 2025. The subject of this research is 33 students of eleventh grade students. The research data were collected through interview, observation, test, document study such as curriculum, lesson plan. The result of this research showed that In Cycle I, limited devices, unstable internet, and low motivation led to only 61% of students reaching the KKM with an average score of 67.88, while in Cycle II, improved strategies and the use of ELSA boosted motivation, accuracy, and engagement, raising the passing rate to 73% and the average score to 71.82. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that learning to improve speaking skills in class XI students using the ELSA application media can improve students' pronunciation and speaking comprehension skills

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## INTRODUCTION

English is essential for high school students because it opens doors to global educational and career opportunities. English language skills help students access quality educational resources, enhance study abroad opportunities, and prepare for an increasingly global workforce. This not only develops students' language skills but also instills a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and global knowledge, preparing them to face the future challenges and opportunities. Inversely proportional to the high demand for English language skills in the era of globalization, the English language skills of Indonesian citizens are currently considered to be in the low category. Based on the English Proficiency Index report conducted by Education First (EF) on around 2.1 million people with an average age of 25 years from 111 countries, Indonesia is in 81st place (Zein Subhan, 2019). Speaking ability is the ability to pronounce articulatory sounds or words to express, express and convey thoughts, ideas and feelings (Tarigan, 1983). Practicing speaking skills can be done by interacting and communicating with the people around you. Based on this definition, the use of the student centered learning method which encourages students to participate actively physically, mentally, intellectually and emotionally, assisted by the use of speaking assistants, is expected to help improve students' English speaking skills. Practicing English skills can be done by using various strategies, which are often defined as learning by applying a combination of several learning methods as an effort to improve learning outcomes (Gerlach & Ely, 1980). Various learning methods by teachers or instructors is a form of ideas or techniques that are considered new. In order to be able to facilitate students to make progress in the learning process and outcomes because it is carried out in a varied or innovative way. In this research, varied learning was used to improve English skills. Students frequently struggle with inhibition, such as anxiety over making mistakes, fear of potential judgment, or being embarrassed. The capacity to talk relies heavily on proper pronunciation thus becoming detailed rationales for the need for English language learners to practice the sound production of unfamiliar words (Vasbieva, et al, 2016). The use of speaking assistant technology is considered to be able to help students improve their speaking skills as a tool. In general, speaking assistant technology is developed based on voice data from various dialects of a language, identifying the speech patterns of native speakers and non-native speakers, so that it can provide input to show users how to correct errors. In this research, researchers used ELSA (English Language Speaking Assistant) application as a media that helps the English language learning process in the classroom.

Based on teaching and learning activities at SMK Muhammadiyah 15 Jakarta, many students have a lack of speaking skills, especially in English; the students seemed to be having problems with their pronunciation and a lack of knowing how to say words in English. This can be caused by a less supportive atmosphere in learning English, laziness, lack of confidence, students' feeling intimidated, and students' disinterest in learning English. According to the problem above, the researcher is interested in exploring students' abilities in learning English through the ELSA Speak application to improve student speaking skills, so the researcher will conduct a study entitled "Improving student speaking skill through the implementation of English language speech assistant (ELSA Application).

ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) is an application designed to help users improve their English

speaking skills. It utilizes AI, including speech recognition technology, to provide feedback and guidance on pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. ELSA complements traditional learning methods, offering an interactive and personalized approach to language acquisition. The app is designed to help learners speak English fluently and correctly, with AI coaching to improve speaking skills. ELSA English Language Speech Assistant, is a fun and engaging App specially designed to help improve English Speaking communicate Skill. ELSA's artificial intelligence technology was developed using voice data of people speaking English with various accents. ELSA speak is the only English speaking and communication App that can help correct pronunciation errors to each syllable, the use of Artificial Intelligence and proprietary voice recognition, voted as the top 5 Application. English Language Speech Assistant is an acronym for ELSA. English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) can be downloaded for free from AppStore or Google Play. The importance of using media for teaching is that it can be used to help the students in their studies and to make the teaching-learning process more effective and efficient. In the Elsa application itself, there are several categories, namely daily lesson exercises, improved pronunciation, and topic-based learning (there are 14 topics here, and we can choose according to our abilities). In Elsa Speak, there are also phonetic symbols for each word, and we can also listen to how the word is pronounced.

The ELSA Speak application provides students with extensive instruction, native audio support, guided practice, feedback, and simulated conversational exercises, all of which are in the form of gamification and have been proven to increase motivation. (Aeni, et al., 2021), ELSA (English Language Speaking Assistant) is an application that uses speech synthesis technology to teach vocabulary and grammar to users (Luu, L. . T., 2021) With the help of voice recognition technology, This application is supported by features such as Speech Recognition, Proven Personalized Curriculum, Free Online Dictionary and Free Assessment, is one of the intelligent artificial intelligence technologies for mastery of language, especially to measure speaking skills. For example, when students say certain words or sentences, the ELSA Speak system performs analysis and provides corrective feedback including giving their speaking scores and it can be challenging to get good grades. This study aims to investigate the implementation of the ELSA application in improving speaking skills among eleventh- grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 15 Jakarta. Specifically, it explores how the application enhances students' pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and confidence in speaking English. By employing classroom action research, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of digital media in language learning and contribute practical insights for teachers, students, and institutions in adopting technology-assisted learning..

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to investigate the effectiveness of the English Language Speech Assistant (ELSA) application in

improving students' speaking skills. The CAR design followed the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of four cyclical stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The cycles were implemented iteratively to identify problems, apply actions, evaluate outcomes, and revise strategies for subsequent cycles. The researcher used the qualitative method of Classroom Action Research (CAR) in this research. Classroom action research is conducted in four steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Planning is the plan for acting, starting from how the action will run, when the action is carried out, where the action will be carried out, who will carry out the action, what the purpose of the data action is, and why the action is carried out. Action is the process of implementing plans made and collecting data that will be examined, and then the results will be applied to the teaching process. Observing is the process of observing and analyzing data, observing the plans that have been designed, and then analyzing the obstacles that occur. Reflecting is contemplating and examining the action carried out more deeply based on the data obtained during the action. The implementation of the method was carried out in two cycles, where each cycle consisted of four stages.

The subject of this research was eleventh-grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 15 Jakarta in the 2025/2026 academic year, which consisted of 34 students. Data collection was carried out using observation, interviews, documentation and tests. In the cycle 1, the researcher focused on introducing the ELSA application to students and integrating it into speaking activities, particularly on the topic of asking and giving opinions. The process included pre-speaking activities (application demonstration and account setup), speaking practice (using ELSA for pronunciation drills and role-plays), and post-speaking reinforcement. Next, in Cycle 2, improvements were made by strengthening lesson plans, providing clearer instructions, and maximizing the ELSA application's features, especially its color-coded feedback (red, blue, green) and role-play functions. Students were also encouraged to practice collaboratively in pairs or groups to reduce anxiety and increase interaction.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The research conducted classroom observations and interviewed the English teacher and the students to identify the problem with the teaching and learning process of speaking. Based on the observations, when the teacher teaches, the teacher only provides material, explains the material briefly, and gives assignments. Teachers often give speaking practice in the classroom, but the students speaking performance is low. They did not know how to speak correctly and use the correct pronunciation. Using unattractive media makes students feel bored and unenthusiastic when learning English. They have difficulty finding appropriate words to express their ideas and lack confidence. After conducting research, the researchers got results based on the problems. The researchers conducted research in three cycles, and each cycle was divided into two meetings. The subject of this research consists of 34 students XII IPS 1 SMA Tanjung Priok.

## Results of Cycle 1

Below are the results of cycle 1 in the learning process of English speaking skills using the ELSA Application. In the first cycle, the researcher focused on introducing the ELSA application to students and integrating it into speaking activities, particularly on the topic of asking and giving opinions. The process included pre-speaking activities (application demonstration and account setup), speaking practice (using ELSA for pronunciation drills and role-plays), and post-speaking reinforcement. The researcher revised strategies for Cycle II, such as providing more guidance, focusing on problematic vocabulary, and motivating students to practice consistently. The researcher gave information about the material for the next meeting and closed the meeting by praying. The table below shows the results.

Table 1. Test result of cycle 1

No	Completeness	Total of students	Percentage
1	Pass	20	61%
2	Failed	13	39%
Average			67,88

In these steps, the collaborator and the researcher observe the teaching and learning process by monitoring all activities that happen in the classroom. The first meeting on cycle 1 gradually ran well; when the researcher explained the material, the students mostly paid attention, although some students enjoyed themselves. The students looked interested when the researcher used the suggestopedia method in the learning process. During the observation stage, several challenges emerged. Some students lacked personal devices or sufficient internet quota, while others were distracted by online games and showed low motivation. From the table, it can be seen that 20 students, 61%, are able to reach KKM, and 13 students, 39%, have not been able to reach KKM. Although some students improved their pronunciation and speaking confidence, overall performance did not meet the success criteria. The reflection stage revealed that limited access to technology, weak motivation, and lack of confidence were the main obstacles. The researcher found their pronunciation wrong; most had limited vocabulary and needed to be more fluent, and some students were still less able to speak English. When the researcher explained the material, the students mostly paid attention, although some students enjoyed themselves. Students show interest in learning using the suggestopedia method, especially when researchers play classical or soft music during learning. Based on the previous research, the low skills of students are due to aspects of speaking that are not followed by students, such as errors of grammatical, did not tell/express their opinions of the text in English, the students' lack of vocabulary and sometimes missing with others and the students was error to pronounce the words in the text. To fix those problems in cycle 1, the researcher had to increase students' motivation by giving them more attention and pushing them to be more confident in speaking English.

## Results of Cycle 2

This section contains the results of the post-test in cycle 2. In this step based on the previous cycle, improvements were made by strengthening lesson plans, providing clearer instructions, and maximizing the ELSA application's features, especially its color-coded feedback (red, blue, green) and role-play functions. Students were also encouraged to practice collaboratively in pairs or groups to reduce anxiety and increase interaction. The researcher entered the class, greeted the students, and checked their attendance before starting the learning process. The researcher then reviewed the previous material about descriptive text and asked some questions related to discussing descriptive text through ELSA Application. The researcher asked what difficulties the learners faced when describing the animals or plants they knew. The researcher asked about students' responses to learning by using soft or classical music. The lesson was closed by reading a prayer. The table below shows the results

Table 2. Test result of cycle 2

No	Completeness	Total of students	Percentage
1	Pass	24	73%
2	Failed	9	27%
Average			71,82

In this step, the students' participation increased compared to cycle 1. In this cycle 2, target achievement increased with an average score of 71,82. In cycle 2, 24 students reached the minimum standard score (KKM), but 9 students still needed to achieve the target. The learning atmosphere became more conducive, and students showed higher enthusiasm in practicing pronunciation and role-playing dialogues. Despite some students remaining passive, most demonstrated progress in accuracy and fluency. Based on the data above, 73% of students passed, and 27% of students failed, showing improvement compared to Cycle I. The students were able to perform the practice competently and confidently. The researcher found that the students' results still need to be higher and that they must work harder to improve their speaking skill in the next cycle. This needs to be evaluated to be improved in the next cycle, so from there, the researcher and the collaborator further discussed the learning process that would be carried out at the next meeting.

## Discussion

After conducting the classroom action research, the researcher analyzed the steps in two cycles. The researcher decided The results demonstrate that the implementation of the ELSA application contributed positively to the improvement of students' speaking performance. The most significant progress was observed in pronunciation accuracy, as the application provided instant corrective feedback that allowed learners to self-monitor their mistakes. This aligns with Pourhossein & Sabouri (2017), who emphasized that technology-based tools support pronunciation learning effectively through repetitive and individualized practice.

The findings also confirm that integrating technology fosters higher student motivation and engagement. In Cycle II, the gamified learning environment of ELSA, particularly its role-play feature, increased students' willingness to practice dialogues in class. This is consistent with Luu et al. (2021), who found that mobile-assisted language learning applications motivate learners by offering personalized and interactive experiences.

However, several limitations affected the outcomes. Not all students had equal access to mobile devices and stable internet connections, which hindered participation in Cycle I. Additionally, the premium version of ELSA restricted access to advanced features, limiting practice opportunities. Despite these challenges, teacher guidance, peer collaboration, and consistent reflection cycles contributed to notable progress in Cycle II.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study supports the idea that technology-enhanced learning, when integrated with proper classroom management and student-centered strategies, can significantly improve EFL learners' speaking skills. Nevertheless, further efforts are required to overcome technical and motivational barriers to achieve higher success rates. The improvement is not only in the test results given to students, but also in the motivation of students in learning, where students carry out learning with enthusiasm and focus on the explanation given by the teacher so that students become active in learning, and their attitude during the explanation of the material provided. Finally, from this explanation, it can be concluded that the action hypothesis is accepted. ELSA Application can improve students' speaking skill in Eleventh-grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 15 Jakarta from an increase in students' speaking skill scores and motivation in the teaching-learning activities. When the teacher explained the material the researcher can concluded that students' motivation in learning English increased, students learned enthusiastically and focused. During learning and their attitude when the explanation of the material was given Students became active. Students' vocabulary increases and their speaking skill improve by using the ELSA Application, increasing students' courage in speaking English without fear of being wrong in pronunciation. The students were also interested in learning to pronounce some vocabulary. The results of this study are the students' speaking skill improved very well, this can be proven by the students' scores which increased in each cycle. an increase in the mastery of vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency in students very well. In addition, there is also an increase in the motivation and interest in learning of students, as well as students' confidence in speaking English. The application of ELSA in learning speaking skill where students feel comfortable and increase motivation. The researcher interviewed the students and the students enjoyed improving their speaking skill through the ELSA Application because they could learn more actively and have fun. Finally, they can understand the material when it has been explained because they consider that the material will be more interesting with this method. Related to the interview result with the teacher and the student's response about the implementation, the suggestopedia method would be an alternative way in the teaching and learning process.

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