

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The introduction to this research contains the background to the problem, statement of the problems, objectives of the problems, benefits of research, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms that underlie the research.

1.1 Background to the Problem

English is an essential global language, serving as a vital tool for communication, education, and career advancement. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and is part of the national curriculum. However, many students face significant challenges in acquiring and mastering the language, particularly in speaking and pronunciation. Pronunciation, as a fundamental aspect of spoken English, often becomes a barrier for learners due to limited practice, lack of exposure to native speakers, and insufficient interactive learning methods. To address these challenges, innovative and engaging teaching strategies are necessary to improve students' pronunciation and overall confidence in speaking English. One such approach is the implementation of "Let's Speak English," a method designed to enhance students' speaking skills through interactive and practical activities. This study focuses on improving the pronunciation skills of 8th-grade students at Taman Siswa Surabaya using this method.

Language holds an important function in numerous aspects of everyday life, especially in the areas of thinking, reasoning, and being. The impact of language on students' cognitive, social, and emotional development, along with their academic success in various subjects, is significant. Acknowledging early language development requires the use of various strategies designed to enhance students'

motivation to learn the language. Enhancing pronunciation abilities is an essential aspect of language learning and instruction, particularly in the context of acquiring the English language. The research into learning the English language encompasses the examination and assessment of the grammatical structure of English, a leading international language in contemporary society. Learning English is vital since it is recognized globally as a universal language and is utilized for education in contemporary technological advancements (Alfarisy, 2021).

The study of English is an educational field aimed at providing students with a thorough grasp and skill in the English language, allowing them to communicate efficiently and correctly in spoken English. A key goal in the realm of English language learning in elementary schools is to foster children's interest and motivation in learning the English language. Educators need to possess a comprehensive understanding of their students' traits, allowing them to effectively recognize and choose suitable teaching methods and educational materials. A young learner might display an egocentric mindset, marked by a failure to recognize different viewpoints and a propensity to emphasize their own interests and opinions. This stage can be characterized as a time of self-absorption or egocentrism. Distinguishing between concrete and abstract ideas continues to be difficult when evaluating children's behavior (Afifah, 2023).

In Indonesia, English is regarded as a foreign language, resulting in the establishment of the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) framework. As a result, the level of English fluency among people in Indonesia is restricted. English is generally understood by most people, but there is a group of individuals who do not

use English as their main form of communication. Moreover, just a small number of people have the confidence and skill to participate in fluent English conversation. This concern seems to be a common element, particularly the hesitation to participate in English conversation resulting from insufficient skill and unfamiliarity with the language. The discussion centers on the link between learning vocabulary and the anxiety linked to making pronunciation mistakes. The skill to converse in English does not depend on one's command of the language or their adherence to specific regulations, but instead on the person's readiness to show bravery. The difficulties in correctly pronouncing words present major hurdles for English language learners in Indonesia. The observed phenomenon stems from variations in word pronunciation between Indonesian and English. The most effective approach is to cultivate individual courage and consciously incorporate English into everyday tasks (Anggraini et al, 2018)

Correct pronunciation of words is crucial for learners and is an important element of language instruction. Correct pronunciation aids in language acquisition, while incorrect pronunciation greatly obstructs language learning. In this situation, pronunciation entails organizing sounds produced by the movement of air through the speech organs. To achieve proficiency in English as a second language, it is vital to master pronunciation. Mispronunciation may cause confusion because of differences between letters and their associated sounds. Moreover, Tennant states that pronunciation is a notably intricate element that is of great importance in the field of education. Pronunciation encompasses more than merely producing accurate sounds and emphasizing correctly; it also enhances students' understanding of spoken language. This indicates that by stressing the appropriate

syllable while articulating words distinctly, learners can grasp the meanings of words and instinctively replicate the accurate sounds. Mastering pronunciation is essential for learners. Good pronunciation allows them to communicate successfully, making their language easily understandable. Certain students find it challenging to pronounce specific English words due to differences between how language is written and how it is spoken (Gilakjani dan Branch, 2016).

The goal of pronunciation training is not to anticipate that learners will speak like native speakers. The primary aim of spoken communication ought to be precise enunciation. To change the pronunciation of English words, learners need to adjust their perception of the sounds in those words. This applies to both single sounds and bigger components of speech such as syllables, stress patterns, and rhythm. Unfortunately, instruction on pronunciation is sometimes overlooked in English language teaching. Jamilah observed that mastering pronunciation can be difficult when the sounds in a target language do not exist in the learner's native language, hindering their ability to imitate. The learner can correctly articulate the sounds of the target language, but they have not grasped the stress pattern in English. Consequently, they frequently apply the intonation patterns of their native language, which are inappropriate for English. From these explanations, it can be concluded that mastering pronunciation is difficult because certain sounds are not present in a person's native language and there is insufficient awareness of stress patterns in English. In practice, instruction on pronunciation is frequently overlooked (Agustiana and Batau, 2021).

The absence of students' dedication and enthusiasm for learning is obstructing the educational process, making it difficult to grasp lessons and leading them to

overlook the teacher's guidance, which produces inadequate learning results. This happens because teachers lack access to educational resources to communicate messages and involve students; learning media can act as a means to convey subject matter and attract students' attention. Numerous educators overlook the significance of correct English pronunciation. There are multiple reasons for this oversight. Many students claim that they need not learn pronunciation and that studying it is a futile effort. They contend that simply communicating in English is enough, and other factors lose significance once the message is effectively communicated. Many teachers are unaware of the significance of pronunciation. Educators emphasize grammar and vocabulary in foreign language instruction, helping students cultivate robust listening and reading abilities. Additionally, many educators think that students perceive studying pronunciation as too difficult and uninteresting.

Pronunciation assistance is highly important as it serves as the main method of understanding. If students cannot pronounce a word correctly, they will have difficulty communicating well. Advice on pronunciation helps learners understand native speakers better and improves their ability to communicate. Pronunciation should be viewed as more than just accurately pronouncing distinct sounds or words. Understanding the significance of pronunciation is crucial since the way a word is said is the key aspect of speaking. If we mispronounce a word, it alters its meaning, which can be problematic in communication. To address this issue, all aspects of education must be modernized. This involves learning strategies that incorporate technology. There are numerous technologies that assist students in learning, and internet access significantly enhances their ability to acquire knowledge. The Let's Speak English application is among those that are utilized.

The Let's Speak English app invites students from Junior High School 1 TAMAN SISWA SURABAYA, particularly those in class VIII, to improve their spoken English skills, concentrating specifically on conversation abilities. The aim of this program is to assist users in improving their English speaking skills at the introductory level. The educational framework employed in this app is quite remarkable. The app is made to be user-friendly, enabling users to learn English effortlessly. The user's initial text may be refined to a more academic tone as follows: The text presented by the user is characterized by its clear articulation. Lastly, it is important to mention that the resource also features illustrative stories, captivating conversations, and challenging speaking activities. Readers can avoid confusion while looking for words, as they can quickly use them in real-life scenarios. Along with being easy to remember, the language patterns are appropriate for everyday situations and can be used effortlessly. This program aids English language learning for people from various backgrounds. This method is noted for its straightforwardness, effectiveness, and ease of use. This application caters to users of all skill levels, from novices to experienced individuals. Gradually integrates storytelling guidance, fundamental conversations, and exercise tasks. It is crucial to follow the chronological arrangement of the chapters when examining the contents of this application. The Let's Speak English platform can showcase words that generate positive reactions from readers, cultivating a feeling of fondness and pleasure for the English language.

Considering the context stated above, it is crucial to adopt more impactful strategies, like rewarding students for their successes in learning the English language. Given the widespread use of technology by students, it is essential for

educators to recognize and utilize the educational potential of learning media (Ramli, 2018). The emergence of new technology has led to major transformations in the methods of teaching and learning (Pavlik, 2015). Studies on the extensive adoption of a specific technological advancement, namely the mobile phone, have led to recommendations supporting its incorporation into educational settings. The wave of transformation also influenced the techniques used in language education and acquisition (Stockwell, 2010).

Besides practicing pronunciation in class, students can also learn it at home. They can independently learn English pronunciation whenever and wherever they choose. By providing flexible, interactive, and tailored opportunities for use both inside and outside the classroom, these applications pose a significant challenge to traditional methods of teaching related to mastering English pronunciation. Certain vocabulary proved challenging for the eighth-grade students of Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya to remember. As a result, the researcher decided to use the Let's Speak English app to enhance the vocabulary and listening skills of eighth-grade students at Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya.

Referring to the preceding explanation and a strong wish to find a solution to this problem, the author is motivated to conduct research in order to improve the vocabulary mastery of students using Let's Speak English. The author intends to conduct classroom action research to determine the implementation process of Let's Speak English and to improve students' command of English pronunciation. In this case, the author will conduct a study with the title **“IMPROVING PRONOUNCE BY USING, APLICATION “LET’S SPEAK ENGLISH” AT EIGHT GRADE Junior High School”**.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background that has been described, the problem that will be studied can be formulated as: is the use of the Let's Speak English application useful for improving the English pronunciation achievement of grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya?

1.3 Objectives of the Problems

To address the problem identified in the aforementioned problem formulation, the primary objective of this study is :

1. To if the use the Let's Speak English Application is useful for enhancing English pronunciation skills of VIII students at Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya.
2. To determine the effectiveness of implementing the Let's Speak English application on students' language skills in students at VIII Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya.

1.4 Benefits of Research

It is hoped that the results of this research will be useful in the following ways:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This research is expected to be a contribution to the development of English learning, especially for English vocabulary mastery.

2. Practical Benefits

It is anticipated that the findings of this research will be beneficial for:

- 1) For teachers, increasing teacher creativity in developing various learning models, especially by using crossword puzzles and being able to create an effective and creative learning process for students.
- 2) For students, Students are able to enhance their vocabulary skills by following the curriculum guidelines, and they should be highly motivated to learn a range of new words. Students are expected to have good communication skills in order to contribute knowledge in language.
- 3) For schools, it can improve school achievement, especially in learning English.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this research focuses on investigating the use of the Let's Speak English application to improve the English pronunciation skills of grade VIII students at Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya. The study specifically examines the advantages and effectiveness of the application in enhancing students' language skills, with an emphasis on pronunciation. The research is limited to the context of students in grade VIII at Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya and evaluates the impact of the application over a defined period of implementation. It does not extend to other grade levels, schools, or language aspects beyond pronunciation and general language skills directly influenced by the application.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In order to clarify the key terms used in this research, some definitions are put forward:

1. Pronunciation Skills

The ability to produce the sounds of a language correctly, including stress, intonation, rhythm, and clarity, enabling effective verbal communication in English.

2. Improving Pronunciation Skills

The Let's Speak English application enhances students' pronunciation, language proficiency, and confidence while fostering active engagement in English learning.

3. Junior High School 1 Taman Siswa Surabaya

A junior high school located in Surabaya, Indonesia, where the research is conducted to evaluate the application's impact on English language learning.

