

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents five topics related to the study. The topics are the Background of the Study, Research Question, Purpose of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope and Limitation, and the Organization of the Study.

### **A. Background of the Study**

Students will be considered proficient and master English if they can master fluent speaking skills. Because English has now become one of the compulsory subjects for students in junior high school by the regulation of the Minister of Education of the State of Indonesia number 22 of 2006. And English proficiency is used as a reference for the achievement of junior high school students. Because one of the benchmarks of student achievement in English is the ability to speak. And applying English as a tool of communication in activities at and outside of school, so students are required to master the speaking skill correctly and fluently. The speaking skill is used as one of the benchmarks of achievement in English because speaking skill is one of the productive abilities in a very complex oral form. And the ability to speak is the key to communicating between students and students with a general audience. Only with speaking skills can students express themselves. In addition to being able to express opinions or ideas owned by students, the ability to speak to students can also have a major influence on their own self-value when communicating verbally.

The importance of students in mastering the speaking skill in English is mentioned by Ur (1999) said that among the four English skills, speaking is called the most important skill. Speaking skills for themselves are of greatest interest to English language learners. The interest in speaking as a native speaker, makes many people want to master the ability to speak especially students. Speaking skill is productive in the form of oral communication. Nurhayati (2015) stated that the speaking skill is not biased to be obtained only by studying once or twice but must be with a continuous and structured learning process. In addition to the systematic process of learning to speak, the application of the results of learning to speak English must also be carried out continuously. Students will not become proficient and fluent in the ability to speak English if the process of learning English is still passive using English. The English learning process itself should be a place to apply English learning outcomes because if the results of learning to speak English are not practiced directly, then the productive speaking skill will not develop. Munir (2018) said that speaking skills are the most difficult skills in English to develop. So that the learning process and the right learning methods are needed in students' speaking skills to improve students' speaking skills.

Students must master several components of speaking English so that the speaking skill is by the learning targets that have been set. Based on Lado (1997) four components of speaking must be mastered by students, namely pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. To

master the four components perfectly, students experience many problems. Ur (1996) states that some problems cause students difficulty to speak English. These problems are inhibition, nothing to say, low participation, and mother tongue use. This problem is often found in students who are learning to speak English. In addition to the problems above, other problems are commonly experienced by students in the English learning process. Juhana (2012) said that several psychological factors can affect students' ability to learn to speak English. Some of the psychological factors that become problems are the following fear of mistakes, shyness, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation.

Based on preliminary studies that have been conducted 2 times, the researcher found several problems faced by class VIII L students at MTsN 1 Trenggalek. Students experience barriers linguistically and psychologically. The linguistic barriers are problems related to English technically such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. And the psychological obstacles that students face are as mentioned above. So the teacher must be more active to use English and play an active role in the learning process so that it will motivate students to dare to speak English. In addition to actively inviting students to speak English, the teacher must also be able to find the right learning media for students to learn to speak English, especially for students' pronunciation and fluency. According to Nurhayati (2018), as an educator and teacher, English teachers are required to always develop their abilities, knowledge, thought, and attention. So English teachers must also pay

attention to the development of technological media as one of the media to learn English.

Recently, technology has become the main tool that people use to help with different activities carried out. In addition, Indonesia has entered the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 based on technology. Continuously with the implementation of the industrial revolution 4.0, the teaching and learning process must also adjust the use of technology as a learning medium. Degest (2019) said that concerning the world that has entered the industrial revolution 4.0, the teaching media used in the learning and teaching process must be based on technology 4.0. So that all learning processes will always be connected to the use of technology. Nurhayati (2019) said that the value of practical and touchable in process of teaching and learning is learning using technology, especially to support the government program and policy related to the information technology and communication. Eshankulovna (2021) also said that technology has become an aide for students to improvise language skills such as speaking skills. The use of technology such as podcasts, video conferencing, movies, and voice recognition software is considered the most effective learning medium to improve students' speaking skills.

One of the effective applications that can be used as a medium to improve students' speaking skills is the ELSA Speak application. Benzies (2017) said that currently many software, digital platforms, and applications are tools for learning languages, one of which is the ELSA Speak application to learn pronunciation. ELSA itself stands for English

Language Speech Assistant. ELSA Speak application is an Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) that can improve students' abilities in terms of pronunciation and speaking skills. This application is available on all mobile devices such as smartphones and android. ELSA speak application can assist students to improve their speaking skills by converting spoken words into machine-readable input. The application identifies the correctness of what was spoken and then delivers the feedback and allows the user to try again, allowing the students to determine whether they are speaking correctly or not. ELSA speak application also features 7 Best English Pronouncement Apps (2019) that can help students to improve their English speaking skills to be better and more confident.

In this study, the researcher attempted to use ELSA speak application to improve students' speaking skills. The researcher chose the ELSA Speak application because this application can be used by all circles, especially students in junior high school. And based on the procedures for using the ELSA speak application that is easy to understand and the various features available in the application that can improve students' speaking skills, especially for their pronunciation and fluency. So ELSA Speak application is the right application to improve the speaking skills of students. The use of the ELSA Speak application can reduce the monotonous activities of the speaking learning process in the classroom. Because based on research conducted by Nurhayati (2105), monotonous classroom learning activities will make students

feel bored and not interested in learning. There have been several previous studies related to the use of ELSA speak application to improve speaking skills in students. The first previous study is a research conducted by Samad and Aminullah (2019) with the title Applying ELSA Speak Software in the Pronunciation Class: Students' Perception. The difference between that study and this study is in the research methodology used. Previous research used descriptive qualitative research methods while current research uses classroom action research (CAR) research methods. The results of previous research show that ELSA speak software is very good if applied to the learning process of pronunciation. The second previous study was conducted by Sarmadi and Ismail (2020) entitled ELSA Speak Application as a Supporting Media in Enhancing Students' Pronunciation Skill. The difference between this research and previous research is in the research design used to conduct research. In previous research, the research design used was a pre-experimental research design while this research used classroom action research (CAR). The results of research that has been analyzed statistically show the results that the ELSA speak application is effectively used to enhance students' pronunciation skills. The last previous study was a study conducted by Aeni (2021) entitled Inserting ELSA Speak Application in Hybrid Learning to Enhance the Students' Motivation in Speaking. The difference between previous research and current research is the subject of research and the learning process carried out. The research subjects in the previous study were second-

year students in English education while the research subjects are now students of class VIII junior high school. In the previous study, the learning process was carried out in a hybrid way between face-to-face learning and online learning. While the learning process in this study is entirely carried out with a face-to-face learning process. The results of previous research show that students are more interested and enhanced in the English learning process if they use the ELSA speak application. From all the explanations, the research conducted by the researcher entitled **“Using ELSA Speak Application to Improve Students’ Speaking Skill in Eighth Grade of MTsN 1 Trenggalek”**.

#### **B. Formulation of Research Question**

Based on the background of the study above, the research question is formulated as “How can the ELSA speak application improve students’ speaking skills in the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Trenggalek?”

#### **C. Objective of the Study**

Based on the research question, it can be known that the objective of the study is to identify how to use ELSA speak application to improve students’ speaking skills in the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Trenggalek.

#### **D. Significance of the Study**

The result of this study hopefully can be beneficial either theoretically or practically. It is expected to give a contribution to the teacher, the students, and the next researcher as follows:

- a. For the Teacher

The findings of this research are hoped can help the teacher to find out an alternative way of teaching and may offer references or encouragement to English teachers to motivate students, especially in speaking.

b. For the Students

The findings of this research are hoped can be used to improve the students' speaking skills and may guide them to overcome their difficulties in speaking English.

c. For the Next Researcher

The findings of this research are hoped to be beneficial for the next researcher who wants to perform research on this topic and it can be one of the references to conduct a study so the future researcher can make their studies more complete.

## **E. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid different perceptions about key terms which will be the focus of this research, giving definitions for each key term is needed in the research.

1. Speaking

Speaking is a productive skill in oral form and is a way of communicating to convey and express ideas, opinions, and thoughts that can be understood by the speaker and the listeners so that interaction occurs.



## 2. ELSA Speak Application

ELSA speak application is an automatic research recognition application that can be used on mobile phones. ELSA speak application with various features offers instruction, native audio, practice, feedback, and a simulated conversation that will be immediately given feedback to find out where the shortcomings lie for the learner. ELSA itself stands for English Language Speech Assistant.

### **F. The Organization of the Study**

This thesis is written in five chapters, those are introduction, review of related literature review, research method, findings and discussions, conclusion and suggestion.

1. CHAPTER I. Introduction. It consists of background of study, formulation of the research problem, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.
2. CHAPTER II. Review of related literature. It includes speaking, learning speaking, the ELSA Speak application, and previous studies.
3. CHAPTER III. Research method. It covers of research design, setting and subject of the study, procedure of the study, observing and reflecting.
4. CHAPTER IV. Findings and discussions
5. CHAPTER V. Conclusion and suggestions.