

The Use of English Pronunciation Application as a Supporting Media in Enhancing Students' Pronunciation

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Abstract

In an era characterized by the ubiquitous integration of technology in education, effective communication is essential, and the English language has risen as the common language uniting individuals with varied backgrounds. Pronunciation, a fundamental aspect of language proficiency, plays a crucial role in effective communication. This study explores the impact of integrating an innovative pronunciation application into the learning experiences of students. Through a quantitative approach and data collection from a structured questionnaire, focusing on the dynamic context of English Education Major at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, this study seeks to investigate the efficacy and practical implications of employing an English Pronunciation Application as a supporting media in the enhancement of students' pronunciation skill. The findings suggest that the English Pronunciation Application has been successful in serving as a supportive media, leading to significant improvement in students' pronunciation abilities.

Keywords: English Pronunciation Application; Pronunciation; Technology

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, effective communication is essential, and the English language has emerged as the lingua franca connecting people from diverse backgrounds. Language proficiency has long been recognized as a crucial skill in today's globalized world, with English being the third most spoken and most widely taught language (Runde & Nealer, 2017). Effective communication in English not only hinges on vocabulary and grammar but also on clear and accurate pronunciation. It's not just about knowing grammar rules and vocabulary; pronunciation plays a pivotal role in conveying meaning accurately. (Prashant, 2018). However, mastering pronunciation can be a challenging endeavor, especially for non-native English speakers (Vancova, 2019). As shown above, communication in English being the lifeblood of our society, relies heavily on correct pronunciation.

In recent years, the integration of technology in education has gained prominence, offering new avenues for language learning (Smith & Johnson, 2021). The technology of mobile phones is now widespread. Students use Android smartphones in their daily activities. Technology allows students to apply and practice as needed anywhere and without time limits. In addition, students can determine their own learning path. With the advancement of technology and its simplicity, a lot of applications have been rapidly developed for ease of use (Rifqiyah, Ardini, & Prabowo KA, 2021). The extensive utilization of mobile phones has brought about notable transformations in education across various settings, encompassing language learning. Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) enabled learning by harnessing technology rather than diverging from traditional educational methods that depend on paper, boards, and teacher-centric approaches (Nafa, 2020). The widespread availability of mobile connectivity can facilitate several aspects of language learning, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Utilizing mobile applications for the purpose of learning English speaking skills has the potential to aid students in improving their speaking abilities (Gael & Elmiana, 2021). Hence, with the cause of the widespread of mobile phones, MALL became the path of new learning activities, specifically in pronunciation skill.

To address the challenge of mastering pronunciation by using mobile phones, educators are increasingly turning to innovative pedagogical tools, such as English Pronunciation Applications (EPA), as supportive mediums for improving students' pronunciation skills. Several previous studies have shown that using EPA significantly improves students' pronunciation. EPA, which encompass a variety of software and mobile applications, have emerged as powerful tools to assist learners in improving students' English pronunciation (Rifqiyah, Ardini, & Prabowo KA, 2021). Haryadi and Aprianoto (2020), in their research about Integrating EPA into Pronunciation Teaching convey a research from Wu (2015) that Wu demonstrated that students taught using application significantly outperformed control students in vocabulary acquisition. The research results also show that using English pronunciation applications can help EFL students, especially English department students, become more engaged and have positive attitudes and behaviors in learning pronunciation. As part of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), the app also encourages learners to study at their own leisure and at their own pace outside of the classroom (Haryadi & Aprianoto, 2020). Using technology-based pronunciation learning tools, such as apps or software, allows students to practice for as long as they want and adapt at their own pace. Although many studies have examined the influence of MALL in learning activities, there is a lack of research on how MALL, specifically how English Pronunciation Application help students' pronunciation not only as a learning tool in classroom but also an alternative media to correct pronunciation like a native speaker.

EPA encompass a diverse range of software and mobile applications designed to aid learners in enhancing their English pronunciation. This application offer a multifaceted approach, integrating audiovisual resources, interactive exercises, and real-time feedback mechanisms, all tailored to refine learners' pronunciation proficiency

(Jones & Lee, 2020). By this experiment, the researchers want to determine the use of English Pronunciation Application (EPA) in enhancing students' pronunciation in English Education, UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto. Whether it is as significant as the results of previous studies or differ in some aspect. Moreover, by investigating the impact of EPA on pronunciation improvement, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of integrating technology into language education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

The swift advancement of technology in today's era of globalization cannot be ignored for its influence on the realm of education. Among the information technologies frequently employed in the educational process, the mobile phone stands out. Mobile phone serves as a learning tool, significantly enhancing the teaching and learning process, with one of which is through Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) (Putri, 2021). Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) refers to the use of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, to enhance and support language learning. It involves the utilization of mobile applications, online resources, and tools to facilitate language acquisition and practice in a flexible and convenient manner (Kukulska-Hulme, 2018). Putri (2021) conducted an analysis on the use of mobile phone in English teaching and learning process. The findings shows that mobile phone is important and has advantages on several application served, such as Google Translate, English Thesaurus, U-Dictionary, and others.

English Pronunciation Application (EPA)

Haryadi & Aprianoto (2020) analyzes on how the integration of English Pronunciation Application affects students' participation and learning. The result of the study indicates that integrating the English Pronunciation Application led to heightened student participation and brought positive influence on fostering students' self-directed learning. Subsequent research was conducted by Rifqiyah, *et al.* (2021), the authors investigate the effectiveness of the English Pronunciation Application (EPA) as a medium in pronunciation classes. From the research conducted by the author, there were several important points that students' pronunciation abilities had increased between after and before using EPA. The authors also states that using the English Pronunciation Application (EPA) is better than what was taught before using the application. Based on the literature review above, research on English Pronunciation Application as supporting media, not only as a learning tool but also an alternative source of native-like pronunciation values in enhancing students' pronunciation skill has never been done before.

English Pronunciation

Pronunciation encompasses the manner in which words are articulated. Proficiency in pronunciation empowers individuals to accurately vocalize English words and fosters self-confidence in English speaking. A study about the importance of pronunciation in

English language communication was done by Prashant (2018), he stated that pronunciation cannot be underestimate and pronunciation must become one's priority while learning English. Research on the efficacy of second language (L2) pronunciation instruction by Thomson & Derwing (2014) produced that L2 pronunciation stands apart from other aspects of acquiring a second language because it isn't necessarily linked to overall proficiency. Even beginners can demonstrate excellent pronunciation, while someone with a strong command of L2 grammar and vocabulary may struggle to communicate effectively. This variability in students' pronunciation can pose challenges for instructors in typical language classrooms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research is a vital and potent instrument for guiding human advancement. The absence of organized research would have resulted in minimal or limited progress (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). The research method employed in this study is quantitative. Quantitative research relies on the quantification of data or measurements, and it is suitable for phenomena that can be articulated in terms of numerical values or quantities (Bhome, et al., 2013). The design used in this research is descriptive design. A descriptive design gathers data on variables without changing the environment or manipulating any of the variables. Descriptive correlation design is the design to explore relationships between variables and develop a better understanding of patterns (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). In this case, a descriptive correlation design seeks to determine whether there is a relationship between the variables or if there are indications that one variable has an impact on the other.

Participants

The participants in this research will be drawn from the 3rd and 5th year English Education Major at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto. The research will employ a convenience sampling method, which means that participants will be selected based on their availability and accessibility (Taherdoost, 2016). This method is chosen for its practicality and efficiency in the context of this study. A sample size of at least 30 students will be sought to ensure a sufficiently representative and diverse participant group. The participants' willingness to participate and their engagement with English Pronunciation Applications will be important factors in the selection process. Informed consent will be obtained from each participant, ensuring their voluntary participation in the study and adherence to ethical guidelines.

Data Collection

The researchers employed a questionnaire, where the researchers gathered and evaluated questionnaire responses to seek the use of English Pronunciation Application on students' pronunciation skills. The instrument of data collection process involved the utilization by questionnaires, which serve as a means to gather information by posing specific inquiries. The research will use a structured questionnaire as the primary data

collection tool. The questionnaire will be designed to address the research questions and objectives. These questionnaires were distributed to the students to obtain their opinion regarding their experiences with the English Pronunciation Application.

Data Analysis

Data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics deals with the collection, organization, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data. Common descriptive statistics include measures such as mean (average), median (middle value), mode (most frequent value), range, standard deviation, and graphical representations like histograms and box plots. On the other hand, inferential statistics concerned with making statements about the population parameters, relationships between variables, or the significance of observed differences based on a sample of data (Elst, 2019). Key statistical tests may include t-tests and regression analysis to examine the relationships between variables. The data analysis will be conducted using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

Ethical Considerations

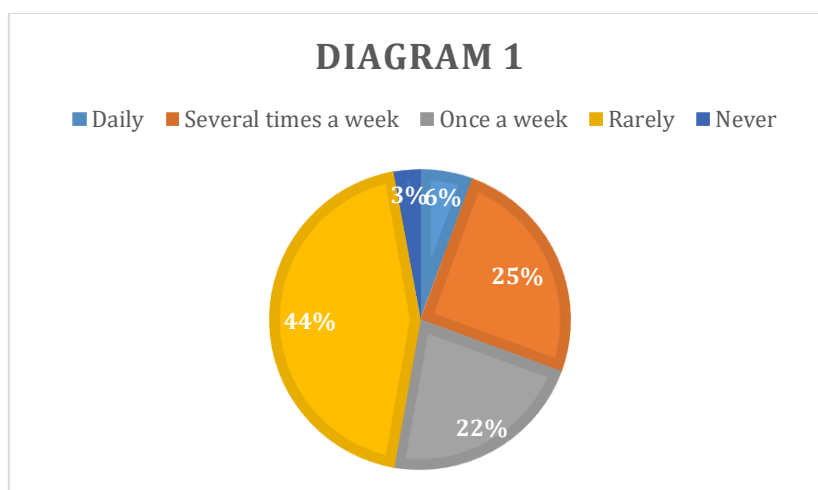
Prior to participating in the survey, participants will be provided with clear and concise information about the research objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. The research will adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant anonymity, informed consent, and data protection. All data collected through the survey will be kept strictly confidential. Participants' identities will not be disclosed in any reports or publications. Data will be coded to protect participant privacy. Informed consent will be obtained, ensuring that participants willingly agree to take part in the study. All data collected will be stored securely, and access will be restricted to the research team. Data will be saved on password-protected devices and encrypted, and physical copies of data will be stored in a secure location.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers tackled the examination of gathered data, aiming to analyze the improvement in students' pronunciation following the utilization of the English Pronunciation Application (EPA) Mobile-based as a supporting media to find out and analyze the use of the application in students' pronunciation development. The findings are described in the following paragraphs.

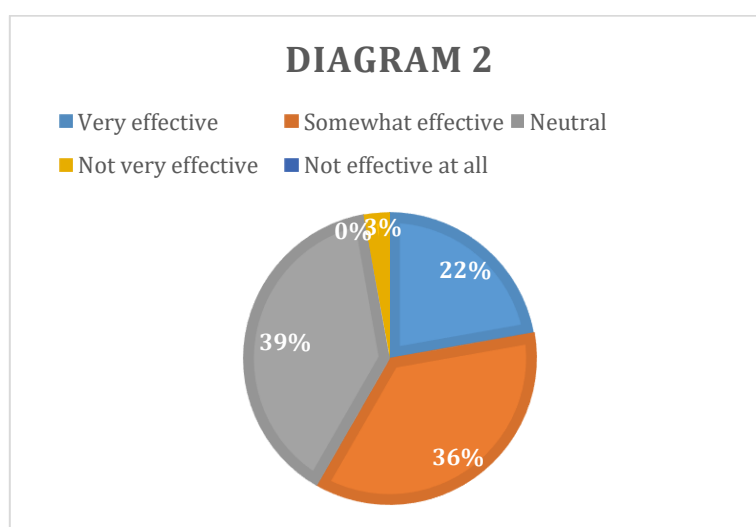
How often they use English Pronunciation Application in Enhancing Students' Pronunciation

The researchers did a questionnaire test to determine the impact of using English Pronunciation Application (EPA) in enhancing students' pronunciation. Based on 36 answers in the questionnaires, the usage of English Pronunciation Application (EPA) recording to their opinion is showed below.



According to the data gained and displayed in Table 1, it was found that the majority of students rarely use English Pronunciation Application (EPA). There were only 25% students that use English Pronunciation Application (EPA) several times a week, 22,2% students use English Pronunciation Application (EPA) once a week, the 5,6% use the application daily, and there is one respondent that never use the application. The expansion of time, place, and pace afforded by MALL enables continuous exposure and practice of literacy skills, with learners having control over their learning process.

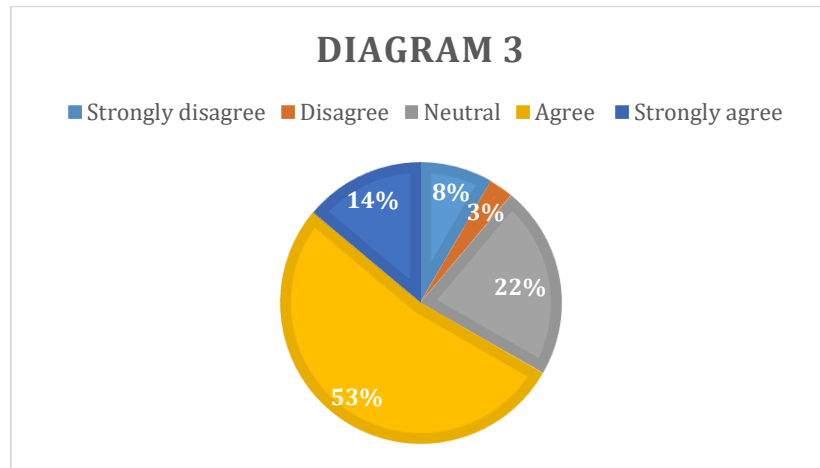
The Effectiveness of English Pronunciation App



The findings from the survey assessing the effectiveness of an English Pronunciation App among 36 respondents revealed a diverse range of opinions. A notable 22.2% of participants expressed that the app was "very effective" in enhancing their pronunciation skills. Additionally, 36.1% considered it "somewhat effective," indicating a substantial portion of respondents who found value in the App's utility. A significant number, comprising 38.9% of participants, reported a neutral stance, suggesting that the app neither significantly improved nor hindered their pronunciation. On the flip side, a minor 2.8% of respondents felt the app was "not very effective." Interestingly, no participants deemed the app "not effective at all," showcasing a positive trend where no one perceived

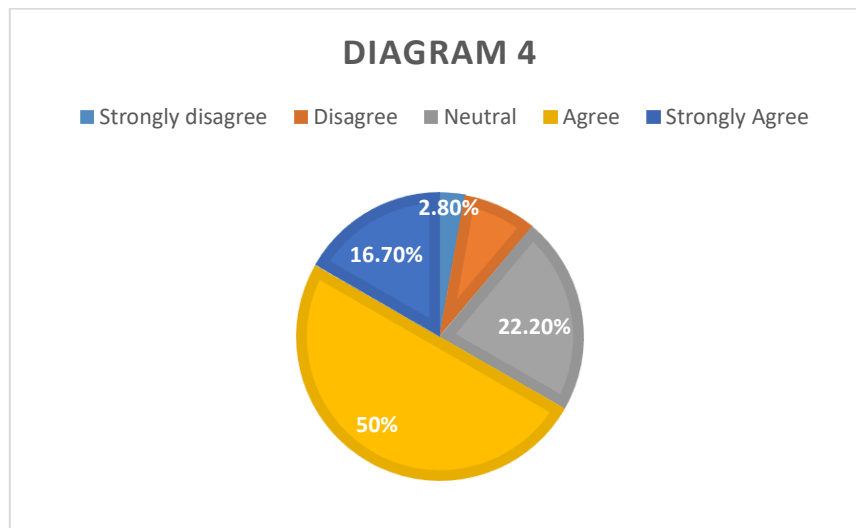
the app as entirely ineffective. It can be concluded that the participants agreed about the application is effective in enhancing students' pronunciation. Even though there are students that thought the application is not that effective to develop their pronunciation. These results highlight a generally favorable perception of the English Pronunciation App, with varying degrees of effectiveness reported among the user base.

English Pronunciation Application provides accurate feedback on student's pronunciation error



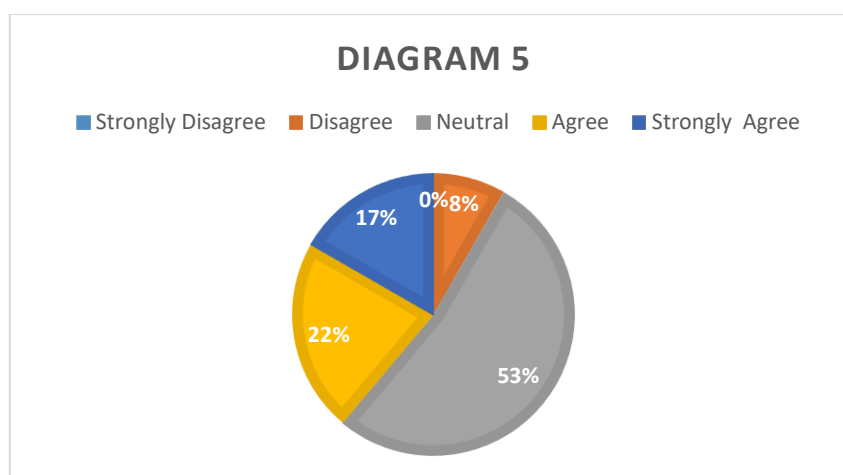
The English Pronunciation Application has proven to be a valuable tool for refining pronunciation skills, as evidenced by feedback from 36 respondents. Impressively, 8.3% of participants strongly agree that the application excels in correctly assessing pronunciations. Conversely, a minimal 2.8% disagreed with this assertion. A significant 22.2% of respondents adopted a neutral stance regarding the application's assessment capabilities. Encouragingly, the majority, comprising 52.8% of participants, agreed that the application effectively evaluates pronunciation. Furthermore, 13.9% of respondents expressed strong agreement with the application's ability to accurately assess the pronunciation skills of students. These positive responses underscore the effectiveness of the English Pronunciation Application in providing valuable and reliable feedback on students' pronunciation efforts, while also acknowledging the need for continued user engagement and potential enhancements. Overall, while a portion of users highly praised the application, there is valuable feedback that can be leveraged to enhance its effectiveness for a broader audience.

English Pronunciation Application is able to correctly assess the pronunciations



Pronunciation Application's ability to accurately evaluate students' practiced pronunciations yielded mixed responses among the 36 respondents. A marginal 2.8% of participants strongly agreed that the application effectively assessed pronunciations, while 8.3% disagreed with this assertion. A substantial portion, 22.2%, adopted a neutral stance on the application's proficiency in pronunciation assessment. Contrarily, half of the respondents, totaling 50%, agreed that the application correctly evaluates their pronunciation efforts. In contrast, 16.7% of participants strongly agreed with the application's effectiveness in this regard. These diverse perspectives underscore the need for ongoing assessment and refinement to address concerns and enhance the overall effectiveness of the English Pronunciation Application in meeting the varying expectations of its user base.

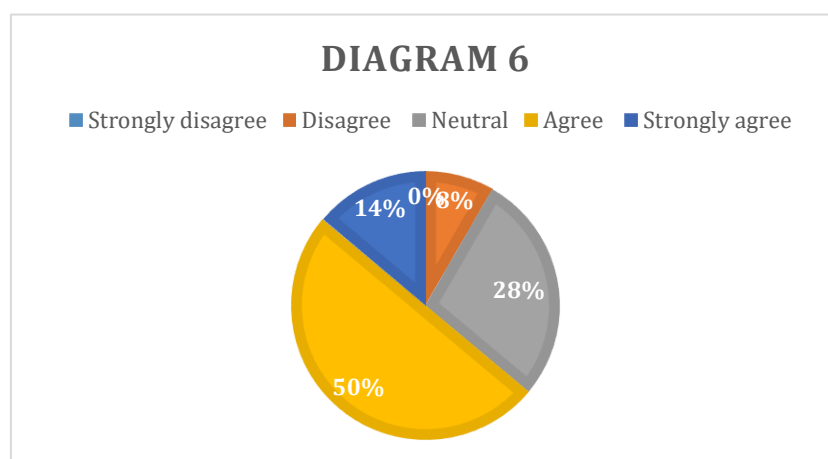
English Pronunciation is able to help students' improve their pronunciation



The findings regarding the efficacy of the English Pronunciation Application in aiding students' improvement in pronunciation reveal a diverse range of opinions. Surprisingly, no participants strongly agreed that the application significantly contributes to enhancing pronunciation skills. A small percentage, 8.2%, expressed disagreement with

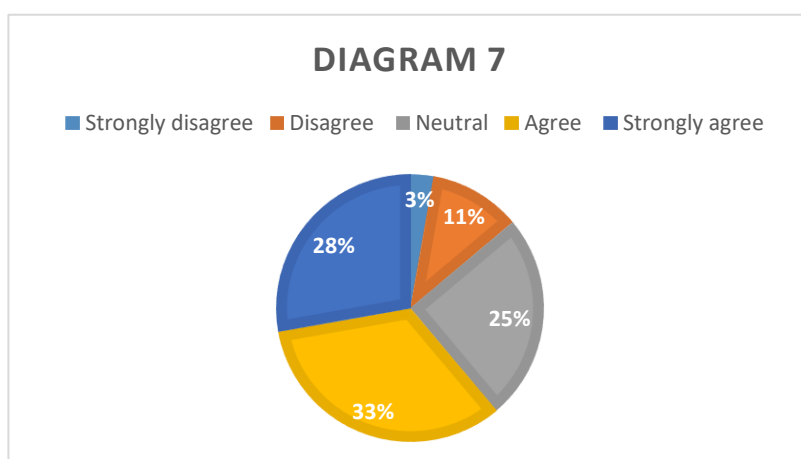
the application's effectiveness in fostering pronunciation improvement. The largest opinion, 52.8%, adopted a neutral stance, indicating uncertainty or a lack of consensus on the application's impact on pronunciation enhancement. On a positive note, 22.2% of respondents agreed that the English Pronunciation Application is beneficial for students seeking improvement in their pronunciation. Additionally, 16.7% of participants strongly agreed with the notion that the application is instrumental in helping students refine their pronunciation skills. These findings suggest a need for further investigation into the specific features and methodologies employed by the application, as well as potential areas for improvement to address the varying perceptions of its impact on pronunciation enhancement among users.

English Pronunciation Application is able to identify specific aspects of pronunciation that need improvement



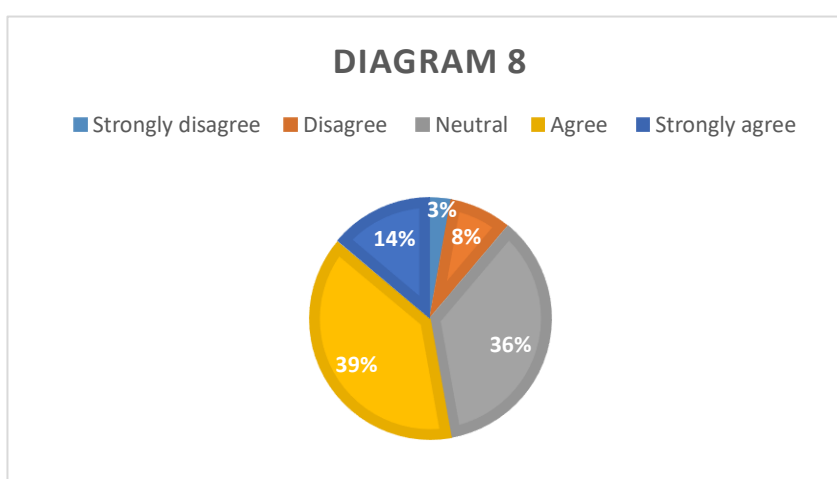
The English Pronunciation Application's ability to pinpoint specific aspects of pronunciation that require improvement present a mixed set of opinions. Notably, no participants strongly agreed that the application excels in identifying specific areas for pronunciation refinement. A small but noteworthy 8.3% of respondents expressed disagreement with the application's efficacy in this regard. A substantial 27.8% took a neutral stance, suggesting a degree of uncertainty or lack of consensus on the application's precision in identifying specific pronunciation shortcomings. On a positive note, 50% of respondents agreed that the English Pronunciation Application indeed does a commendable job in identifying specific aspects of pronunciation that need improvement. Furthermore, 13.6% of participants strongly agreed with this assessment, indicating a subset of users who find the application particularly effective in providing targeted feedback for pronunciation enhancement. These findings underscore that the English Pronunciation Application does a good job in improving specific facets of the students' pronunciation.

English Pronunciation Application is easy to use for daily pronunciation practice



The findings regarding the user-friendliness of the English Pronunciation Application for daily pronunciation practice reveal diverse perspectives. A modest 2.8% of participants strongly agreed that the application is exceptionally easy to use in the context of daily pronunciation practice. Conversely, 11.1% expressed disagreement with this sentiment, suggesting that a portion of users found the application less intuitive or accessible for regular use. A quarter of the respondents (25%) adopted a neutral stance, indicating a level of uncertainty or mixed opinions on the ease of use for daily practice. On a positive note, 33.3% of participants agreed that the application is user-friendly for daily pronunciation practice, while a noteworthy 27.8% strongly agreed. By result, most of the respondents find the application seamlessly integrates into their daily routine, with potential areas for improvement to address the concerns of those who find the application less user-friendly.

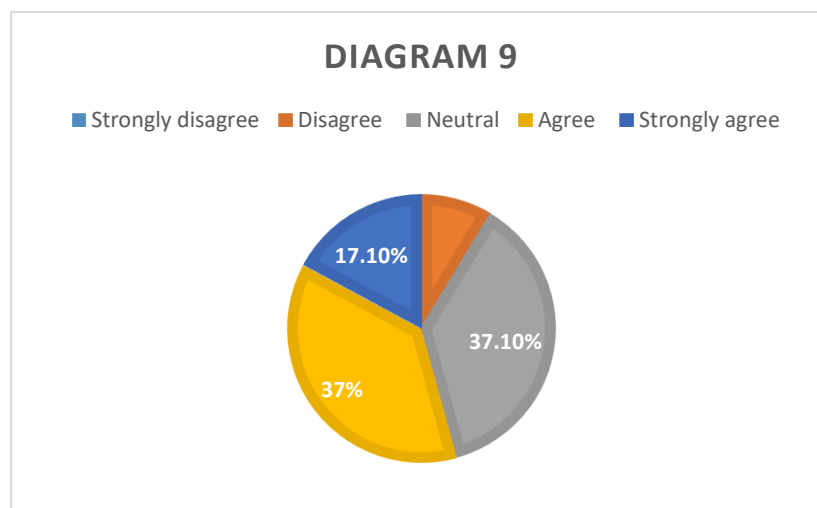
English Pronunciation Application is able to give clear instructions



The clarity of instructions provided by the English Pronunciation Application highlight varying opinions on the effectiveness of the guidance offered. Only a small fraction, 2.8% of participants, strongly agreed that the instructions provided by the application are very

clear. Conversely, 8.3% of respondents disagreed, indicating a subset of users who found the instructions lacking in clarity. A substantial 36.1% remained neutral on this aspect, suggesting a significant level of uncertainty or mixed perceptions regarding the clarity of instructions. On a positive note, 38.9% of participants agreed that the instructions are clear, indicating a majority who found the guidance comprehensible. Additionally, 13.9% of respondents strongly agreed, pointing to a notable group of users who perceived the instructions as highly clear. These findings underscore that English Pronunciation Application is able to address the clarity of the instructions, only a minor amount of the participants that disagreed.

English Pronunciation make the students' comfortable for practicing pronunciation



The findings about the English Pronunciation Application's impact on creating a comfortable environment for pronunciation practice suggest a range of perspectives. Strikingly, no participants strongly agreed that the application significantly contributes to making students feel comfortable during pronunciation practice. A notable 8.6% expressed disagreement, indicating a portion of users who did not find the application conducive to a comfortable practice environment. A substantial 37.1% of respondents maintained a neutral stance, suggesting a considerable level of uncertainty or mixed opinions on the application's ability to foster comfort during practice. On a positive note, an equal percentage of 37.1% of participants agreed that the application does contribute to students' comfort during pronunciation practice. Furthermore, 17.1% of respondents strongly agreed with this sentiment, pointing to a noteworthy subset of users who felt particularly at ease while using the application. These findings underscore the importance of further investigation into the user experience aspects that contribute to comfort during practice and potential improvements to address the concerns of those who did not find the application conducive to a comfortable learning environment.

Based on the data obtained and presented above, derived from the responses of 36 participants, indicates that a significant portion of students found the application effective, user-friendly, and capable of providing clear instructions for pronunciation practice. Despite some variations in opinions, the overall inclination towards positive

responses, particularly in the “agree” category, suggests a general satisfaction with the application's performance. However, it is important to acknowledge the existence of diverse perspectives, including those who held neutral or dissenting views. These findings underscore the significance of continuous evaluation and potential enhancements to address specific concerns, ensuring the English Pronunciation Application aligns more closely with the varied needs and expectations of its user base.

Discussion

The results of the survey align with the broader concept of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), emphasizing the significance of mobile technology in language education. The findings echo the idea that MALL provides a flexible and engaging learning environment, allowing learners control over their learning process. The positive feedback on the English Pronunciation Application's effectiveness in assessing pronunciation aligns with the observations made by Maryam Ameri (2020) regarding the transformative impact of modern technology on education. The current study's positive trend toward the effectiveness of the English Pronunciation Application is consistent with the notion that mobile learning, facilitated by applications like EPA, contributes to language skill improvement. The mixed responses regarding the application's ability to identify specific aspects for improvement align with the complex nature of language learning. The positive responses regarding user-friendliness and clarity of instructions suggest that the English Pronunciation Application is well-received in these aspects, contributing to a positive learning experience.

As a component of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), English Pronunciation Application also promotes self-study at the learner's own pace outside the classroom. It serves not only as a new learning tool but also as an alternative resource for correct English pronunciation in EFL contexts where native speakers are scarce. The app is highly recommended for English lecturers teaching pronunciation to freshmen or beginners in pronunciation learning (Haryadi & Aprianoto, 2020). The findings from the current study align with the conclusion drawn by Dian Shafwati (2022), who observed a slightly significant improvement in students' pronunciation after utilizing pronunciation applications. Both studies recognize the potential of such applications in contributing to enhanced pronunciation skills among students.

In conclusion, this research study's findings contribute to the existing body of research on mobile-assisted language learning, supporting the idea that technology, including applications like the English Pronunciation App, plays a crucial role in language education. The insights from the participants provide valuable feedback for ongoing improvements, emphasizing the need for continuous evaluation and adaptation to meet the diverse needs of learners. The study's findings indicate that the use of the English Pronunciation App can enhance engagement, foster positive attitudes, and improve the learning conduct of EFL students, particularly those in the English department.

CONCLUSION

According to the result of this research, the English Pronunciation Application has been proven successful as a supporting media to enhance students' pronunciation. Most of the respondents agreed that English Pronunciation Application (EPA) is useful as a supporting media in improving their own pronunciation. This suggests that the English Pronunciation Application has emerged as a valuable resource, resonating well with students seeking to refine their pronunciation abilities. The analysis of the gathered data reveals a prevailing trend among students utilizing the English Pronunciation Application, with the majority of respondents expressing agreement with various aspects of the application. Furthermore, the study underscores the widespread acceptance of English Pronunciation Application (APA) among students, emphasizing its role as a beneficial aid in language learning.

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