



The Use of English Podcast among English Education Students at Universitas Negeri Padang

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Abstract

Technological developments have changed human life, including the education sector. Currently, many technology-based learning media have been found, podcast is one of them. Podcasts can be used as an additional learning media, especially for listening and speaking activities. This study aims to see the phenomenon of using English podcast among English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang and explore their perception about the use of podcast to improve their listening and speaking skills. This study used a qualitative research method with a case study approach. The questionnaire and interview are used to collect the data. In general, there are not many of podcast users among English Education students at Universitas Negeri Padang, especially English podcasts. The data shows that only about 13% of English Education students use podcasts, of which 7% use English podcasts. Based on this data, students who use English podcasts agree that English podcasts can be used as additional learning media that can improve their listening and speaking skills. However, students also found their own challenges when listening to English podcasts, namely words, idioms or slang that are unfamiliar to them and also internet network problems.

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INTRODUCTION

In learning English, listening is considered as one of the difficult subject for English Education students. Diora & Rosa (2020) found that quite a number of difficulties faced by students of English Education, Department of English Language and Literature, FBS, UNP in listening class. This is likely due to the limited amount of time allocated for the listening class (just once a week for two credits). Aside from the classroom learning process, the student will not review the content or seek out extra resources to assist them to improve their listening skills. Another reason is that students typically experience anxiety before listening class, which can occur as a result of overthinking and the fear of making mistakes. As a result, the limited study hours combined with these issues make the learning process less optimal. Most of the issues students face in listening classes are anxiousness, difficulties inferring the

meaning of unknown words, difficulty concentrating, slurred audio pronunciation, and difficulty remembering what was said in the audio (Diora & Rosa, 2020). As a result, students must take the initiative to find additional materials and media to assist them in practicing listening independently. Perhaps practicing alone will help them reduce their anxiety, so they can relax and focus more on listening.

Besides listening, another skill that is generally difficult for English Education students at Department of English Language and Literature to master is speaking skill. Speaking English in a conversation or in front of public can be challenging, according to English Education students (Mitha et.al, 2018). Speaking classes, like listening classes, have limited hours, so participation in learning is less than optimal and additional learning and practice outside the classroom are needed. The problems in speaking include the lack of self-confidence of students, worries about making mistakes in pronunciation, grammar, or lexical items they use to express something, worrying about being criticized, and feeling embarrassed when speaking English. In addition, the lack of student initiative to seek other learning resources is also one of the causes (Riadil, 2020). Another problem that often occurs during speaking activities is anxiety and lack of confidence. Speaking anxiety is very influential on students' speaking activities, especially when they have to speak in front of many people. Additionally, students admitted that they lacked the self confidence to speak in front of many people because they felt embarrassed if they made mistakes and were judged negatively by their friends. They will believe that their friends are superior than them. It makes them unwilling to participate in class. (Mitha et.al, 2018).

Nevertheless, with some methods, all of these problems may be solved, and solutions to the problems encountered earlier can be found, because technology is continually evolving. Currently, many media and applications can assist English learners in more readily accessing learning materials via their smartphones at anytime and anywhere. Many applications and websites offer a variety of elements for learning English engagingly and enjoyably, and they are easily accessed. In this digital era, the use of technology as a medium for the learning process is common. Through technology, students can view, create, share and find all the information needed to improve their language skills (Prayitmojo et.al, 2018). There have been many new technologies developed, and one of them is the podcast, which offers resources for language learning (Bustari et.al, 2017).

Podcast is one of the technology products that can be used to improve students' listening and speaking skills, as well as to increase vocabulary and practice their pronunciation. Podcasts are audio files that can be uploaded via the internet and can be downloaded via a laptop or smartphone (Chowdhury, 2019). A podcast is a broadcast in the form of voice recordings from the hosts. Through the recordings, the users may listen to talks or conversations between hosts and guests discussing a particular topic. Currently, podcasts are one of the trends in Indonesia. The current trend in content distribution is shifting away from video-based content, like that found on Youtube, and has incorporated audio-based content, like that found on podcasts (Zellatifanny, 2020). Many users engage in podcast content because the discussions are interesting and more relaxed. In addition, users may choose the episodes they like randomly without having to listen to all of them (such as the topics

they dislike). When compared to conventional radio broadcasts, podcasts are more flexible. In Indonesia, Spotify, Soundcloud, and Google podcasts are the three main platforms that are frequently accessed for listening to podcasts (Stephani et.al, 2021).

As one of the media resulting from technological advances, a podcast provides convenience in language learning. Darwis (2016) states that many teachers around the world sometimes use podcasts in their teaching and learning activities. Over the last few years, podcasts have continued to evolve. Podcast users continue to experience an increase. Indonesia is the second-largest podcast user in the world in 2021 with a total of 35.6% (*katadata: 2021*). The highest number of users is with an age range of 15-24 years (*katadata: 2021*). The use of podcasts has now touched the world of education as a learning medium. This can be seen from the use of podcasts in the field of education which reaches 10.6% (*katadata:2021*).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative research method with a case study approach. The qualitative method was chosen because this study aims to provide a more detailed description of the opinions of English education students on the use of podcasts to improve their listening and speaking skills. Qualitative research was used to learn more about a particular phenomenon of interest, involving gathering, analyzing, and interpreting extensive narrative and visual (i.e., non-numerical) data (Miles and Gay, 2019). According to Fraenkel et.al (2012), qualitative research is a term used to describe studies that examine the quality of relationships, activities, events, or materials. Case study research was a type of qualitative research design where the subject of investigation was a bounded system (Miles and Gay, 2019). The participant of this research was students of English Education Program academic year 2020 and 2021, totaling 282 students. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select the sample for this research. Purposive sampling was the process of selecting a sample that had several criteria and was believed to represent the population (Mills and Gay, 2019). The researcher chose this technique because determining the sample requires certain criteria, namely English Education students who used English podcasts to learn English.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. *Research Finding*

a. *The Phenomena of Using Podcast*

There were not many people use podcasts, especially English podcasts as additional learning media to help them improve their English skills. Students who use English podcasts said that the main reason they use podcasts and listen to English podcasts was to improve their English skills. They said that listening to English podcasts can improve their vocabulary mastery, how to pronounce words, and also improve their listening skills. Another reason they listen to English podcasts was for entertainment and to reduce stress. Furthermore, there were those who said that listening to English podcasts can increase their knowledge.

Students who used podcasts on average have used podcasts for the past year, some have started since they entered university or since they

graduated from high school and some have listened to podcasts since they were in high school. Those who use podcasts start getting to know podcasts themselves through recommendations from those closest to them. In addition, there are also those who know podcasts from advertisements on social media and also YouTube.

The time they spent the most time listening to podcasts is their free time. When they are done with their tasks and have more time to relax, such as on weekends. In addition, there were also those who listen to podcasts when they feel tired with a fairly busy schedule, so they will take a moment to listen to podcasts in order to reduce their stress.

Most of the students choose to listen to conversational podcasts, because for them it is more interesting and also entertaining. However, there are also those who chose monologue podcasts because they think they can focus more when listening to one person speak. On the other hand, there are also those who like all kinds of podcasts, depending on whether the discussion is fun or not. For the topic of the podcast itself, most of them preferred podcasts about self improvement, because for them it is very inspiring. In addition, there are also those who like to listen to podcasts that discuss the world of music, sports, and the paranormal experience because for them it is more entertaining.

The ideal time for a podcast is around 15-30 minutes because a podcast that was too long can cause boredom while listening to it. So, to prevent boredom and stay focused while listening to podcasts, it was recommended that the duration was not too long. . They said that listening to podcasts made them calmer and they enjoyed listening to English podcasts. However, there were those who said that the first time they listen to the English podcast, they found it difficult to find vocabulary that they have not known before, so they have difficulty understanding what was being said in the podcast. But overall they feel happy and enjoy listening to English podcasts.

So, it can be concluded that English podcast users at the English Language and Literature Department, Universitas Negeri Padang have been using English podcasts for more than a year with the aim of improving their English skills. They like to listen to various types of podcasts such as the most popular, namely monologue and conversational podcasts. Podcasts with topics that were constructive as well as entertaining were topics they love to listen to. They prefer to listen to short podcasts with a duration of about 15-30 minutes to prevent boredom while listening. They like to listen to English podcasts because it can calm them down and also keep them entertained.

b. Students' Perception

All students agree that English podcasts can help them to improve their listening skill. Through English podcasts, they discover new, previously unknown vocabulary, how to pronounce the word, and can also practice their listening skills. When listening to English podcasts, they also train their focus so that they can understand the meaning and content of the podcast. In

addition of improving their listening skill, English podcast indirectly also helped improve their speaking skill. They can practice saying words or sentences that they listen to on podcasts and even words or sentences they don't know before. They can practice following the pronunciation of the podcaster who was a native English speaker. So, it can be concluded that English education students agree that English podcast can help students improve their listening and speaking skills.

c. Challenges in Using Podcast

When listening to podcasts, students encounter various challenges, including new words, idioms, or slang that are unfamiliar to them. In addition, the sometimes unstable internet connection was also a challenge for them when listening to podcasts, and also inconsistent in listening to podcasts. Seeing these problems, these students also already have solutions to overcome the problems encountered when listening to podcasts. When they hear words or terms that are new to them, they will try to listen many times until they hear the spoken word clearly, then they will look for the meaning of the words or terms. It can be concluded that students find some challenges when listening to podcasts. Nevertheless, they have solutions to overcome these obstacles.

Discussion

The discussion is written to interpret and describe the significance of your findings in light of what was already known about the issues being investigated, and to explain any new understanding or insights about the problem after you have taken the findings into consideration. It should connect to the introduction by way of the research questions or hypotheses you posed and the literature you reviewed, but it does not simply repeat or rearrange the introduction; this section should always explain how your study has moved the reader's understanding of the research problem forward from where you left them at the end of the introduction.

1. Phenomena of Using English Podcast

Based on interview data, the researcher found that the reason why students use English podcast was because podcast was an alternative medium that can be used to improve their English skills in an easy and fun way. This was in line with the finding from Kohar et al. (2014) that listening to podcasts was fun and enjoyable way to learn. Podcast was also easy to access and have many interesting topics. It was also supported by the statement Rahmatia et.al, (2018) that students enjoyed listening to podcast and podcast can be accessed and used very easily. In addition, they also said that podcasts were very fascinating and can also increase their knowledge.

All students have listened to the English podcast for more than a year. They have listened to English podcasts since they were in senior high school so they have been listening to English podcasts for about 1-2 years, some have been in university, and some have started listening to podcasts since the pandemic. They get information about the use of podcasts from their social media such as Instagram or Twitter. There were also those who got recommendations from

people around them, and also advertisements from platforms that provide podcasts themselves, namely Spotify and YouTube. Most students listen to podcasts when they have free time, after doing their assignments or when they want to sleep. There were those who listen to podcasts 2-3 a day, but there are also those who only listen to it once a week. Depends on the time they have and also sometimes depends on their mood.

For podcast types and topics, students have various answers. According to Braffton (2021) there are 8 types of podcasts; Interview Podcasts, Conversational Podcasts, Monologue Podcasts, Storytelling/Investigative Podcasts, Roundtable Podcasts, Theatrical Podcasts, Repurposed Content Podcasts, and Hybrid Podcasts. Among the 8 types of podcasts, the majority of students prefer to listen to conversational and monologue podcasts (short and long monologue). Meanwhile, the topics that students listen to the most were sports, education, daily life, entertainment, social issues, thrillers or true crime, and self improvement. The duration of the podcast they want to listen to or often listen to, students have varied answers, some said 5 minutes was enough for them, some said 15 minutes, and there was also one person who said 2 hours was the best duration to listen to a podcast. However, on average, students choose between 15-30 minutes the longest for a podcast. Because they thought that podcasts that were too long can cause boredom when listening to them. This of course can also reduce concentration which causes you to not focus when listening to podcasts. This is in line with what was said by Chowdbury and Haque (2019) that It's important to keep in mind that podcasts shouldn't be very long when using them in EFL instruction because they could make students get bored.

When listening to podcasts, most students said that they enjoyed and really like it. They say that listening to podcasts was fun and they feel entertained at the same time. They really enjoy hearing native speakers bring podcasts. Listening to podcasts can also made them calmer and reduce stress. In line with Abdulrahman et.al (2018) stated that students believe that podcasts give them access to real content and interesting learning activities, which increases their motivation to study English.

2. Students' Perception

All students agreed that podcasts could help improve their listening skill. The used of English podcasts to improve their listening skill has an immediate impact. When listening to English podcasts, they are trained to listen. They also said that listening to podcasts makes their listening activities more relaxing and enjoyable. Podcasts also indirectly increase students' learning motivation, especially to practice their listening skills. This was in line with what Rahmatia and Widiastuty (2018) stated that the fact that podcasts can help students learn listening skill and that they are willing to use it as an alternative way to improve their listening skill, and podcasts are also motivating for learning.

Regarding the used of English podcasts to improve speaking skill, students have two views on this matter. Most students agreed that podcasts can also improve listening skill. However, a small number of people think that the

use of English podcasts has little effect on improving their speaking skill. The findings were slightly different from some previous findings that the use of podcasts to improve speaking skills is the same as listening skill. As Samad et.al (2017) said that there is a significant improvement of students' speaking skills after using podcasts. Yoestara et.al (2018) stated that podcasts are an effective teaching medium for improving the speaking and listening abilities of Indonesian students because it may give students access to real materials, encourage self-directed learning, boost language confidence, and promote active learning. Although the use of podcasts has an indirect impact on students' speaking skills such as listening skills, podcasts were quite effective if used in speaking activities. It could be by retelling about the material or things they listen to on podcasts. So that it has more impact on their speaking skill.

3. Challenges in Using Podcast

Students said that their challenge in listening to English podcasts was finding new words or terms that they had never heard before. They did not know the meaning of these words and terms. Another problem is the sometimes unstable internet network and also feeling lazy to listen to podcasts. However, in other cases such as difficulties in using smartphones or laptops to access podcasts are not found, because accessing podcast was not difficult. In line with Rahmatia and widiastuty (2018) which stated that finding podcasts is easy, and there are many tools that provide to find them such as the internet, applications, and more. Students did not have any obstacles in using or getting the desired podcast content, because now technology is increasingly advanced. So, it can be concluded that podcast is one of the alternative media that is easy to use to improve listening and speaking skills.

Despite all these challenges, students find effective ways to overcome all these challenges so that these challenges can be reduced or even eliminated. When they find new words or terms, they will repeat the audio several times until they are sure of the words spoken in the podcast, then they will look up the meaning of the words, slang, or idioms they hear in the podcast through a dictionary, either through physical dictionary or online dictionary, they will also ask other people or their friends, and also look for answers via the internet. When having trouble accessing podcasts because of the internet network, she will wait until the network is normal.

CONCLUSION

According to research and findings, there were not many English podcast users among English education students at Universitas Negeri Padang. Students who used podcast know about podcasts because of recommendations from people close to them or their relatives and also saw advertisements on their social media. Students who listen to English podcasts said that they listen to English podcasts because they want to improve their English skills and increase their vocabulary. They like to listen to various types and topics of English podcasts because it can improve their knowledge and also practice their English skills. According to them, podcasts that were too long can make them feel bored quickly. So the podcast duration of about

15-30 minutes is just right. They also said that they enjoy listening to podcasts, because it can be used as a medium of entertainment as well as for learning.

English podcasts were proven to be used as an alternative media to improve students' English skills, especially listening. All students agreed that English podcasts can help them improve their listening skills. Students said that by listening to English podcasts they get used to listening to native speakers, so they can practice their listening skills. As for speaking skills, most students agreed that English podcasts can help improve their speaking skills. Others stated that they did not really feel the effect of using English podcasts on their speaking skills. Nevertheless, overall the students really enjoyed listening to the English podcast. Students said that listening to English podcasts is one of the alternative learning media that is very fun and easy to use. Listening to English podcasts is also very useful to improve their vocabulary and pronunciation. They find a lot of new vocabulary and have never heard before. Besides that, they can also increase their knowledge about sharing what they listen to in English podcasts because podcasts have a variety of topics delivered, starting from daily life, education, entertainment, sports, social issues, thrillers, true crime, and many more.

In addition, various types and duration of podcasts can reduce students' boredom when listening to them. Students can choose what type of podcast they want to listen to and choose how long they want to listen to in order to stay focused. Podcasts are also one of the most accessible and easy-to-use media. Podcasts can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Therefore, there are no significant obstacles for students in using podcasts. Podcasting was a method that has been demonstrated as one of the alternative learning media that encourages the individual study and introduces a more relaxed manner of learning English. Podcasts have also proven to be a friend to all language learners and have become a trend in modern society.

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