IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY USING PODCAST

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah menggunakan podcast sebagai media pembelajaran. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui implementasi *podcast* untuk pengajaran berbicara dan tanggapan siswa terhadap implementasi tersebut. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan desain pre-experimental terhadap satu kelompok *pre-test* dan *post-test* dengan subyek penelitian adalah siswa kelas XI SMA di Indonesia. Selain itu, pengumpulan data menggunakan perangkat tes, observasi, kuesioner dan wawancara dengan dua siswa yang memperoleh nilai *post-test* tertinggi dan terendah. Berdasarkan analisis statistik nilai *pre-test* dan post-test serta hasil kuesioner menunjukkan peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah penggunaan *podcast*. Faktanya, sembilan siswa (36%) merasa bahwa kemampuan berbicara mereka meningkat pesat setelah menggunakan *podcast*, dan sebagian besar siswa (64%) merasa kemampuan berbicara mereka meningkat pada tingkat menengah. Hasil wawancara menunjukkan bahwa siswa merasa bahwa penggunaan *podcast* lebih menyenangkan dibandingkan dengan penggunaan metode konvensional di kelas. *Podcast* juga membantu dalam meningkatkan kemampuan pengucapan siswa, menambah kosakata baru, dan meningkatkan tata bahasa siswa. Keuntungan menggunakan podcast adalah fleksibilitas waktu, sedangkan kerugiannya berkaitan dengan kerumitan pembuatan dan pengunggahan *podcast*.
Kata Kunci: kemampuan berbicara, bahasa Inggris, *podcast*, siswa.

Abstract

This study aims to see improvements in students' speaking ability after using podcasts as a learning media. Moreover, it tends to know the implementation of podcast for teaching speaking and students' responses toward the implementation. The study used quantitative method to identify the students' speaking improvement with a pre-experimental design of one group pre-test and post-test and qualitative method to examine the implementation and students' responses. The subjects were 11th-grade students of senior high school in Indonesia. In addition, the data collection was using tests, observation, questionnaire and an interview with two students who achieved the highest and lowest post-test scores. Based on a statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores and the questionnaire results, it showed an increase in students' speaking ability after the use of podcasts. In fact, nine students (36%) felt that their speaking ability improved highly after using podcasts, and most of the students (64%) felt their speaking' ability improved at the intermediate level. The interview results showed that students felt that the use of podcasts was more fun than the conventional method use in the class. It was also helpful in improving the students' pronunciation of words, adding new vocabulary, and improving students' English grammar. The advantage of using podcasts was time flexibility, while the disadvantage relates to the complexity of creating and uploading podcasts.
Keywords: speaking ability, English language, podcast, students.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the primary skills which plays an essential role in today's global world. According to Baker & Westrup (2003), speaking is oral communication that helps to access information. Speaking is also one of the ways we communicate with other people around us. Speaking helps us to deliver our idea and opinion. However, speak in the targeted language tends to be the most challenging aspect of second language learning and teaching (Pichette, 2009). Besides that, as a country where English is a foreign language, speaking using English is limited to classrooms. The use of English outside the classroom is limited, especially at the primary and secondary school levels. Due to the lack of space and time, students' speaking skills are challenging to develop. Based on world education institutions EF English First, English proficiency in Indonesia is very low at 34 out of 44 countries. These countries are countries with English as a foreign language (Mulyadi, 2011).

In the initial observation of this study, the short hours of teaching English in class made students unable to

practice speaking optimally. Besides the lack of time-space and time, internal factors also hinder students' speaking ability progress. Those internal factors are the psychological factors of the students. According to Quinn (2016), five psychological factors hinder students speaking progress: fear of making mistakes, shyness, speaking anxiety, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation. This internal problem is a difficult challenge for teachers when teaching speaking. The students' internal problems above often make students lazy and give up on learning and developing their speaking skills. In teaching, the teacher is required to be able to provide solutions to these inhibiting factors. One of the solutions to the above inhibiting factors is teaching speaking through a podcast.

The word "podcast" comes from a combination of two words are "iPod" and "broadcasting" (Cruz & Carvalho, 2007; Lim, 2005). According to the New Oxford American Dictionary, a podcast is "a digital recording of a radio broadcast or other similar program available on the Internet for download to a personal audio player." The more general definition of the podcast has expanded to podcasts compressed digital multimedia files (audio or video) available on the internet for download and played using a computer or mobile device such as the iPod. Podcast files can also be uploaded to a website, linked to blogs, sent by email, or any other means for traditional computer files to be shared (Fontichiaro, 2007). Podcasts are interactive media used to support the learning process in the classroom to develop listening and speaking skills (Ramli & Kurniawan, 2018).

The most beneficial aspect of podcasts is their ease of distribution. Podcasts have made it easier for people to leave their homes with bits of the internet crammed into their mp3 players (Stanley, 2006). They are not restricted to iPod technology and easily downloaded on any MP3 device, or anyone with a mobile device such as an iPod or other MP3 player can listen to these files anywhere after they have downloaded the podcast files to their mobile device. Besides providing easy access, podcasts can also help overcome students' internal problems in developing speaking skills. Podcasts are only audio form, making it easier for students to overcome the students' shyness and lack of confidence. Students' shyness and lack of confidence often arise when they are required to speak to large audiences. When they use podcasts, they do not have to show their faces while speaking, and they just need to focus on their speaking skills without worrying about their appearance. Podcasts also allow students to record their voices first before uploading them to online sites, and this can used by students to practice and record their voices as much as they want before sending them to online sites. With plenty of practice opportunities, the fear of making mistakes can be minimized.

There has been a lot of research on podcasts in the education area, such as podcasts as assessment guidance and feedback among university students (McSwiggan & Campbell, 2017), and learning through podcasting as Open Educational Resources (OER) (Rosell-Aguilar, 2013). However, most of the previous studies only used podcasts as a media for listening, so there is little research on podcasts as media speaking. Along with it, previous research was also mainly studied at the tertiary level. However, teaching speaking skill in secondary level also faces several problems such as students' internal factors. Thus, the media is needed to support the learning process and to develop their speaking ability. Considering the advantages provided by podcasts, such as easy access, time flexibility, and solution to overcome students' internal problems to improve speaking skills, teachers can use a podcast to support learning media to improve students' speaking skills. Therefore, this study aims to know the students' improvement in speaking ability after using podcasts, the implementation of a podcast in teaching speaking, and the students' responses regarding to the use of podcasts as supporting learning media.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative and qualitative method. According to Ary, et al (2010) quantitative method used data in the form of number while qualitative method used data in the form of words. In this study, the quantitative method used was pre-experimental design with one-group pre-test-post-test. In a one-group pre-test-post-test design, the subjects in the experimental group were measured before and after the treatment administered, there was no control group, and it aimed to know the comparison of the same individuals before and after the treatment as the aims of this study were to find out whether or not there was an increase in students' speaking ability after using podcast.

The subjects of this study were 11th-grade high school students in MAN 1 Mojokerto, located in Mojokerto, Indonesia. The subjects consisted of 25 students from 11 IPS 4 class. This research used the offer and suggestion material which was a part of the learning material of semester 1 in 11 grades. The offer and suggestion material were selected because there were conversations as the main subject of the material.

The research instruments used in this study were pre-test, post-test, observation sheet, questionnaires, and interviews. The pre-test and post-test scores were based on the speaking rubric adopted from Brown (2004) that aimed to answer the first research question regarding whether there was any improvement in students' speaking skills. Then, the researcher used observation sheet to answer the second research question regarding to the implementation of a podcast in teaching speaking skills. After that, the

researcher used a questionnaire that contained five questions adapted from Juana & Palak (2011) about student opinions on learning through podcasts as a supporting media to answer the third research question regarding students' responses after being taught using podcasts. In addition, an interview was used to explore the students' opinions about learning English through podcasts deeper.

After data collection was completed, all the data was analyzed using SPSS. Finally, the T-test formula used to find out the mean differences between pre-test and post-test are significant or not. Based on the the final results of the t-test, it compared to figure out if there are any differences. In this case, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and the null hypothesis (H_0) were used. A significant value of 95% (0.05) was used in this study (Bartz, 1976). The null hypothesis (H_0) is that there is no improvement in students' speaking skills after using podcasts. On the other hand, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is an improvement in students' speaking skills after using podcasts. Where the criteria are:

H_0 accepted, H_1 rejected if t-value $<$ t-table

H_0 rejected, H_1 accepted if t-value $\geq$ t-table

For the second research question, the researcher interpreted the observation result to describe how teachers implementing podcasts in teaching speaking. Then, for answering the third research question regarding students' responses, the questionnaire was converted into numeric code where one was for not improved at all, two was for very slightly improved, three was for average improved, four was for significantly improved, and five was for highly improved. Afterward, they were also analyzed using descriptive statistics. The last, Interview result were interpreted to explore students' responses deeper.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' improvement in speaking using podcast

To answer the first research question, the researcher used pre-test and post-test. The pre-test and post-test aimed to get accurate results regarding the improvement in students' speaking ability. The pre-test was carried out when the researcher first entered the class, and the post-test was carried out at the end of the research session after students used podcasts as a supporting learning media. The scoring of pre-test and post-test of speaking English was using the method by Brown (2004). Pre-test and post-test result shown in the table 1. Table 1 describe the minimum, maximum. Mean of pre-test and post-test and the standard deviation.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	25	48.00	60.00	58.56	3.029
Post-test	25	52.00	72.00	66.00	4.778
Valid N (listwise)	25				

It is known that all 25 students had a better score in the post-test compared to the pre-test. In the pre-test, the minimum score was 48.00, and the maximum was 60.00, with a mean of 58.56 and a standard deviation of 3.029. The minimum and maximum scores increased in the post-test, 52.00 for minimum and 72.00 for maximum, respectively, with the mean of 66.08 and standard deviation of 4.778.

Paired sample t-test was applied to find the difference in results before and after being given treatment in the form of learning English speaking skills using podcasts. There was a difference in the mean value between before (pre-test mean = 58.56) and after using podcasts (post-test mean = 66.08). Furthermore, there was an increased in the mean value, which indicated that podcasts increased the students' speaking skills. The result of the t-test can be seen in the table 1 as follows:

Table 2. Paired sample t-test

N	Correlation	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
25	0.907	0.000	-15.667	24	0.000

From Table 1, it can be seen that the correlation coefficient value is 0.907, and the significance is 0.000. Since the significance value is 0.000 < 0.05, there is a correlation between the pre-test and post-test variables.

It can also be known that the significance (2-tailed) in Table 1 above is 0.000 < 0.05, which means that hypothesis H_0 was rejected and H_1 is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a difference between the results before and after podcast usage, which means that there is a positive effect of using podcasts to improve students' speaking ability. The t-value is -15.667, while t-table with degree of freedom (df = 24) and significance value ($\alpha / 2 = 0.025$) is 2.064. The negative value of the t-value indicates that the mean pre-test score is lower than the post-test score. The t-value of 15.667 > 2.064 means that hypothesis H_0 is rejected and hypothesis H_1 is accepted. It can also be concluded that there is a difference between the results before and after podcast usage, which means that there is a positive effect of using podcasts to improve students' speaking ability.

The implementation of using podcast for teaching speaking

To answer the third research question, the researcher observed the process of teaching and learning speaking using podcast as supporting learning media. Every step that the teacher takes during teaching speaking used podcasts was observed by using observation sheet as the instrument. This observation was conducted for three meetings.

In the first meetings, the teacher explained the topic of offering and giving suggestion. To give the examples of offering and giving suggestion expression to students, the teacher played an audio podcast of two people's conversations. The audio contained of asking for offers and suggestions, accepting offers and suggestions, and rejecting offers and suggestions. After that, the teacher began to prepare for taking the pre-test scores conducted by the researcher. The teacher divided the students into several groups consisted of three students and began to distribute the dialogues about offering and giving suggestions. Each group got a different conversational dialogue. Students were given about 5 minutes to practice the dialogue they got. After 5 minutes, each group recorded their audio and practiced the dialogue they got. After all groups finished record their audio, the researcher provided a link on how to upload their audio to Spotify via anchor.fm. However, students found it difficult to upload their podcast audio, so that the audio collection switched to the google drive link. After done taken the pre-test scores, the teacher ended the meeting that day.

At the second meeting, the teacher began to deepen the use of podcasts as a supporting media in teaching speaking. The teacher began to give students the task of making conversation dialogues and practicing recording their podcast audio. At the second meeting, the teacher gave students some examples of situations and asked students to make dialogue offers and suggestions according to the specified situation. While recording the audio, the teacher guided and monitors students in the process of making dialogues. The teacher often corrected the students' incorrect pronunciation and the students sentence structure in the dialogue made by students and suggested the students to use of more familiar words. Students also participated actively when making dialogues. They asked some pronunciations of words that were difficult for them to pronounce and asked the meanings of words they did not understand. The results of the student audio that they made at the second meeting were collected on the google drive link that the researcher had provided.

At the third meeting, the teacher reviewed the core material that had been taught, such as expressions used to ask for offering and giving suggestions, expressions used to accept offers and suggestions, and expressions used to reject offers and suggestions. At the third meeting, students were given a post-test to re-measure their speaking ability. The post-test material was an example of a conversation dialogue about offering and giving suggestions that the researcher has prepared. Students were divided into groups consisting of 3 students and given a dialogue about offering and giving suggestion. Each group received a different topic from the previous pre-test topic. Students were given about 5 minutes to practice reading the dialogue text that has been distributed. After 5 minutes, each group recorded their audio and read the text of the dialogue they got. The audio recording of their post-test was then uploaded to the google drive link that the researcher had provided.

Students' responses toward the use of podcast in teaching speaking

To answer the second research question, the researcher used questionnaires and interviews. The used of questionnaires and interviews aimed to know student responses after using podcasts as a supporting learning media. After taken post-test scores, the students were asked to fill a questionnaire with five questions about their opinion after using a podcast as a learning media. The students can choose one of the five scale options based on their own experience and perspective. The result has been summarized as follows:

Table 3. Percentage distribution of the questionnaire

Questions	Answer options				
	1	2	3	4	5
Accent & pronunciation	-	1 (4%)	12 (48%)	7 (28%)	5 (20%)
Grammar & vocabulary	-	1 (4%)	16 (64%)	6 (24%)	2 (8%)
Fluency of speech	-	-	22 (88%)	3 (12%)	-
Ability to Express ideas	-	-	9 (36%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)
Speaking abilities	-	-	11 (44%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)

1 = not improved at all   2 = very slightly improved
3 = average improved   4 = significantly improved
5 = highly improved.

Table 2 presented the frequency distribution of the results of the questionnaire. From the table, we knew that most of the students felt that their accent and pronunciation got average improvement (48%), and the rest of it felt significant improvement (28%) and highly improvement (20%) after used podcast. Only a few students (4%) felt a

very slightly improvement in their pronunciation. This questionnaire data was also strengthened by the results of the interview with two students as the representatives of the class. Both students agreed that their pronunciation had improved.

> Student A: "*Yes, I feel my pronunciation is better after using podcasts because I can repeat words with difficult pronunciations over and over again until I pronounce them correctly.*"

> Student B: "*I think my pronunciation is a bit better after using podcasts.*"

From the result of interview above, student A felt improvement in their pronunciation, and student B felt slightly improvement in their pronunciation. Besides that, students A and B also agreed that their grammar and vocabulary has improved after using the podcast.

However, the significant improvement in grammar was only felt by student A, as proven by their statements below.

> Student A: "*I think my grammar and vocabulary were very improved. I found some new words and corrected my grammar structure.*"

> Student B: "*I just felt that there might be a slight increase in my grammar and vocabulary.*"

The result of interview above shows that student B felt slightly improvement and student A felt high improvement in grammar and vocabulary after using podcast.

Besides exploring students' responses regarding improvement that they felt, the interview also aims to explore students' opinions regarding the use of a podcast in teaching speaking. During the interview, the researcher asked about both students' opinions regarding the use of podcasts for their learning activities in speaking English, whether if it was fun or not. Both students stated that learning to speak English using podcasts was more fun than the common learning method. It was proven by the statement of Student A and B below.

> Student A: "*I think learning using podcasts media is more fun than regular learning because, with podcasts, I can listen to my voice recordings many times and correct them so that word or pronunciation errors can be reduced.*"

> Student B: "*I think learning using podcasts is quite fun compared to regular learning because it can be done anywhere.*"

Then researcher jumps to the question regarding the advantages of the podcasts that students felt during the learning process. Both students state that podcast has time flexibility that became the main advantages of podcasts during the learning process. Student B even emphasized the benefits of podcasts for shy people, as they stated below.

> Student A: "*I like podcasts because they are flexible. I can record my voice at home and practice as much as possible, so it not just practiced at school.*"

> Student B: "*I love podcasts because they can do anywhere. I'm a shy person, so with podcasts, I do not have to be embarrassed about being seen by other people while recording.*"

Then, the last question that the researcher asked the students was about the disadvantages of the podcasts that students felt during the learning process. Students complained about the difficulty of uploading podcasts to Spotify because the procedure was quite complicated. It is proven by their statements below.

> Student A: "*This might be about how to upload podcasts to an app such as Spotify. This is because I have never done it before, and the procedure was quite complicated and a bit confusing.*"

> Student B: "*I was confused when trying to upload podcasts to Spotify because I had to go to another web first (anchor.fm), and it was a little bit complicated.*"

From the questionnaire and interview result, we can conclude that the use of podcasts as a supporting media in learning got a positive response from students. Students perceive learning through podcasts as more fun, effective in improving their speaking skills (intermediate and high improvement), having more flexible time, and overcoming internal factors that hinder their speaking development.

Discussion

The use of podcasts in the learning process of speaking English can improve the speaking skills of 25 11th grade students of MAN 1 Mojokerto, which can be seen from the t-value, which is greater than the t-table so that the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. It can be said that there was an improvement in students' speaking skills after using podcasts. The positive effect of podcast usage in the learning process is in line with previous research that has been conducted by Rosell-Aguilar (2013), McSwiggan & Campbell (2017), and Nwosu et al. (2017).

After exploring students' responses, the researcher categorized the questionnaire result for all 25 students into three criteria of students' level of improvement: Low; Intermediate, and High. According to Azwar (2012), data categorization into three criteria can be divided using mean (M), standard deviation (SD), minimum score (X_{min}), and maximum score (X_{max}). Low level of improvement can be categorized using formula $X < M - 1SD$, intermediate can be categorized using formula $M - 1SD \leq X < M + 1SD$, while the high level of improvement can be categorized using formula $M + 1SD \leq X$. Since the total items of the questionnaire were 5 questions with 5 scales from 1 to 5 respectively, so that the possible minimum score is 5 ($X_{min} = 1 \times 5 = 5$) and the possible

maximum score is 25 (X_{max} = 5x5 = 25), while the range is 20 ($X_{max} - X_{min}$ = 25–5 = 20). A normal curve has 6 standard deviations, so that the value for each standard deviation (SD) is 3.333 (SD = range / 6 = 20 / 6 = 3.333). In a normal curve, the mean value always in the middle, so that the mean value is 15 (M = ($X_{max} + X_{min}$) / 2 = 30 / 2 = 15). Since mean (M = 15) and standard deviation (SD = 3.333) were defined, the results for all formulas can also be calculated. The low, intermediate and high category of improvement will be defined as X < 11.667, 11.667 ≤ X < 18.333 and 18.333 ≤ X respectively. The results of the questionnaire were categorized based on its total score (X) for each student. The result has been shown in figure 1 below.
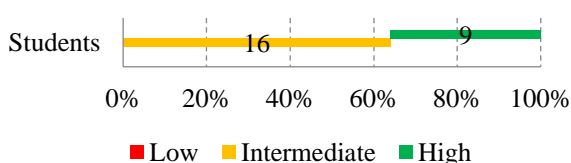

Figure 1. Category of students' speaking improvement

About nine students (36%) had a total score of more than 18.333 and categorized as a high level of improvement, 16 students (64%) had a total score between 11.667 until less than 18.333 and categorized as an intermediate level of improvement while none of the students were categorized as low level of improvement since no students had a total score less than 11.667. However, it is still in line with Juana & Palak (2011), who stated that the use of podcasts could improve speaking skills based on students' opinions.

Based on the interview, there were similar answers from the two students representing the highest scorer and the lowest scorer of the post-test. Both thought that using podcasts as supporting learning media was more fun than teaching without supporting learning media. Besides that, both students also felt improvements in their speaking ability after using podcasts. They felt their pronunciation became better after using podcasts. This is because they can try to pronounce the word several times. Apart from pronunciation, both students also felt that their vocabularies had increased because they learn a new word and can correcting their grammar structure. According to the students, the advantage of podcasts is time flexibility. They can take the audio anywhere without having to be limited by class hours. For some shy kids, podcasts are perfect because they do not need to worry about being seen by others while recording the audio. According to Quinn (2016), shyness is one of the five psychological factors that hinder students speaking progress. Apart from advantages, podcasts also have disadvantages. The students felt confused while they need to upload their podcasts audio to the Spotify app. It happened because they had to go through another web (Anchor.fm), and the procedure was quite long and complicated.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that podcasts helped the students improve their speaking ability. All 25 students who participated as the sample of this study improved their English-speaking ability after using podcasts as a learning media. From the interview, it was known that students felt that learning English speaking skills using podcasts was fun. It could improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Time flexibility is an advantage of podcasts, while the complexity of creating and uploading podcasts is a disadvantage.

Suggestions

Although the results showed that there was an improvement in the students' speaking skills through the use of podcasts which could be seen from the increase in the post-test scores compared to the pre-test, the sample study of 25 students had not been able to represent the entire 11th-grade students at MAN 1 Mojokerto. Therefore, further studies need to be carried out by increasing the number of samples. It is also possible to use different methods, for example, by comparing the experimental class and the control class. In addition, research related to podcasts can be applied to speaking skills and other English language skills: reading, writing and listening.

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