STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON SPOTIFY APPLICATION IN IMPROVING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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ABSTRACT

Listening music through music streaming has become part of tertiary students' activities. Music streaming is one of the media that can improve students' English pronunciation. The purpose of this research was to investigate three students' perceptions from different Universities in Indonesia on the use Spotify application in improving English pronunciation. A qualitative research method with thematic analysis was applied in this research and the subjects of this research were four students from SMP 21 Semarang, Grade IX H, two of whom had good pronunciation and the other two were average, based on parameters related to Spotify features such as student interest and student motivation (Andriani et al., 2018; Rahmania & Mandasari, 2021). Three themes were identified from the interview results: Easy and flexible accessibility features, Engaging media for learning, and Practicing English pronunciation. The findings of this research revealed that the use of Spotify features for English pronunciation improved students' pronunciation, particularly in terms of words and meanings. The two students with good pronunciation paid attention to the elements of English pronunciation, such as vowels, stress, rhythm, pitch, and intonation. However, the students with average pronunciation only listened to the songs.

Keywords : English Pronunciation, Students of SMP N 21 Semarang, Spotify, Thematic Analysis

A. Introduction

Pronunciation is an inseparable part of speaking and undeniably important to understand the meaning exchange in the communication process (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2019). Learning pronunciation is not easy, especially for English education students. They need to have the capability to excel in the pronunciation course.Teaching pronunciation has changed year to year (Xodabande, 2017). In Vietnam's formal education system teaching English pronunciation has been neglected due to barriers to their goals and careers (Nguyen & Newton, 2020). Lack of ability is an obstacle for them to play an active role in communicating. Internal factors like one's ears can influence a person's English pronunciation. Ears have a bigger role in understanding sounds more accurately by imitating sounds which can make pronunciation more similar to EFL learners; this has a

positive impact but is often overlooked by EFL students (Fadillah, 2020).

The influence of technology such as is a benchmark for EFL student learning media in order to achieve the learning process. Students have access to various music streaming platforms, including Spotify, JOOX, Youtube Music, and others. However, in this study only focuses on using the Spotify application. Spotify app launched on October 7, 2008; it is discovered by Daniel Ek and Martin Lorentzon in Sweden. Spotify users are predominantly millennial with 29% of users aged 25 to 34 years and 26% between 18 and 24 years old (Aisy, 2021) Spotify application can significantly improve students' listening skills through English songs (Andriani et all, 2018). Almost all students believe that Spotify can improve five elements of listening English skills, namely listening to English is predicting content, core, general meaning, understanding the topic, finding specific information, and inferring meaning. Each range from 70% to 90% confirm in each skill statement (Bona, 2017).

According to the points had been explained above, the research interested to investigating the perceptions students of three different universities in Indonesia on Spotify, for the question here is how are students' perceptions of the use of the Spotify application in improving English pronunciation?

Literature Review

1. Music Streaming in ELT Context

In the industrial era on 2013 more than 28 million paid subscribers and many more members of the free service are considered active users of streaming music. Music streaming are becoming popular among students faster Internet and cellular technology speeds (Borja et all, 2015; Whittle & Eaves, 2016). Listening to music has been always an emotional experience for every listener (Wadley et all, 2019). The class is enjoyable and promotes a positive learning experience.. It needs do not too much time or meeting to do (Agustina, 2016).

According to Bona (2017), the students at Ubaya Polytechnic utilize the Spotify music streaming application on a daily basis throughout the week. JOOX App makes a positive impression to get better pronunciation (Rahmania & Mandasari, 2021) and it uses give the pronunciation class at University of Wijaya Putra has achievement and most students are

motivated (Astutik et all, 2019). English songs automatically could benefit listening skills, speaking skills and provided support to improve students' writing skills (Fauzan, 2021).

2. Spotify in Learning English

Spotify dominate the music streaming application market in Indonesia with 47.70% subscribed users and get more appreciation in a music collection (Karyono et all, 2019; Netti & Irwansyah, 2018). Spotify has a more effective and innovative impact than traditional methods (Putri, 2022). Feature Podcast Spotify is an alternative media in improving English class skills, motivating the learning process in the classroom (Alfa, 2020; Efendi, 2021; Kuriniawan, 2017; Samad et all, 2017; Tanjung & Silvyani, 2021). The use of Spotify could help students to manage time efficiently in the distance learning process (Susilowati et all, 2020).

3. English Pronunciation

Pronunciation English has a rhythm in the mother tongue of English student is an unattainable difficulty and good pronunciation provide add value to give confidence, admiration and interest in speaking (Alsadae & Sase, 2022; Laide, 2018). Mastering pronunciation can be considered as one of the most challenging skills to acquire. The most significant problem generates by the factors concerns language speech (Vallauri, 2020).

According of (Ahmad, 2018) found out of English students Unsika that various errors and difficulties occur in English pronunciation are vowel sounds. Students do not realize the importance of pronunciation accuracy in English phonetics and phonology (Simon et all, 2015). Problems and causes in pronunciation difficulties in phonological system that occurs relates to the segmental and supra segmental sound aspects of the English language (Umaternate, 2018). As a means of improving English pronunciation, students chosen the music streaming application, because it has lyrics features, easy to use, free access that could be used anytime especially for every student who has their smart phone to be able to do it every day. Hence, that the application of music streaming applications in their daily live increased students' interest motivation, confident because the learning environment/situation is being more relaxing through student learning activity (Andriani et all, 2018; Rahmania & Mandasari, 2021).

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach utilizing thematic analysis, which involves identifying and examining patterns or themes within qualitative data. The participants consisted of two students with proficient pronunciation skills and two students with average pronunciation abilities. The research utilized interviews as a data collection method. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather information for the research through a question-and-answer process between the interviewer and the interviewee, with or without the use of an interview guide. The semi-structured interview format was selected as the method, as it allowed for the questions to be tailored based on the participants' responses and their current circumstances.

Table 2.1 Participants' Criteria

No	Participant	Class	Experience Using Spotify
1	Zahrah Afiqah Husna (ZAH)	9H	One year
2	Rajendra Faruq Virdansyah (RFV)	9H	One year
3	Abimanyu Satria Darmawan (ASD)	9H	More Than One Year
4	Erina Wirawan (EW)	9H	More Than One Year

C. Results and Discussion

The research findings revealed three key themes: accessible and adaptable features, engaging learning tools, and effective resources for practicing English pronunciation.

- **Accessible and Flexible Features**

"What is your basis that you choose Spotify application as a media for learning English?"

ZAH : *I chose this application because Spotify music is high quality and I can get the latest songs thus I don't miss the newly released music. Spotify provides a lyric feature that's make me understand what kind of English song I'm listening to.*

RFV : *Previously, I didn't know how to use Spotify. But apparently after I searched this app can help me in terms of pronunciation. It only uses a data package, the application is not difficult to use and I can use it anywhere. If I study a pronunciation course I have no money and I am ashamed of my age.*

Based on the experiences of the two participants, it can be concluded that they derive numerous benefits from using the Spotify music streaming application in this study. This aligns with the findings of Andriani et al. (2018), who stated that learning English through music streaming is facilitated by features like accessible lyrics, user-friendliness, and availability of data usage at any time and place. The inclusion of the lyrics feature positively influenced their English learning process, aiding in expanding vocabulary, honing listening skills, and enhancing pronunciation comprehension. The presence of the lyric feature was particularly instrumental in helping the participants identify the content of the English songs they were listening to.

- **Interesting Media for Learning**

"Do you feel your interest, motivation, confidence in pronunciation is getting better after using the Spotify application?"

ZAH: *Yes, I do. I feel there is an increase in the courage to speak up and express my ideas. I must be active and able to master English pronunciation with my daily listening to podcasts and music. It's true that Spotify improve after I use. That's why I always use the app to keep practicing my hearing as well as my pronunciation.*

RFV: *Yes, I do. I'm so comfortable using it. I became more active in understanding pronunciation with the help of lyrics. I always repeat songs that are difficult to understand the more I seek to continue to understand the pronunciation.*

Drawing from the experiences of the two EFL students, the researcher observed an enhanced interest and motivation towards improving pronunciation (Indeed, I do). They advocated for ongoing pronunciation practice through song repetition (I consistently replay songs to refine my listening and pronunciation skills). The study revealed that through song listening, ZAH gained confidence in verbal communication and articulating thoughts (I sense a boost in confidence when it comes to speaking and expressing my thoughts). The incorporation of Spotify's lyrics feature significantly contributed to RFV's pronunciation proficiency, leading to a sense of ease in utilizing the platform (I find it extremely user-friendly).

- **Practicing English Pronunciation**

"How does Spotify improve your pronunciation?"

ZAH: *The difference between the pronunciation of love and laugh. It's almost the same pronunciation then I tried to replay and imitate it until I really knew the difference between the two words. For intonation, pause or rhythm I don't pay attention.*

RFV: *Listening to music was helps my English a lot including pronunciation, but I don't understand pauses or rhythms. However, from this Spotify music, I know the difference between words such as leave and life, light and like, and many more.*

ASD: *Listening to music and podcasts that are repeated and deepening them e.g. in podcasts on the word blood, the pronunciation is on /*blʌd*/, not /blOt/. In Intonation in sentences e.g. but the point I think there are up and down, not flat or low. Then the stress is on important - im'portant thus I know how to stress and how many stress the syllable is.*

EW : *When I listen to some songs on spotify i will find new words and i don't have to open the dictionary about how to say it, i can just listen to what the singer said and it's easy*

From the responses provided by all participants, the researcher concludes that Spotify contributed to an enhancement in their ability to accurately pronounce words (I made an effort to replay and mimic until I gained a clear understanding of the distinctions between words like "leave" and "life," "light" and "like"). Nonetheless, RFV demonstrated a profound comprehension and improvement in theoretical aspects of English pronunciation, including vowels, intonation, stress, word pronunciation, and their associated meanings. Conversely, the other participant primarily concentrated on scrutinizing the lyrics and understanding word meanings..

E. Conclusion

Based on the gathered data, several conclusions can be drawn. Through the interviews with students, the researcher identified three prominent themes: accessible and adaptable features, as well as engaging media for learning and honing English pronunciation. Within these themes, it was observed that only one participant, RFV,

demonstrated a comprehensive understanding and application of theoretical aspects of English pronunciation, encompassing vowels, intonation, stress, word pronunciation, and their meanings. This proficiency can be attributed to RFV's background as an English student. On the other hand, participants ASD and EW, who were of average proficiency, exhibited less emphasis on theoretical pronunciation. Instead, they primarily focused on discerning word differences in lyrics and understanding their meanings. This approach reflects their moderate engagement with pronunciation theory due to their limited mastery of the subject..

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