

The Implementation of Audiobooks in Reading Class to Improve STKIP Kristen Wamena Students' Reading Comprehension Skills.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the implementation of audiobooks in a reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena using Qualitative Research approach. The focus of the study was to examine students' learning responses and reading comprehension experiences during audiobook-assisted reading activities. The research was conducted in a natural classroom setting involving undergraduate students enrolled in reading course. Data were gathered via classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and reflective notes. The thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative data to uncover patterns linked to students' engagement, understanding, and learning behaviors. Students' reading achievement served as supplementary evidence to enhance the qualitative results. The results showed that audiobooks produced favorable educational reactions in students. Audiobooks assisted students in enhancing concentration, grasping pronunciation, and recognizing key concepts and supporting details in written materials. Students additionally noted enhanced confidence and motivation while interacting with English reading resources. Classroom engagement increased as students took part in discussions and expressed their comprehension of the texts. The research finds that audiobooks serve as a valuable teaching tool in reading courses, especially when used with reflective and student-focused instructional methods. Audiobooks can enhance students' reading understanding and foster a more captivating educational atmosphere, particularly for those from varied linguistic backgrounds

Keywords: audiobooks, reading, STKIP Kristen Wamena

INTRODUCTION

Understanding written text is a key skill in acquiring a language learning that enables students to understand the meaning of written text and develop critical thinking skills. Through reading activities, students can broaden their horizons and acquire knowledge that is not always obtained through formal learning in the classroom. There are numerous sayings emphasize the importance of reading, including (a) books act as portals to the world, and reading is the tool for opening doors (b) books are mere clutter when gathered, yet they become amazing when explored, and (c) reading is as essential to me as air and guides my future (Wulandari, n.d.). From these ideas, it is evident that reading skills play a crucial role in learning a language.

Besides that, Khairuddin (2013) highlight Participating in Reading activities play a significant role in enabling students to acquire knowledge and develop a thorough understanding of multiple topics. They also help learners improve pronunciation accuracy, grammatical comprehension, perspective-taking, and reading fluency, both orally and silently. Consequently, reading skills are fundamental for learners' academic development.

In the context of Indonesian education, reading skills receive serious attention from the government. This is reflected in the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003, which emphasizes the importance of improving the quality of learning, including reading skills. Furthermore, the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 23 of 2015 also mandates

15 minutes of reading before the start of classes at all levels of primary and secondary education. This policy demonstrates the government's commitment to improving literacy culture in schools.

Although various policies have been implemented, the reality is that many students still experience difficulties in reading comprehension. Factors such as limited understanding, low interest in reading, minimal background knowledge, and the dominance of electronic devices are the main obstacles to the development of students' reading skills. This condition is also exacerbated by the habit of students who spend more time watching television or playing on devices over reading literature. Yaumi (2017) explained that as time has progressed, the rise of electronic devices has resulted in a uniformity of inclinations towards engaging with them, like playing games, rather than reading books

Literacy issues are also evident in Papua, particularly in Jayawijaya Regency. Data shows that reading and literacy rates in this region are still relatively low compared to other regions. (Napitupulu, n.d.). The following data shows the results of a reading test conducted.

Table 1.1 reading test

Districts in Papua	Read fluently with understanding	Reading with understanding	Reading with limited understanding	Don't know How to read
Papua	7%	5%	36%	52%
Biak	1%	2%	36%	61%
Jayapura	18%	11%	43%	28%
Mimika	8%	6%	38%	38%
Jayawijaya	0%	2%	27%	71%

The data presented in Table 1.1 reveal that Jayawijaya Regency consistently ranked lowest across all evaluated categories relative to the other districts. This pattern aligns with the findings of the 2020 literacy survey conducted by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), which highlighted substantial illiteracy levels in surrounding regencies, such as Lanny Jaya (64.66%), Nduga (53.55%), Central Mamberamo (41.33%), Tolikara (36.34%), and Asmat (20.81%). This data also support by ("Journal of Education Papua Baru," 2023, pp. 1-10) explained that These statistics underscore the challenges that often result in poor reading outcomes, requiring educators to seek more innovative learning strategies that are tailored to the characteristics of local students.

According to Wu et al. (2019), various factors influencing reading behaviors, such as the scarce access to engaging literature, students' insufficient reading experience at home and in school, parents' inability to improve their reading and writing abilities, and the inability of educators and parents to alter students' reading practices. These elements lead to poor reading comprehension in students. To boost students' enthusiasm for reading, English teachers should devise fun activities for students that enhance their reading skills without them noticing.

Interestingly, Papuan society has a strong oral culture, where listening to stories is part of everyday life. Based on the researcher's experience, students exhibit strong listening abilities, which are deeply rooted in local cultural practices. In Wamena, elders preserve the tradition of oral storytelling as a means of transmitting historical narratives. Within highland Papuan communities, particularly during communal events such as mourning rituals and conflict resolution, older generations share stories with younger members. Additionally, storytelling commonly takes place at night before bedtime, covering themes such as origins, historical events, beliefs, and cultural values. Younger generations listen attentively, retain these narratives, and later pass them on to their own children. This longstanding tradition has cultivated a culture of attentive listeners in

Papua. This tradition shows that students' listening skills are relatively good and have the potential to be utilized in learning to read. Therefore, the use of media that combine visual and audio elements, such as audiobooks, is considered appropriate for these characteristics.

In recent times, the integration of technology into language learning has been widely promoted as a solution to this challenge. One form of technology that has gained increasing attention is the use of audiobooks. Audiobooks combine written text with audio narration, allowing students to read while simultaneously listening to the correct pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm of the language. This multimodal input is believed to support student comprehension by engaging both the visual and auditory senses, which can enhance comprehension and retention of information.

Furthermore, it supports vocabulary acquisition while also enabling students to understand the correct pronunciation of words. Wolfson (2008) suggests that audiobooks can be especially beneficial for students facing difficulties or who are beginners, because they improve understanding and appreciation of written texts through spoken language experiences. Moreover, Stone-Harris (2008) points out that audiobooks open up the reader's struggle to gain new experiences, similar to that those of proficient readers, thus enhancing reading. A study by Tusmagambet (2020) revealed that the use of audiobooks improves students' reading comprehension. Similarly, Rahman and Hajar (2020) found that audiobookss contributed to the development of students' multisensory skills and enhanced both their speaking and reading comprehension abilities. Integrating audiobooks into their study habits allows students to gain considerable advantages. Involving students in reading through audiobooks can aid in comprehending the material and offer practice in articulating words accurately. Incorporating audiobooks in the classroom will help ensure that more individuals maintain the practice of sharing finished stories (Wallin, 2020).

To support students in developing English language skills, particularly reading comprehension, it is necessary to explore alternative ways of organizing learning materials as well as selecting appropriate teaching methods and instructional tools to enhance students' reading comprehension abilities.

Drawing on the explanation presented above, this study aims to analyze implementation of Audiobook in reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena. The study further highlights the implementation of audiobook use in supporting students' reading comprehension.

LITERATURE

Reading

According to Rahman and Hajar (2020) mastery of reading comprehension is essential for students, as it enables them to gain experience, develop broader perspectives, increase knowledge, and achieve a more profound understanding of texts. It support by Abukhattala (2013) who explained that Reading represents a core and essential skill in language acquisition. By reading, the reader can improve their English language skills, including spelling from words, sentence structure, and proper grammar from the material they are engaging with. It indirectly assists the reader in comprehending aspects of the English Language more clearly.

Teaching reading comprehension is a crucial component of reading instruction, as it enables students to understand the author's intended message. According to Varita (2017), reading comprehension involves active engagement with written lansguage and meaning construction

through interaction. As students develop this skill, they become better able to connect textual content with their imagination and personal experiences.

From this perspective, Reading comprehension is an efficient approach since reading benefits language acquisition. This guarantees that students comprehend what they are reading, and that they read it again. They comprehend the text to grasp both explicit and implicit meanings, in addition to summarizing, predicting, and evaluating. Prawono (2018) noted that silent reading helps in grasping the meaning of words for comprehension while reading.

Agustini et al. (2018) emphasize that instructional media used in the learning process should be effective, adaptable, and easily accessible. One medium that can be applied in teaching and learning activities is audiobooks. It is media that contains audio and also written text that can be used in teaching English. This is one technology that can help students in reading (Hardiah, n.d.). An English story with an audiobook application, Possibly help student understanding And theirs read interest. Also, with the audiobooks Application , students can relax. feel because they can listen to the audio that is temporarily read .

With this media, students can learn accurate pronunciation by listening to the speaker articulate those words and their intonation. When students listen to that speaker narrate the story, they can acquire new vocabulary from it.

Usage of audiobooks in teaching English has begun to proliferate globally in education. Many teachers utilize audiobooks to assist them in teaching listening, writing, speaking, and reading (Ayunda, 2015). In audiobooks, a text is available for the reader to view while listening to that speaker's voice. This technology also keeps people on time and help they understand the book better compared to if they read they loud (Effect & Books, 2011).

Ayunda (2015) also state that benefit from audiobooks for English students can provide an example from fluent reading and exposure to patterns, intonation , expression , different accents, dialects , and pronunciation in English.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the implementation of audiobooks in a reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of students' learning responses, classroom interaction, and reading comprehension experiences during the use of audiobooks as an instructional medium.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted in a reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena involving undergraduate students who were actively participating in the learning process. The participants were selected purposively, as they were directly engaged in audiobook-based reading activities. This design allowed the researcher to closely examine students' responses and learning behaviors within a natural classroom setting.

The research has taken 1 class as a sample to do the research. The researcher takes this class as a sample because it is the introductory class for reading, and the students in it possess

similar average skill levels. The participants in this study are students from semester 3, totaling 15 individuals, with 7 being female students and 8 being male students.

Research Instruments

Data collection was carried out through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and reflective notes. Classroom observations were used to document students' engagement, participation, and interaction during audiobook-assisted reading activities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to capture students' perceptions, feelings, and learning experiences related to the use of audiobooks. Reflective notes were written by the researcher to record instructional decisions and classroom dynamics throughout the learning process. Students' reading performance was used as supporting data to reinforce the qualitative findings.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis approach, which involved organizing, coding, and interpreting the collected data to identify recurring patterns and themes related to students' learning responses and reading comprehension. The analysis was conducted continuously during and after data collection to allow for meaningful interpretation of the findings.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, data triangulation was applied by comparing information from observations, interviews, and supporting learning outcomes. This qualitative research design provided a comprehensive understanding of how audiobooks were implemented in the reading class and how they influenced students' learning experiences at STKIP Kristen Wamena.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This qualitative study examined the implementation of audiobooks in a reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena and with particular emphasis on students' learning responses, reading comprehension, and classroom engagement. The findings are derived from classroom observations, reflective notes, and semi-structured interviews with students, supported by students' reading performance.

Result

The results indicate that the use of audiobooks contributed positively to the reading classroom environment. During the early stage of implementation, students showed interest and curiosity toward the use of audiobooks. Observational data revealed that audiobooks helped students pay closer attention to pronunciation, intonation, and the overall meaning of the text. Based on the semi structured interview result, many students reported that listening to the audio while reading the text helped them stay focused and better understand pronunciation. One student stated:

“When I listen to the audiobook, I can understand how the words are pronounced, so it is easier for me to follow the text.” (Student 3)

However, some students experienced challenges at the beginning, particularly in keeping pace with the audio narration. A student explained:

“At first, the audio was a bit fast for me, so I needed time to adjust and sometimes I focused only on the text.” (Student 7)

As the implementation progressed, students demonstrated noticeable improvement in learning behavior. They became more attentive during reading activities and more actively involved in classroom discussions. Students were able to identify main ideas and supporting details more accurately and expressed their understanding with greater confidence. Group discussions also became more interactive, indicating increased engagement with the reading materials.

The improvement in students' reading comprehension was supported by their reading scores, which showed an overall increase after the implementation of audiobooks. Although this study emphasizes qualitative findings, the improvement in performance reinforced the observation that audiobooks facilitated better comprehension and learning focus. This change was also reflected in students' interview responses. One student mentioned:

“After using audiobooks several times, I feel more confident because I can understand the story better.” (Student 10)

Students also reported that audiobooks helped them identify main ideas and important details more clearly. Another student commented:

“Listening while reading helps me know which part is important, especially the main idea.” (Student 5)

In addition, students expressed increased motivation toward reading activities. Audiobooks made the learning process more engaging and reduced students' anxiety when reading English texts. This was supported by the improvement in students' reading performance, which showed a positive trend after the implementation.

Discussion

The inclusion of students' interview responses provides deeper insight into how audiobooks influenced students' learning experiences. The students' statements indicate that audiobooks supported their comprehension by providing clear pronunciation models and helping them maintain focus during reading activities. These responses suggest that audiobooks functioned not only as instructional media but also as motivational tools that encouraged active engagement.

The initial difficulties reported by students highlight the importance of adaptation and instructional support in audiobook-based learning. As students became familiar with the media and received appropriate guidance from the lecturer, their learning responses improved significantly. This finding aligns with qualitative learning perspectives that emphasize the role of experience and interaction in shaping students' understanding.

In the context of STKIP Kristen Wamena, students' positive responses suggest that audiobooks helped create a more inclusive reading environment for learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds. The reduced anxiety and increased confidence reported by students indicate that audiobooks can support learners who may struggle with traditional text-based reading.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that students' learning responses are a key indicator of the effectiveness of audiobook implementation. The combination of improved engagement, positive attitudes, and enhanced comprehension confirms that audiobooks are a valuable instructional medium in reading classes when applied through a qualitative and reflective teaching approach.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This qualitative study investigated the implementation of audiobooks in a reading class at STKIP Kristen Wamena and its influence on students' reading comprehension and learning responses. The findings indicate that audiobooks contributed positively to the reading instruction process by enhancing students' engagement, confidence, and comprehension.

The use of audiobooks encouraged active learning responses, as students became more attentive, motivated, and willing to participate in classroom discussions. Interview data revealed that audiobooks helped students understand pronunciation, identify main ideas, and reduce anxiety when reading English texts. These positive learning responses were accompanied by an improvement in students' reading performance, which supported the qualitative findings.

Overall, the study concludes that audiobooks are an effective instructional medium for reading classes, particularly when integrated through reflective and student-centered teaching practices. The success of audiobook implementation was strongly influenced by the lecturer's guidance, repeated exposure, and opportunities for interaction. In the context of STKIP Kristen Wamena, audiobooks proved to be a valuable tool for supporting students with diverse linguistic backgrounds in reading comprehension activities.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed:

1. For Lecturers

Lecturers are encouraged to integrate audiobooks into reading instruction as a complementary learning medium. To maximize effectiveness, audiobooks should be accompanied by guided listening activities, repeated exposure, and structured discussions that support students' comprehension and engagement.

2. For Students

Students are advised to actively use audiobooks as a learning resource both inside and outside the classroom. Regular practice with audiobooks may help students improve pronunciation, listening skills, and overall reading comprehension.

3. For future researchers

Future studies are recommended to explore the use of audiobooks in different learning contexts, language proficiency levels, or skills areas such as listening or speaking. Further qualitative research involving longer implementation periods or mixed-method approaches may provide deeper insights into students' learning experiences with audiobooks.

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