Spotify as a Tool for Pronunciation Enhancement Among Eighth Graders: A Quasi-Experimental Study

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of using the Spotify application, using English songs and podcasts, on students' pronunciation at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu. The research used a quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental class that used Spotify and a control class that used traditional methods. The sample consisted of two eighth-grade classes chosen using purposive sampling. Data was collected through pre-tests and post-tests to measure students' pronunciation before and after the treatment. The results showed that the average score of the experimental class improved significantly from 14.58 to 24.77, while the control class increased from 20.83 to 38.89. The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test confirmed that the experimental class significantly improved ($Z = -3.963$, $p = 0.000$). However, the Mann-Whitney test showed no significant difference between the experimental and control classes ($p = 0.677$). While Spotify helped improve students' pronunciation, it was not proven more effective than traditional teaching methods. In conclusion, using the Spotify application can help students improve their pronunciation, especially for the consonant sounds /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, and /ð/. Even though the improvement was not greater than the conventional method, Spotify still made learning more interesting and interactive for students.

Keywords: *Pronunciation, Spotify, Improve, Consonant Sound.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool for communication, allowing people to express thoughts, emotions, and ideas. It consists of three main components: structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Among these, pronunciation plays a crucial role in ensuring effective communication. According to Ammar (2022), pronunciation refers to how sounds are produced in speech. Proper pronunciation helps people understand each other clearly and prevents misunderstandings. Kobilova (2022) also emphasizes that pronunciation is critical for successful communication because incorrect pronunciation can lead to misinterpretation of the message.

Many Indonesian students struggle with English pronunciation due to differences between English and Indonesian phonology. Haris, Kurnia, Saiful, and Sukmawati (2023) explain that Indonesian students often have difficulty pronouncing English words correctly during oral assessments. This issue arises because students are unfamiliar with English sounds or their corresponding spelling patterns. Certain English consonant sounds, such as /ʃ/ in "sheep" and /θ/ in "think," are particularly challenging since they do not exist in Indonesian. As a result, students tend to replace these sounds with more familiar ones, leading to pronunciation errors that can affect their overall communication skills.

The complexity of English spelling further contributes to students' pronunciation difficulties. Unlike Indonesian, where words are typically pronounced as they are written, English has many inconsistencies in spelling and pronunciation. This confusion makes it harder for students to produce words correctly. Susanthi (2020) states that difficulties in mastering English pronunciation often stem from limited speaking practice, vocabulary constraints, and a lack of grammatical knowledge, making it challenging for students to articulate words correctly.

Various teaching methods and tools have been explored to address these pronunciation challenges. Previous studies have primarily focused on traditional pronunciation training, but difficulties persist. With technological advancements, researchers have begun exploring digital tools such as music streaming applications to enhance language learning. One such platform is Spotify, a widely used application that offers both music and podcasts, making it a potential tool for pronunciation practice.

Handayani and Solok (2016) highlight that educational media use can significantly impact learning outcomes. The researcher chose Spotify because it is an engaging and accessible platform that can serve as a motivating learning tool for students. Through songs and podcasts, students can enjoyably and interactively be exposed to natural English pronunciation.

Spotify is particularly popular in Indonesia, making it a practical choice for educational purposes. Netti and Irwansyah (2018) report that Spotify dominates Indonesia's music streaming market with a 47% share, demonstrating its widespread use. Marshall (2015) further explains that in today's digital era, streaming applications like Spotify provide unlimited access to audio content, which can be leveraged for language learning.

Several studies have investigated Spotify's role in improving pronunciation. Sari et al. (2024) conducted research using questionnaires and found that Spotify enhances students' pronunciation skills by engaging them with auditory content. Similarly, Ilyas and Kaniadewi (2023) explored students' perceptions of Spotify for pronunciation practice and found that features such as lyrics and personalized playlists were beneficial. Additionally, Purba et al. (2023) discovered that Spotify significantly improves pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary through student surveys and interviews.

Although previous research indicates that Spotify can be an effective pronunciation tool, most studies focus on student motivation and perception rather than specific pronunciation challenges. There is limited research on how Spotify can help students pronounce difficult consonant sounds such as /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, and /ð/. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing the effectiveness of Spotify in helping eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu improve their pronunciation of these challenging sounds.

This research will also compare the effectiveness of Spotify-based pronunciation practice with traditional teaching methods. By evaluating students' pronunciation progress, this study seeks to provide insights into the role of digital media in language learning. Understanding Spotify's impact on pronunciation will help educators incorporate technology-driven learning strategies to enhance students' English proficiency.

Based on these considerations, this study investigates whether Spotify can effectively improve students' pronunciation skills. The researcher observed similar pronunciation difficulties among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu, indicating a need for innovative teaching approaches. Therefore, this study is conducted under the title: "Using Spotify Application to Improve the Pronunciation of Eighth-Grade Students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu."

METHODS

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design.

The research involved two groups: an experimental group and a control group method. The study aimed to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis by comparing students' pronunciation improvements in both groups. Data was collected through pre-tests and post-tests to measure students' pronunciation before and after the treatment.

This study's population consisted of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, focusing on two classes with similar proficiency levels. One class was assigned as the experimental group and the other as the control group. The independent variable was the use of Spotify, incorporating songs and podcasts, while the dependent variable was students' pronunciation accuracy, particularly in pronouncing /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, and /ð/.

Data was analyzed using SPSS statistical methods, including the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks and Mann-Whitney U tests. The Wilcoxon test assessed pronunciation improvement within the experimental group, while the Mann-Whitney test compared performance between the experimental and control groups. These analyses provided insights into the effectiveness of using Spotify as a pronunciation-learning tool.

Research design

This study used a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test to compare two groups. The experimental and the control group. Before the lessons, both groups took a pre-test to check their pronunciation skills. The experimental group practiced using songs and podcasts on Spotify, while the control group not. After the learning period, both groups took a post-test to measure their improvement.

The study lasted for six meetings, giving students enough time to practice. The experimental group listened to and repeated words from Spotify audio content, while the control group used teacher-led exercises. This setup allowed a fair comparison of both learning methods and helped determine whether Spotify was more effective for improving students’ pronunciation.

Research participants and Sampling Procedures

The population in this study is 140 eighth grade VIII students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani palu.

Table 1 : *List of 8th grade students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani palu.*

Class	Number of Students
VIII GADJAH MADAH	27
VIII WR SUPRATMAN	30
VIII KIHAJAR DEWANTARA	27
VIII SURATIN	27
VIII RADEN SALEH	29
Total	**140**

Sample is a small group selected from a larger population to represent it in a study. According to (Sukmawati et al., 2023), the sample is a small part of the number and characteristics of the population. In selecting the sample, the researcher used a purposive sampling method. The name of each class is considered based on specific criteria, and the classes are selected intentionally. The researcher considers the similar characteristics of the students, as they have received the same treatment from the teacher, in determining the sample. In this case, the experimental group is VIII Suratin, and the control group is VIII Ki Hadjar Dewantara.

Data Collection

The study used pre-tests and post-tests as the main instruments to measure students' pronunciation accuracy before and after learning. The pre-test was given before the lessons started to determine students' initial pronunciation ability, while the post-test was administered after the lessons to assess improvements. Both tests focused on key pronunciation aspects, particularly the sounds /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, and /ð/. The experimental group learned using Spotify, while the control group followed regular pronunciation drills. To ensure consistency, all tests were conducted in a structured manner, and results were evaluated using a pronunciation rubric, which will be provided in the rubric table:

Table 2 : *Scoring Rubric of pronunciation pre-test & post-test*

Aspect	Items	Criteria	Score
Pronunciation	16	The correct pronunciation of consonant sound	1
		Incorrect pronunciation of consonant sound	0

Adopted from (Aini et al., 2013)

Interventions

The intervention in this study was the use of Spotify as a pronunciation learning tool. The learning process involved listening to selected songs and podcasts that emphasized specific English sounds. The activities included repeated listening, pronunciation practice, and discussions about the audio content. Research Conditions:

- **Experimental group**: This group used Spotify to improve pronunciation through repeated listening and imitation of native speakers.
- **Control group**: This group followed traditional pronunciation exercises without any digital media assistance.
- The intervention took place over six learning sessions. Students in the experimental group first listened to the assigned audio, then practiced.

pronouncing key words, and engaged in guided discussions. Afterward, they completed individual pronunciation tasks. The control group followed standard pronunciation drills. Assessment was conducted using pre-tests and post-tests to evaluate progress. This method combined auditory learning with structured practice to help students improve their pronunciation naturally

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The researcher calculated the mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation after determining the standard score for both the control and experimental groups sing SPSS v.24. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis was presented in Table 4.

Table 4: *Descriptive Statistics Test Result*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Pre test Experimental	27	.00	43.75	14.5833	1.76525	9.17249
Post test Experimental	27	6.25	62.50	24.7685	2.55115	13.25615
Pre test Control	27	.00	50.00	20.8333	2.49644	12.97186
Post test Control	27	18.75	81.25	38.8889	2.89548	15.04534
Valid N (listwise)	27					

Based on Table 4, both groups had 27 students (N=27). "N" represents the number of students in each group, with all data valid. The control group had a higher average post-test score (38.89) than the experimental group (24.77). Similarly, before the treatment, the control group scored higher in the pre-test (20.83) compared to the experimental group (14.58). This indicates that the control group initially performed better. However, after the treatment, the experimental group showed steady improvement, despite having a lower final score. This suggests that the treatment contributed to balanced progress.

In the pre-test, the control group's scores ranged from 0.00 to 50.00, with an average of 20.83 and a standard deviation of 12.97. A higher standard deviation indicates a wider score distribution, meaning some students performed well while others scored much lower. The experimental group's scores ranged from 0.00 to 43.75, with a lower standard deviation (9.17), indicating less variation in performance.

After treatment, the experimental group's post-test scores ranged from 6.25 to 62.50, with an average of 24.77. Their standard deviation increased to 13.25, showing that while some students improved significantly, others showed smaller progress. The variation suggests the treatment had different effects on students.

The control group's post-test scores ranged from 18.75 to 81.25, with an average of 38.89. Their standard deviation rose to 15.04, meaning some students improved significantly while others showed less progress. The greater score gap suggests uneven learning outcomes.

Both groups improved after the treatment. The control group's scores increased more overall, but the experimental group showed more consistent progress. The experimental group's average rose from 14.58 to 24.77, while the control group's increased from 20.83 to 38.89. Despite scoring lower, the experimental group demonstrated more stable improvement.

Overall, both groups improved, but in different ways. The control group had a bigger score increase, but their progress was not even. The experimental group improved more steadily, even though their final scores were lower. This means the treatment helped students improve in a more balanced way, while the control group had faster but less consistent progress.

Table 5: *Normality Test Result*

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Class	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Learning Outcomes	Pre-Test Experimental	.219	27	.002	.894	27	.010
	Post-Test Experimental	.194	27	.011	.878	27	.004
	Pre-test Control	.166	27	.054	.902	27	.015
	Post-Test Control	.227	27	.001	.862	27	.002

The normality test checked if the data followed a normal distribution or not using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Since the sample size was 54 (<100), this test was appropriate. A p-value > 0.05 indicates normal distribution, while ≤ 0.05 means the data is not normal, requiring a non-parametric analysis.

The normality test results in table 5 show that the data from both the experimental and control groups are not normally distributed. All significance values were below 0.05, confirming this. The post-test control group had the lowest value (0.002), followed by the post-test experimental group (0.004), the pre-test experimental group (0.010), and the pre-test control group (0.015). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test also supported these findings, with values below 0.05 except for the pre-test control group (0.054), though the Shapiro-Wilk test is more reliable for small samples.

Since the data is not normally distributed, this study will use non-parametric tests. The Mann-Whitney U test will be applied as an alternative to the independent t-test, and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test will replace the paired t-test. Additionally, a homogeneity test is not required, as normality is a key condition for conducting such a test. These adjustments ensure accurate and appropriate data analysis.

Table 6: *Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test Result*

Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
PostTest - PreTest	Negative Ranks	0[a]	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	20[b]	10.50	210.00
	Ties	7[c]		
	Total	27		

a. PostTest < PreTest

b. PostTest > PreTest

c. PostTest = PreTest

Statistics Test Result

	PostTest - PreTest
Z	-3.963[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

This shows that 20 students scored higher in the post-test than in the pre-test, with a mean rank of 10.50 and a total rank of 210.00. No students had lower post-test scores, and 7 had the same scores. This suggests that most students improved after the treatment, while a few maintained their previous scores.

The results indicate clear pronunciation improvement using Spotify as a learning tool. The Z value of -3.963 and a significance level of 0.000 confirm that the improvement is statistically significant. Because of this result, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted, meaning Spotify contributed significantly to students' pronunciation improvement.

Table 7
Mann-Whitney Test Result

	Class	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Score	Experimental	27	26.63	719.00
	Control	27	28.37	766.00
	Total	54		

Statistics Test Result

	Score
Mann-Whitney U	341.000
Wilcoxon W	719.000
Z	-.417
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.677

a. Grouping Variable: Group

Table 7 presents the post-test rank data for both the experimental and control Groups, each consisting of 27 students. The Experimental Group had a mean rank of 26.63 and a total rank of

719.00, while the Control Group had a mean rank of 28.37 and a total rank of 766.00. Although the Control Group had slightly higher rankings, the total ranks were close, indicating similar score distributions between the groups.

The Mann-Whitney U test results (U = 341.000, Z = -0.417, p = 0.677) show no statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the two groups. Since the significance level is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected. This suggests that using Spotify did not lead to a substantial improvement in pronunciation, particularly in consonant sounds, compared to the traditional method. Although the results were not statistically significant, the Experimental Group still showed improvement. Using Spotify may have helped students stay engaged and learn better.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research highlight that using Spotify as a learning tool can help improve students' pronunciation skills. However, when compared to traditional methods, the difference was not statistically significant. The pre-test results showed that many students struggled to pronounce certain consonant sounds, especially /ʒ/ and /θ/. Through the treatment, where students engaged with songs and podcasts, they could practice these sounds more interactively. Listening to native pronunciation and repeating the words allowed them to refine their pronunciation, making them more aware of how to produce the sounds correctly. This aligns with Ilyas and Kaniadewi (2023), who stated that Spotify's features, such as songs and podcasts, effectively support pronunciation learning.

The study also found that while the experimental group showed significant improvement after using Spotify, the control group, which followed traditional teaching methods, also improved. However, the improvement in the control group was less consistent. Some students showed significant progress, while others had minimal changes. This suggests that traditional teaching methods may not fully address individual pronunciation difficulties, while Spotify provides a more engaging and flexible approach. Pratiwi (2022) emphasized that using songs in pronunciation learning makes the process more enjoyable and reinforces correct pronunciation through repetition. This supports the idea that incorporating music and podcasts can make pronunciation practice more effective and engaging for students.

Although the results did not show a significantly greater impact of Spotify compared to traditional methods, the findings suggest that Spotify can be a valuable alternative for improving pronunciation. Activities such as listening, analyzing lyrics, and repeating pronunciation help students become more familiar with the target sounds in an enjoyable way. This is also supported by Purba et al. (2023), who found that Spotify enhances pronunciation and improves intonation patterns. While more research is needed to explore its long-term effects, this study suggests that using Spotify as a learning tool can positively contribute to students' pronunciation development by making learning more interactive and engaging.

CONCLUSION

This research concluded that using the Spotify application can improve the pronunciation of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri Model Terpadu Madani Palu. Students showed significant progress in pronouncing the target consonant sounds /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /ð/, and /θ/ after engaging with English songs and podcasts. Many students struggled with these sounds before the treatment, but their pronunciation improved after repeated exposure and guided practice. The experimental group's post-test scores were notably higher than their pre-test scores, confirming that Spotify provided effective pronunciation practice through engaging and interactive learning methods.

Although the control group's post-test scores were slightly higher than those of the experimental group, Spotify still played a positive role in pronunciation learning. The greater improvement observed in the experimental group compared to their pre-test results suggests that Spotify helped students familiarize themselves with correct pronunciation patterns. While the traditional method remained effective, Spotify offered an engaging and enjoyable approach that encouraged active student participation and consistent practice, making pronunciation learning more accessible and interactive.

For future researchers, further studies could explore the impact of Spotify-based pronunciation training in different educational settings, such as among older students or learners of different languages. Additionally, examining the combination of Spotify with other teaching methods could provide deeper insights into how digital tools enhance language learning. Investigating long-term effects and student engagement levels with Spotify-based learning could also offer valuable recommendations for improving pronunciation instruction in classrooms.

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