INTEGRATING SPOTIFY IN TEACHING ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS: EXPLORING THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

In recent times, the advent of digital technology has revolutionized our modes of communication, learning, and interaction with the world. Technology offers numerous advantages and serves as an appealing and effective tool for educators in their teaching endeavors. Students now have the opportunity to harness the potential of technology, including platforms like Spotify, as a means of enhancing their learning experiences. The objective of this study is to explore the advantages and obstacles associated with utilizing the Spotify application for the purpose of teaching English listening skills through analyzing existing literature. The relevant articles for this research were sourced through internet search engines such as Google Scholar, Mendeley, and Publish or Perish. The examination of the gathered articles uncovered a wide range of challenges and benefits that arise when incorporating Spotify within the realm of language learning.

Keywords: Spotify Application, Teaching, Listening Skills

INTRODUCTION

English is considered the most widely spoken language in the world (Nishanthi, 2018). It is an official language in more than 55 countries worldwide, and an estimated one billion people speak it as a second language. Developing good listening skills is a crucial aspect of learning the English language. Listening is one of the skills that English foreign language students often struggle with due to complex problems and difficulties, especially when listening to music, the radio, or even a native speaker. They may have difficulties comprehending the language, words, and pronunciation. Misunderstandings can occur if students are unable to pay attention to the speaker. Students need to listen carefully to understand the meaning of words because listening skills involve more than just hearing; they require concentration to understand the meaning. Understanding new words while listening becomes a challenge for students. To listen effectively, individuals need certain characteristics, including a desire to comprehend another person, an attitude of acceptance and respect, and a willingness to listen and understand another person's perspective. It demands a significant amount of focus and energy (Tyagi, 2013).

In recent years, the advent of digital technology has transformed the way we communicate, learn, and engage with the world around us. This digital revolution has also influenced the field of education, bringing new opportunities and challenges for language teachers seeking to enhance their instructional practices. One such technological innovation that holds immense potential for English Language Teaching (ELT) is Spotify, a widely popular music streaming
platform. Currently, most people in society, including children, are able to use technology in their daily lives (Pustika, 2020). Technology provides numerous benefits and can be an attractive and productive teaching tool for educators. Students can utilize technology, such as Spotify, as a medium for learning. With the use of this digital music streaming service, individuals can listen to millions of tracks, podcasts, and videos created by musicians from around the globe (Willings, 2022). Spotify, as one of the largest music streaming applications, was released on 23 April 2006 by Daniel Ek and Martin Lorentzon, and it has over 433 million monthly active users. Spotify offers music with lyrics and podcasts with transcripts. Music is a fun and easy way to improve listening skills, as it exposes an individual to a variety of different voices and accents, and helps individuals to understand language in a more natural way.

However, despite its potential, there is a lack of comprehensive research regarding the specific advantages and obstacles associated with utilizing Spotify in teaching English listening skills. Understanding the benefits of incorporating Spotify is crucial. By exploring its advantages, educators can uncover how Spotify’s vast library of audio materials, including music, podcasts, and audiobooks, can improve students’ listening comprehension. Furthermore, the personalized and interactive nature of Spotify allows for tailored playlists and targeted practice, enhancing the overall learning experience. Research can shed light on how these benefits contribute to students’ motivation, engagement, and language proficiency.

On the other hand, it is equally important to identify and address the challenges that may arise when integrating Spotify into language learning. Potential obstacles could include issues related to copyright, access to specific content, technological limitations, and the potential distraction from unrelated materials. By investigating these challenges, educators can develop strategies and guidelines to overcome them effectively and ensure a successful integration of Spotify in teaching English listening. Overall, conducting research on the integration of Spotify in teaching English listening is crucial to gain a comprehensive understanding of its benefits and challenges. This knowledge informs educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers on how to effectively harness Spotify’s potential as a valuable tool for enhancing English language instruction.

In this study, the library research design was employed to obtain the necessary information by using articles or journals as primary sources of reference. The use of library research is crucial for this study because it enables researchers to access a wide range of reference materials for research purposes. Through the literature study method, all key concepts were categorized in the research. By utilizing the library research method, the researcher was able to easily find supporting data, such as previous studies. Moreover, researchers who use the library method can enhance their focus by providing a conducive environment. For some researchers, the library research method can serve as a temporary escape from routine observation or survey. Compared to other research methods, research conducted through this approach can help a researcher avoid distractions that may arise. Consequently, the researcher in this study opted to use the library research method due to the aforementioned benefits. Previous studies on similar issues were thoroughly investigated to reveal the use of multimedia,
especially songs, to develop English listening skills. Some studies have found that using Spotify as a tool for improving English listening skills can be effective in the classroom. This research aims to answer the following questions:
1. What are some challenges when using Spotify as a tool in teaching English listening skills?
2. What are some benefits for teachers and students when using Spotify as a tool in teaching English listening skills?

METHOD
This paper utilized the library research method, which involves researchers directing the investigation from start to finish, often without knowing what sources they encounter. Library research papers typically gather information and data from sources such as journals, articles, textbooks, and other documents. For this study, the researchers selected 15 relevant articles from the field of teaching and teacher education through internet search engines including Google Scholar, Mendeley, and Publish or Perish. To narrow down the results, the reviewers conducted comprehensive reviews using specific keywords, including “Spotify Application”, "Teaching", and "Listening Skills". Inclusion criteria were set for the articles:
1. Published within the last 5 years (2018-2023).
2. The data used is only about the use of Spotify in English listening skills.
3. The data used are both qualitative and quantitative.
4. Related to the use of Spotify Application
5. The data used is empirical research.
6. The setting of the article is in the area of English language teaching and learning.

These articles were analyzed with a focus on the use of Spotify applications in ELT and in teaching practice, and the key features of these Spotify applications in terms of their functions, their effects to the teachers and students, the factors and the problems influencing when using the applications.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Challenges of Using Spotify as a Tool in Teaching English Listening Skills
The study's findings revealed to answer the question about some challenges when using Spotify as a tool in teaching English listening skills. The results obtained from multiple sources in order to address this question. The first researcher was (Bona, 2018). In the research conducted, it was found that among the students involved, there were differing opinions regarding the usability and impact of Spotify on their English learning. Some of the students expressed the belief that the features available on Spotify are complex and challenging to utilize effectively. This suggests that they encountered difficulties in navigating the application or utilizing its features for language learning purposes. On the other hand, approximately half of the students held a positive opinion about Spotify's impact on their English learning. They acknowledged that Spotify offers a comprehensive library of songs, which they found beneficial for their language development. This indicates that these students perceived Spotify as a valuable resource for improving their English skills, particularly in terms of vocabulary acquisition, exposure to authentic language use, and potentially enhancing their
listening comprehension. Overall, the findings highlight the existence of divergent perspectives among the students regarding Spotify's usability and impact. While some students found it challenging to utilize the application's features effectively, others recognized its potential benefits and considered it a valuable tool for their English learning journey.

The second researcher was Afriyuninda & Oktaviani ((2021), the utilization of Spotify for playing songs during the listening process presents certain challenges. These challenges include the presence of unscientific pop songs, inefficient sound systems in schools that can hinder effective listening to songs, and the potential mismatch between the types of music preferred by students. The researchers highlight the issue of unscientific pop songs, which implies that the content and lyrics of popular songs may not always align with educational objectives or provide the desired level of linguistic input for language learners. This suggests that some songs available on Spotify might not be suitable for enhancing language skills or meeting specific learning goals. Furthermore, the inefficient sound systems in schools can pose problems during the listening process. If the sound quality or equipment used for playing songs on Spotify is not optimal, it can hinder students' ability to clearly hear and understand the lyrics, thereby affecting their overall listening comprehension. Another challenge raised by the researchers is the potential discrepancy in musical preferences among students. Since Spotify offers a wide range of music genres and styles, it is possible that the types of songs students like may vary significantly. This variation can make it challenging for teachers to select songs that cater to the diverse musical preferences of the students in a classroom, potentially impacting their engagement and motivation during the listening activities.

The third researchers was Angelia & Simanjuntak (2022), the study highlights the challenges encountered by teachers when using Spotify as a teaching tool. One of the primary difficulties is ensuring that students have the necessary devices like computers, tablets, or smartphones to access podcasts. Additionally, a stable internet connection is crucial for uninterrupted access to podcast materials. To facilitate effective digital learning using Spotify, teachers need to create clear and easily understandable study guides. These guides should outline the learning objectives, specify the podcast content that students should study, provide assignments, and outline assessment criteria. Clear guidelines help students navigate the learning process and understand what is expected of them. Furthermore, students should be given sufficient time and space to study and listen to podcasts. Teachers need to allocate dedicated periods for podcast-related activities and ensure that students have a conducive learning environment. This may involve providing quiet spaces for listening and studying. It is also essential for teachers to offer support and guidance to students throughout the learning process. As students encounter difficulties or obstacles, teachers should be available to provide assistance and help them overcome any challenges they may face. This support can be in the form of clarifying content, answering questions, and providing additional resources or explanations.

According to Waloyo (2019), his research highlights several challenges that students encounter when using the application. One issue is the presence of unfamiliar vocabulary within the application, which makes it difficult for students to navigate and understand the content. This can lead to frustration and potentially
result in students abandoning or uninstalling the application altogether. Another challenge arises from the speed at which native speakers speak and their lack of consideration for the audience. This can pose difficulties for students trying to comprehend the content, as fast-paced speech and unfamiliar messages can hinder their understanding. Consequently, students may feel uncomfortable while using the application due to these challenges. Environmental factors also play a role in the application's usability. Students living near main roads, for example, may experience disruptions from vehicle noise, which can affect their concentration while trying to receive important information from the application. Additionally, the success of using the application at home is dependent on reliable internet connectivity. Limited bandwidth can often cause significant problems, leading to errors or interruptions while using the application. Overall, these challenges highlight the need for addressing vocabulary difficulties, improving accessibility, and considering the impact of environmental factors in order to enhance the usability and effectiveness of the application for students.

Benefits of Using Spotify as a Tool in Teaching English Listening Skills

The researcher presented the result of obtained from several sources to answer the question about benefits when using Spotify as a tool in teaching English listening skills. In the study conducted by Bona (2018), the researcher explored the beliefs of students regarding the use of Spotify as a tool to enhance their English listening skills. The findings revealed that the students had a positive perception of Spotify's potential in increasing and sharpening their listening abilities. This positive perception stemmed from the fact that listening to English songs was one of their favorite hobbies. According to the students' feedback, using Spotify was not limited to a specific English course but was perceived as beneficial for all of their English courses. The students believed that incorporating Spotify into their language learning routine had a positive impact on their overall English language proficiency. Furthermore, half of the students expressed the belief that using Spotify regularly could lead to better results not only in English listening tests but also in other English assessments. This indicates that the students recognized the broader benefits of utilizing Spotify as a tool for language learning, extending beyond just listening tests. The study highlighted that Spotify's influence was more prominent in day-to-day English listening courses rather than in formal testing situations. This suggests that the students perceived Spotify as an effective resource for improving their listening skills through continuous exposure to English songs and audio content. In summary, the research conducted by Bona (2018) demonstrated that students held a positive belief in the potential of Spotify to enhance their English listening skills. They considered it a valuable tool that could be utilized across various English courses, leading to improved overall language proficiency. The findings also indicated that while Spotify had a significant impact on day-to-day listening practice, its influence on formal tests was relatively less pronounced.

The second study that conducted by Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021) and Andriani et al (2018), The results of their study primarily revolve around the use of English songs as a means of teaching listening skills. The findings suggest that listening to English songs can be beneficial in improving one's listening abilities. This is because when individuals engage in listening practice with English songs, they have the opportunity to expose themselves to authentic language use, which
can enhance their comprehension skills. Furthermore, the study indicates that listening to English songs can also contribute to the development of good and accurate pronunciation. By repeatedly listening to the lyrics of English songs and imitating the pronunciation of the singers, learners can practice and refine their own pronunciation skills. In addition to improving listening and pronunciation, the study highlights that practicing listening with English songs offers the advantage of learning new vocabulary. As learners engage with the lyrics of the songs, they encounter unfamiliar words and phrases, providing them with opportunities to expand their vocabulary. Overall, the study suggests that incorporating English songs into language learning activities can be an effective approach for improving listening skills, refining pronunciation, and acquiring new vocabulary.

The third study that conducted by Salsabila et al (2021) utilizing Georgina's podcast on Spotify as a teaching and learning tool can generate student interest while also accelerating the learning process. The author suggests that incorporating Georgina's podcast into the classroom or educational setting capture students' attention and maintain their engagement throughout the learning experience. By leveraging the captivating and interactive nature of podcasts available on Spotify, students are more likely to feel motivated and invested in the learning process. Additionally, the author implies that using this particular podcast can enhance the pace at which students acquire knowledge and skills, suggesting that it has a positive impact on the overall learning efficiency. In summary, Salsabila et al (2021) asserts that integrating Georgina's podcast from Spotify into teaching and learning activities fosters student interest, maintains the learning process, and potentially accelerates the pace of learning.

Based from the study of Nisa et al (2022), Anggraini (2021), Redin et al (2021), and Izzah (2022), using Spotify as a tool for teaching listening skills has proven to be effective in improving students' listening abilities. The Spotify platform offers several benefits that contribute to the enhancement of listening skills. Firstly, students can improve their audio skills through the use of this platform. By regularly listening to a variety of audio content available on Spotify, such as music and podcasts, students can train their ears to understand and process spoken language more effectively. By utilizing the Spotify platform in teaching listening skills, educators can leverage its benefits to create engaging and interactive learning experiences. Students can actively engage with audio materials that interest them, allowing for a more personalized and enjoyable learning process. Overall, Spotify serves as a valuable tool for enhancing students' listening skills, offering them the chance to enhance their audio abilities and gain exposure to authentic language use through a variety of audio content, including podcasts.

According to Apriyanti (2022), the Spotify application assists learners in improving their English abilities, particularly in the area of listening skills, by aiding them in expressing their ideas, stimulating their imagination, deepening their understanding, and integrating various language skills and knowledge. When students engage with the diverse audio content available on Spotify, they are exposed to different styles of music, podcasts, and audiobooks, which provide them with a rich source of linguistic input. This exposure helps them develop a broader range of vocabulary and language structures, enhancing their ability to
convey their thoughts and ideas effectively in English. By actively listening to the content on Spotify, students deepen their understanding of the English language. They become familiar with different accents, speech patterns, and intonations, enhancing their comprehension skills. Additionally, exposure to authentic language use through songs, podcasts, and audiobooks helps students grasp the nuances of the language and improve their overall understanding of English.

The result from the study by Hamsia & Roifah (2023), Rahajeng et al (2022), and Sinta (2021) The use of the Spotify application has been found to generate interest and motivation among students when it comes to learning English listening skills. By incorporating the Spotify application into teaching listening through songs, students become more engaged and enthusiastic about their language learning journey. This heightened interest can be attributed to the ability to choose and listen to songs of their liking, which creates a sense of personal connection and enjoyment. Furthermore, the use of Spotify for listening to songs has been observed to boost students' self-confidence in their listening abilities. Through repeated exposure to songs and lyrics, students gain familiarity with the language, improve their comprehension skills, and become more comfortable with listening to English content. This increased confidence stems from the fact that they are able to understand and follow along with the songs, reinforcing their belief in their own listening proficiency. In summary, the utilization of the Spotify application in teaching listening skills leads to heightened interest and motivation among students. Moreover, it fosters a sense of self-assurance and confidence in their ability to comprehend and engage with English content through the medium of songs.

After analyzing 15 studies focused on the utilization of the Spotify application, it can be inferred that the application presents numerous challenges and benefits for educational purposes, particularly in teaching English listening skills. The research findings indicate that Spotify can serve as an alternative for teachers to impart listening skills in a contemporary and enjoyable manner. Utilizing technology, such as the Spotify application, for teaching English listening skills has emerged as an optimal approach in recent times. By integrating Spotify into language learning, educators can tap into the vast array of benefits it offers. Firstly, Spotify provides a vast library of audio content, including music, podcasts, and audiobooks, which exposes students to authentic language use and enhances their listening comprehension. With a wide range of genres and styles available, students can explore diverse linguistic contexts and develop a better understanding of different accents and speech patterns.

Moreover, Spotify offers personalized and interactive learning experiences. Through curated playlists, teachers can compile specific tracks tailored to different language levels, topics, or learning objectives. This allows for targeted practice and progression in listening skills. Additionally, Spotify's recommendation algorithms enable students to discover new content based on their interests, expanding their exposure to the language and fostering motivation. Furthermore, the convenience and accessibility of the Spotify application make it a practical tool for language learning. Students can access Spotify on various devices, allowing for flexibility in their learning environment. Whether at home, on the go, or in the classroom, learners can engage with English listening materials at their own pace and convenience.
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In summary, integrating the Spotify application into English language instruction facilitates an engaging and effective learning experience. Its diverse audio content, personalized playlists, and accessibility provide students with ample opportunities to enhance their listening skills, broaden their linguistic horizons, and develop a deeper understanding of the English language. Additionally, the findings demonstrate that apart from being an effective tool for enhancing English listening skills, Spotify has the potential to boost motivation and engage students in the learning process. Spotify aids students in acquiring new vocabulary, improving pronunciation, and facilitating the expression of ideas, imagination, and comprehension, thereby integrating language skills and knowledge.

Based on the research findings, educators can consider integrating Spotify into their English listening skills curriculum. The application offers a modern and enjoyable approach to teaching, which can enhance student engagement and motivation. Spotify allows students to explore and select songs according to their preferences, providing them with a sense of ownership and autonomy in their learning. Teachers can encourage students to actively utilize Spotify outside the classroom, facilitating independent learning and self-directed language practice. Teachers can design interactive listening activities using Spotify, such as song lyric comprehension exercises, dictation exercises, or even creating playlists related to specific language topics. These activities can make the learning process more engaging and interactive, fostering a deeper understanding of the language.

Future research could investigate the long-term impact of integrating Spotify in English listening skills on students' overall language proficiency. This would involve examining whether students who regularly utilize Spotify demonstrate improved language abilities beyond listening skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing. Also, further research could delve into the factors that influence student engagement and motivation when using Spotify for English listening skills. Understanding these factors can help educators optimize the use of Spotify and tailor instructional strategies to enhance student participation and learning outcomes. By addressing these implications for practice and further research, educators and researchers can continue to explore the benefits and challenges of integrating Spotify in English listening skills instruction, ultimately improving language learning experiences for students.

REFERENCES


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