

EXPLORING STUDENTS' VOICES IN CREATING PODCAST AS PROJECT BASED LEARNING IN SPEAKING CLASS

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore student's voices about using podcasts for their Speaking class project. The participants of this study were 18 students from the fifth semester of the English Education Department at a private university in Yogyakarta. The sampling technique applied is purposive sampling which is based on the specific purposes of this research. The study was conducted through a descriptive qualitative method. The data was collected through open-ended questionnaires to capture the students' voices on the use of podcasts as a media to fulfill their final project in Speaking class. The results of this study showed that podcasts were effective to use as a media in Speaking class, especially to improve their speaking skills. However, students encountered various challenges, including such as difficulties with editing, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and pre-production tasks such as topic selection and content arrangement. Despite these challenges, integrating podcasts into Speaking class fostered a positive attitude toward technology adoption, boosted confidence, and enriched students' learning experience.

Keywords: Students' Voices; Podcast; Project Based Learning

INTRODUCTION

In today's education, incorporating technology into the teaching and learning process has become imperative (Liesa-Orús et al., 2020). Teachers should provide a new model of learning that empowers students to develop their creativity in learning language. Among the learning models utilized by teachers is Project Based Learning (PBL). Fauziati (2018) suggests that Project-Based Learning (PBL) is known to be an effective problem-solving method in the 21st century. Similarly, (Alamer & Al Khateeb, 2021) argues that Project Based Learning (PBL) is a type of learning activity that is based on real-world issues and challenges that require students to collaborate in groups to complete engaging and creative activities and produce a final product.

Since the pandemic happened, PBL has been completely used to support and manage teaching and learning activities remotely. Implementing different methods, strategies, and media to support distance learning during the pandemic has become a challenge for educators. Some studies found that online PBL has a positive impact on language learning. This learning model includes student involvement in the learning process, student focuses on the project being prepared, the use of critical thinking (Cortázar, 2021; Randazzo et al., 2021), and creativity (Barak & Yuan, 2021; Rochmawati et al., 2019). (Haniah et al., 2021; Yuliansyah & Ayu, 2021) reported several steps for implementing online Project-based learning.

In language teaching and learning, a variety of technological tools can be implemented, including podcasts. Hajar (2020) asserts that podcasts are highly beneficial media for educational purposes. The audio and video files of podcasts can be accessed both online and offline. In line with (Asyifah & Indriani, 2021) using podcasts can help students develop their independence as learners outside of the classroom. Based on the statements above, the

researchers interpreted that using technological media is an efficient way for both teachers and students in learning language.

As outlined by Kooten and Bie (2019), creating an educational podcast involves three main steps: pre-production, production, and post-production. In the pre-production phase, students need to gather necessary equipment such as recording devices and editing software, as well as developing a coherent storyline for the podcast. During the production phase, students should focus on recording and determining the ideal duration, typically between 15 to 30 minutes. In the post-production phase, students analyze the recording, augment it with background music and sound effects, and refine it for clarity.

Podcasting was adopted as one of the topics of the Speaking class. The lecturer uses podcasts as a technology media for students' Speaking final projects. Students should make a podcast as creative as possible. To facilitate this process, the lecturer recommended the Anchor.fm application, highlighting its user-friendly interface and cost-effectiveness for podcast production within the Speaking class. Several studies have been conducted to see the impact of podcasts (Alfa, 2020; Hikmah et al., 2021; Prasetya & Nuraeni, 2021; Rahmasari et al., 2021; Yeh et al., 2021). This study shows that podcasts are one of the media that can be used in enhancing students' speaking performances. In line with this (Fatika & Rahayu, 2021; Harahap, 2020; Yoestara & Putri, 2018) also have proven that podcasts enhance students' ability to listen. Regarding students' voices regarding the use of podcasts, few studies have been conducted to explore students' voices. Cain (2020) in his research reported that podcasting is an instructional strategy to foster students' creativity, decision-making abilities, and motivation in learning. In line with Rahmasari et al. (2021) concluded that podcasts are interesting media and beneficial for speaking achievement. However, according to Ismaila (2022), the use of podcasting presents several challenges: (1) Limited access to resources, (2) Lack of pedagogical training on how to integrate Podcasting into teaching, (3) High cost of internet service providers, (4) High cost of e-learning facilities.

Previous research highlighted the usefulness of podcasts in enhancing the language learning process, focusing on aspects such as speaking and listening skills in various educational settings. However, there appears to be a lack of focused inquiry into how podcasts are perceived by students when used specifically as a PBL tool in Speaking classes. Additionally, the research reviewed did not explore in depth the specific challenges or difficulties students face when engaging in podcasting as a PBL activity in this particular educational context.

There is no detailed research regarding students' voices and challenges regarding the use of podcasts as a PBL activity in Speaking class. Several challenges were found, such as; (1) Limited access to resources, (2) Lack of pedagogical training on how to integrate podcasting into teaching, (3) High costs of internet service providers, (4) High costs of e-learning facilities, are at the core of this research gap (Ismaila, 2022; Rahmasari et al. 2021). From these gaps, researchers want to dig deeper into the challenges found by students other than these four challenges. This gap highlights the need for focused studies on student voices regarding the effectiveness and engagement of using podcasts in Speaking classes structured around PBL, as well as delving deeper into the specific challenges and difficulties faced by students during the creation of podcasts as part of their coursework in this context, in addition to the few challenges mentioned previously.

Based on those reasons, the researchers were interested in conducting a study about "Exploring Students' Voices on the use of podcasts as their Project Based Learning in Speaking class" during the post-pandemic period. The research questions are formulated as follows: (1) how do students experience in creating podcast?, (2) What are students' voices in creating podcasts as Project Based Learning in Speaking class? and (3) What are the difficulties faced by the students while creating a podcast?

METHOD

This research utilized a descriptive qualitative approach, which aligns with the principles outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2018), focusing on understanding phenomena rather than quantification. This research conducted at a private university in Yogyakarta, involving fifth-semester students from the English Education Department, selected through purposive sampling to align with the research objectives.

Data collection involved the distribution of open-ended questionnaires via Google Forms, allowing participants to respond at their convenience. All 18 participants completed and returned the questionnaires, shedding light on their perspectives and challenges regarding the integration of podcasts in Project Based Learning within their Speaking class.

Data analysis followed the framework proposed by Miles et al. (2018), encompassing stages such as data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. Subsequently, the collected data were descriptively presented and qualitatively analyzed, focusing on the utilization of podcasts in their final projects. The research findings were then scrutinized to draw meaningful conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the results derived from an open-ended questionnaire administered to 18 students. The questionnaire aimed to address the following research questions. The Findings are presented based on the responses provided by the participants.

Students' experience in creating a podcast

The first question addressed was to explore the students' experience in creating podcasts. The answers can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Students' experience of podcast

No	Answer to the question	The total number of students	Percentage
1.	Answer "Yes"	16 students	88,9%
2.	Answer "No"	2 students	11,1%

Based on the above table, it can be seen that most students reported having no prior experience in creating podcast. It can be interpreted that the podcast is still relatively new to the students. Consequently, there is a pressing need to incorporate instruction on podcast creation and suggest a variety of podcast references to enhance students' familiarity and competence in this medium.

The kinds of applications used by the students in creating a podcast

A whole number of the participants stated that they used Anchor.fm application in creating and publishing their podcast projects, as suggested by the lecturer. However, some applications support students in recording and editing their podcasts. The answers can be seen in the following extracts of the open-ended questionnaire:

"I went ahead and used anchor. fm to whip up my podcast project."(Participant 14).

"First off, I did a manual recording, then jazzed it up with some background beats using the Inshoot app, and lastly, I tossed it onto Anchor.fm." (Participant 10).

"I recorded it first, tweaked it with the VN app, threw in some tunes from YouTube, but still dropped it on Anchor.fm." (Participant 13).

Based on the above extracts of the open-ended questionnaire, most of the students were not too troubled to create a podcast. They know the steps and process to create a podcast. However, some students also used Inshoot and VN applications to support the editing process. The results show that the *Anchor.fm* application can be one of the platforms for creating and publishing podcasts.

Students' Voices of the Use of Podcasts in Public Speaking Class

The next main point answers from the participants are about the students' voices of the use of podcasts in their Project Based Learning in Speaking class. Most of the participants expressed their viewpoints as follows:

"I believe that individuals who have never ventured into podcast creation would find it challenging to explore alternative methods for enhancing their speaking skills, yet it could also offer them a valuable learning experience." (Participant 18).

"I quite enjoy it, to be honest, as the podcast project encourages students to unleash their creativity in refining their speaking abilities." (Participant 6).

"I'm delighted because creating a podcast has been my initial endeavor to enhance my English proficiency, and the process turned out to be less challenging than I had anticipated." (Participant 4).

The above answers show that students agreed that podcasts are a useful tool for language learning. The majority of the students show positive voices of the use of podcasts. Furthermore, the finding reveals that students achieve educational benefits from podcast creation. Some students state that podcasts are interesting and meaningful projects to gain knowledge, to learn something new.

"I find podcasts intriguing because they offer students the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of podcast creation, similar to those found on YouTube or Spotify. This includes everything from brainstorming exciting topics to the recording process, and beyond, until the final product is ready for listeners." (Participant 7).

"I believe that through podcasts, I can acquire new knowledge, showcase my hidden talents, and also share my experiences with others." (Participant 2).

"Podcasts have been an invaluable source of learning for me. They've taught me various aspects, such as establishing the tone, addressing pertinent topics, crafting scripts that resonate with themes, and ensuring that listeners receive the necessary information. Moreover, I've learned techniques to make podcasts engaging and leave listeners eagerly anticipating future episodes. I am convinced that this podcast project can unearth hidden talents among students and harness their skills to create compelling content." (Participant 15).

Students' voices of skills that improved by creating a podcast

The following table shows the types of skills that students enhanced through the podcast project. The detailed answers can be seen as follows:

Table 2. Language skills and components

No	Language skills and component	The total number of students	Frequency
1.	Speaking	18 students	62,1%
2.	Listening	3 students	10,3%
3.	Writing	3 students	10,3%
4.	Grammar	1 student	3,4%
5.	Pronunciation	1 student	3,4%
6.	Editing skill	2 students	6,8%

Based on the data presented in the table above, integrating podcasts as a Project Based Learning in Speaking class is an effective way to improve English skills. It can be seen that a majority of students (62,1%) agreed that a podcast is a useful project for improving their speaking skills. Followed by listening skills (10.3%) some students believed that listening to podcasts had improved their listening ability. They enhance their focus by listening to English podcasts, using them as references to create their own podcast. Additionally, a small percentage of

participants reported improvements in grammar (3,4%), pronunciation (3,4%), and editing skills (6,8%) as a result of engaging in podcast projects.

Challenges faced by the students while creating a podcast

The next main point answers from the participants is about students' challenges while creating podcasts. Some of the participants gave their comments as follows:

"Yeah, but the hiccup usually occurs during the editing phase, possibly due to glitches in the website or app, which could be attributed to my internet connection or laptop. I also encounter some difficulties in editing the audio, but I've figured out ways to troubleshoot the issue." (Participant 2).

"Yeah, I've encountered some challenges. I believe it's mainly about fine-tuning the pace and intonation of speech when creating podcasts. Additionally, my limited knowledge about the features of the podcasting application sometimes results in podcasts that appear average or lack that special aesthetic touch." (Participant 11).

The above answers show that the editing process is one of the problems faced by the students. Besides, some students also state they are fear of making mistakes, insufficient speaking fluency and limited vocabulary. Here are some of the participants' comments:

"I've found myself tripping over my words during this first podcasting experience, especially since I've had to speak extensively. Getting into the rhythm has been tough for me, especially considering that I'm not naturally inclined to be very chatty." (Participant 3).

"I encountered various challenges throughout the process of producing the podcast. One significant obstacle involved selecting words that could be easily comprehended by my audience. This challenge arose due to my restricted vocabulary, leading me to frequently consult a dictionary to find appropriate English equivalents for Indonesian terms. Moreover, considering the educational focus of my podcast, I recognized the importance of using language and terminology that would enrich the learning experience." (Participant 12).

"I lack proficiency in English, especially in understanding new or unusual vocabulary commonly used in everyday conversations." (Participant 4).

Furthermore, excited by all of the opinions, the statements underscore the crucial role of lecturer motivation in cultivating students' speaking skills, particularly in enhancing pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy and fostering positive anxiety. additionally, some students pointed out additional challenges in selecting topics, and contents, and coordinating recording time schedules with guest speakers.

"Yeah, I encountered several challenges while producing and recording. I struggled with selecting an engaging topic to ensure that the listeners remained interested." (Participant 1).

"I find it somewhat difficult to come up with questions because I've never created a podcast before." (Participant 16).

"The issue arises when scheduling recording sessions with guest stars for the podcast, as it can be challenging to find a mutually suitable time, leading to frequent delays in the podcast schedule." (Participant 9).

The answers above demonstrated that creating a well-organized podcast takes time. Before recording time, students should be well prepared. Furthermore, the length of the podcast was identified as a problem. Some of the participants gave their comments as follows:

"When the lecturer sets the duration for the podcast, it poses a challenge because each individual has a different topic to discuss, and thus, the duration cannot be standardized for everyone." (Participant 7).

"The recording ends up being excessively lengthy and does not align with the designated duration." (Participant 8).

The above answers show that some students struggle with the length of the podcast to fit with the podcast duration determined by the lecturer. In addition, background noises and other distracting factors can be a problem when recording time. One of the participants gave his comments as follows:

“Since I recorded the podcast outdoors, there were disturbances such as motorcycle noises and children playing nearby, known as lato-lato” (Participant 10)

In summary, the difficulties faced by students are the editing process, fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary, and podcast pre-production (topic selection, arranging podcast outline, and arranging on recording time).

Discussion

The results from the open-ended questionnaire revealed that the majority of students held expressed a favorable voice of podcasts. Within the Speaking class activity, the lecturer allowed students to create their own podcasts as part of their final project. Students agreed that using podcasts in Speaking class is a fascinating way to learn new things. This means that students can enhance their educational experience with new skills and talents by using podcasting in teaching and learning (Amsa & Efendi, 2022).

Furthermore, additional findings indicate that podcasts can significantly aid students in improving their language skills, particularly in speaking skills. This finding was supported by most of the studies on this topic. These findings show that podcasts are a useful project for improving students' speaking skills. This positive finding is in line with other studies (Alfa, 2020; Hikmah et al., 2021; Prasetya & Nuraeni, 2021; Rahmasari et al., 2021). As supported by Yeh et al. (2021) Podcasts can improve students' English accuracy and fluency while creating a podcast. The students found it beneficial to facilitate their speaking competence through self-reflection and self-regulation, which also helped them overcome difficulties in podcasting. Moreover, Fatika and Rahayu (2021) stated that podcasts can motivate students to improve their listening skills. The use of podcasts in learning to listen made the students understand the material and the students felt happy and comfortable while learning listening. This finding correlated with other researchers (Harahap, 2020; Yoestara & Putri, 2018) which suggested that podcasts could be an effective tool for improving students' listening skills.

Although this study provides insight into how podcasts can enhance students' speaking skills, some difficulties must be acknowledged. First, is the editing process. Based on the results, it can be inferred that producing a good podcast takes a lot of time. The students not only edited one application but also two eventually three supporting applications to create their podcast. Second, podcast duration. Some students struggle with the length of the podcast to fit with the podcast duration determined by the lecturer. Last, podcast pre-production (selecting topics, and contents, and arranging recording time). This finding is in line with Yeh et al. (2021) reported some challenges faced by the students when creating podcasts. The statement “feeling embarrassed to make mistakes. This study also found, that one of the difficulties faced by the students is fear of making mistakes. For these reasons, the implementation of podcasts should require preparation from both lecturers and students.

CONCLUSION

The current research delves into students' perspectives on utilizing podcasts within their Project Based Learning in Public Speaking courses. The findings reveal that podcasts serve as an effective tool for enhancing students' language acquisition, particularly in speaking and listening skills. Additionally, students viewed podcast-based learning activities positively, recognizing the educational benefits they offer. However, students encountered several

challenges, including the editing process, apprehension about errors, vocabulary limitations, and pre-production tasks such as topic selection and content arrangement.

This study aims to provide valuable insights into the integration of technology, specifically podcast creation, in the teaching and learning process. It suggests the need for further investigation, especially within the domain of Speaking classes, which could involve enlarging the sample size, involving participants from various academic levels, and exploring new research avenues related to podcasting.

The pedagogical implications derived from this study are significant for both educators and students. By showcasing the effectiveness of incorporating podcast creation as a Project Learning activity in Public Speaking classes, this research underscores the importance of adopting innovative teaching methodologies to enhance language learning and communication skills. Educators can leverage these findings to design student-centered learning experiences that promote active involvement, creativity, and collaboration. Moreover, integrating podcasting into the curriculum offers students opportunities to develop critical skills such as communication, digital literacy, problem-solving, and self-directed learning. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of addressing students' challenges by providing tailored support, resources, and guidance. Ultimately, the pedagogical implications underscore the transformative potential of podcast-based learning in fostering comprehensive development and preparing students for success in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

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