

Using Spotify Podcast To Enhance Students' Speaking Fluency

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate the effectiveness of Spotify podcasts in enhancing students' speaking fluency at the eleventh grade of SMK Bakti Jaya Depok in the academic year 2024/2025. The study applied a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, consisting of three cycles, each including planning, action, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 29 students of the TKJ Department, while data were collected through tests, observations, and interviews. Spotify podcasts were integrated as the main learning media to expose students to authentic spoken English and encourage active practice. The findings revealed a gradual improvement in students' speaking fluency across the cycles. In the first cycle, 24% of students achieved the minimum passing score (70), with an average score of 65.37. In the second cycle, 47% of students passed with an average of 69.65. By the third cycle, 72.41% of students reached the criterion, raising the average to 74.00. These results conclude that Spotify podcasts are effective in improving students' speaking fluency, providing both innovative learning experiences and increased motivation.

Keywords: Learning Media, Podcast, Speaking Fluency, Spotify, Students.

1 INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a fundamental skill in English language learning, as it allows learners to express their thoughts, opinions, and emotions in real communication. According to Brown (2004), speaking is a productive skill that involves producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Nation (2013) adds that speaking fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly, with minimal hesitation, appropriate speed, and clear pronunciation. This indicates that fluency is not only about producing words, but also about delivering messages effectively in real time. Harmer (2017) also emphasizes that fluency is one of the essential goals of language learning, because it enables students to participate actively in both academic and social contexts.

Fluency in speaking requires several aspects, such as adequate vocabulary, correct pronunciation, appropriate rhythm, and minimal pauses. Fillmore (in Thornbury, 2005) states that fluent speakers are characterized by having plenty of ideas, avoiding long pauses, producing fewer repetitions, and speaking with clear utterances. However, many Indonesian students still struggle with fluency. They often hesitate, mispronounce words, and rely heavily on repetition, which makes communication less effective (Lennon, 2000). This shows that speaking fluency remains a challenge for learners of English as a foreign language.

In Indonesia, the issue of speaking fluency is evident among vocational high school students. Based on the researcher's preliminary observation at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, many students were reluctant to speak due to lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and insufficient exposure to authentic spoken English. Classroom activities were often dominated by grammar and written tasks, while speaking practices were minimal. As a result, students' speaking fluency remained low, with frequent pauses and difficulties in delivering ideas coherently. This reflects the findings of previous studies that fluency is often the weakest aspect of students' English proficiency (Putrawangsa, 2022).

One way to overcome these difficulties is by integrating digital media into the learning process. Podcast is one of the innovative learning resources that provides authentic listening input from native speakers and exposes students to natural speech. According to Hew (2009), podcasts are flexible learning tools that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, allowing repeated listening to improve comprehension and fluency. Among various platforms, Spotify Podcast has gained popularity because it offers diverse topics, native accents, and accessible content for learners. Previous research also supports the use of podcasts in language learning. Chang et al. (2021) found that podcast-based learning improved students' fluency and reduced hesitation. Similarly, Yaqin & Halim (2022) reported that integrating Spotify podcasts into classroom activities significantly enhanced speaking performance and motivation. Based on these findings, the researcher implemented Spotify Podcast as a learning medium to enhance speaking fluency of eleventh grade students at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok. The study was designed as a Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of three cycles: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This research aims to investigate whether Spotify podcasts can enhance students' speaking fluency and provide practical implications for english teachers adopting technology based learning strategies.

2 RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach based on the model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998). This model consists of four stages in each cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection. CAR is an excellent approach for this research because it enables teachers to identify problems, plan solutions, implement actions, and evaluate the results directly in the classroom. Through a process that takes place over several cycles, continuous improvement can be achieved. This study was conducted over three cycles with 29 11th-grade students of the Teknik Komputer dan Jaringan (TKJ) Department at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok during the 2024/2025 academic year. There were 17 male students and 12 female students. The instruments used included a speaking fluency test, observation sheets, and interview guidelines. A pre-test was given to determine the students' initial speaking ability, and a post-test was given at the end of each cycle to measure improvement. Qualitative data related to students' participation, confidence, and learning attitudes were collected through observations and interviews, while quantitative data were obtained from the speaking fluency test scores.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Pre-Action

The pre-action stage was conducted to obtain an initial overview of the learning conditions at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, especially concerning students' English speaking fluency. Based on interviews and classroom observations, it was found that English lessons were only held once a week for 80 minutes, and the teaching process was still dominated by teacher-centered activities. Students rarely practiced speaking, and most of them lacked confidence, had limited vocabulary, and struggled with pronunciation.

The researcher administered a pre-test to measure the students' speaking fluency before implementing the action. The results showed that only a few students could speak fluently and confidently. The majority of the class produced many pauses, hesitations, and unclear utterances, with an average score far below the minimum mastery criterion (KKM) of 70. This indicated that students' speaking fluency needed significant improvement.

3.2 Action

3.2.1 Cycle I

a. Planning

The first cycle was conducted on April 14, 2025, using an analytical exposition text titled *Can AI Solve a Crime?*. The lesson plan was designed according to the 2013 revised curriculum and integrated Spotify Podcast as the main media. Learning objectives included identifying the structure of analytical exposition, answering comprehension questions, and practicing oral presentations to enhance speaking fluency. Media used were Spotify Podcast (BBC Learning English 6-Minute English), transcripts, worksheets, and portable speakers. Assessment covered five aspects of fluency: speed of speech, pauses, mean length of runs, speech rhythm, and pronunciation.

b. Acting

The cycle consisted of two 40-minute sessions. In the first meeting, the researcher greeted students, explained objectives, and introduced analytical exposition text structure. Students listened to the podcast three times: first for general understanding, second to answer comprehension questions, and third for verification. They then prepared a short argumentative text and presented it individually. In the second meeting, students accessed the podcast transcript, answered five comprehension questions, and practiced oral delivery of their text. Each student performed individually while being assessed on speaking fluency indicators. The researcher guided passive students, provided feedback, and encouraged class discussion, although some students remained shy and reluctant to answer.

c. Observing

Observation showed that the classroom atmosphere was relatively less conducive, with some students noisy and unfocused. While several students showed enthusiasm and attempted to answer questions, many were still passive, shy, and lacked confidence in speaking English. Pronunciation difficulties and hesitations were frequent. During the post-test, only 7 students (24.13%) reached the minimum mastery criterion (KKM 70), with the total score of 1,896 and a class average of 65.37. This indicated only slight improvement compared to the pre-test.

d. Reflecting

The use of Spotify Podcast enhanced students' interest and participation, but clearer instructions during speaking practice were still needed. More time for discussion and rehearsal was also necessary, along with focused guidance in pronunciation and fluency. Based on these findings, several adjustments were prepared for Cycle II.

3.2.2 Cycle II

a. Planning

Cycle II was conducted on May 5, 2025, using an analytical exposition text titled *Should Animals Be Kept in Zoos?*. The lesson plan was revised based on the results of Cycle I to provide clearer instructions and more opportunities for practice. Learning objectives were to identify the structure of analytical exposition text, recognize opinion and supporting arguments, and practice delivering oral presentations with greater fluency and clearer pronunciation. Media included Spotify Podcast BBC Learning.

b. Acting

The 90-minute session began with greetings and explaining objectives. Students listened to the podcast three times: first for general meaning, second to find key arguments, and third to practice pronunciation. They analyzed the text structure (thesis, arguments, reiteration), practiced in pairs, and then presented individually. The researcher guided passive students and gave corrective feedback.

c. Observing

Participation improved compared to Cycle I. Students were more focused and confident, speaking with fewer pauses, though some still depended on the text. The classroom atmosphere was more conducive, and peer discussions were active. Post-test results showed 14 students (47%) passed KKM 70, with a total score of 2.020 and an average of 69.65.

d. Reflecting

Cycle II showed better results in fluency, clarity, and confidence. However, some students still repeated sentences and struggled to summarize independently. For Cycle III, more practice in paraphrasing and free speaking was planned.

3.2.3 Cycle III

a. Planning

Cycle III was conducted on June 9, 2025, using the text Young Women on Social Media. The focus was on paraphrasing, free speaking, and enhance student speaking fluency. The stages were the same as previous cycles, with practice in summarizing and oral delivery.

b. Acting

Students listened to the podcast three times for meaning, key arguments, and pronunciation. They analyzed the text structure, practiced , and presented individually speaking fluency by using text already given. The researcher guided and gave feedback.

c. Observing

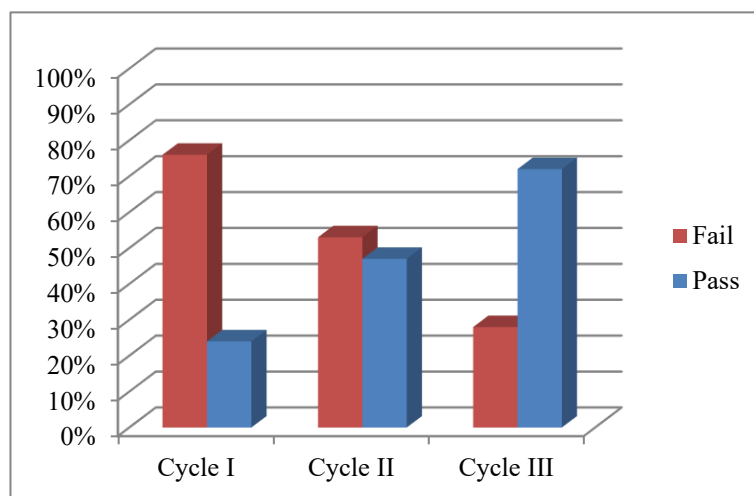
All Students were more active and confident. Discussions were lively, and most used their own sentences instead of reading. Post-test results: 21 students (72.41%) passed KKM 70, with a total score of 2.144 and an average of 74.00.

d. Reflecting

Cycle III showed clear improvement in fluency, and pronunciation, students understood text structure and delivered arguments naturally. Since success indicators were achieved, the research was ended at Cycle III.

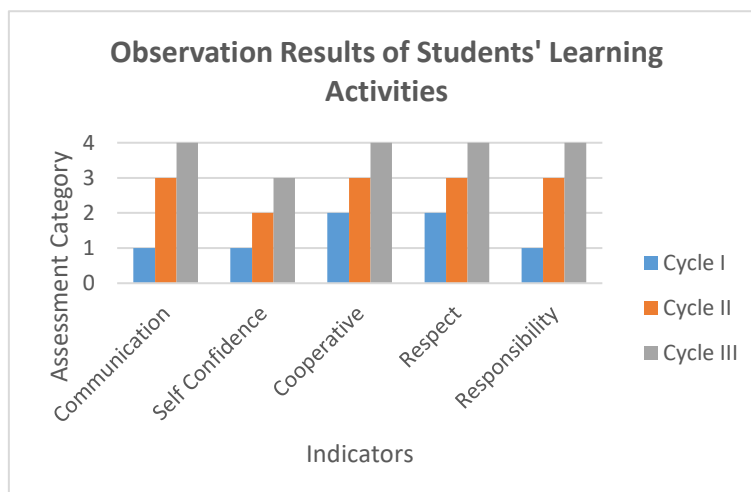
3.3 Discussion

Based on research conducted in the 11th grade at SMK Bakti Jaya Depok, the use of Spotify Podcast showed gradual improvement in students' speaking fluency over three cycles. This progress can be seen from the total of 29 students. In the pre-test, only a few students achieved the minimum passing grade (KKM 70), with a low class average. In Cycle I, the post-test results showed 7 students (24.13%) passed KKM, with a total score of 1,806 and an average of 65.37. In Cycle II, improvement was seen as 14 students (47%) reached KKM, with a total score of 1,928 and an average of 69.65. In Cycle III, the achievement increased further, with 21 students (72.41%) passing KKM, and a total score of 2,064 with an average of 74.00. These results prove that Spotify Podcast effectively enhanced students' speaking fluency in terms of clarity, confidence, and pronunciation. The following diagram illustrates the improvement across the three cycles.



Graph I. Result of Improvement of Speaking Fluency in each Cycle

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Graph II. Observation results of students' learning activities

Observed indicators consisted of participation in discussions, the ability to express opinions, responsibility, group cooperation, and independent reflection. In cycle I, students' activeness ranged between 60–70%, which improved to 80–85% in cycle II and reached almost 100% in cycle III. This steady increase demonstrates the positive impact of interactive strategies. Teacher interviews confirmed a notable shift from passive learning

toward active and reflective learning, while student interviews revealed higher levels of motivation, enjoyment, and confidence. These outcomes are consistent with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory and supported by the research of Silviana and Latief et al., which validate the effectiveness of interactive strategies. Therefore, this strategy not only enhances academic achievement but also fosters positive learning attitudes, shaping a participatory, collaborative, and reflective learning environment that is highly relevant for application in English reading instruction.

4 CONCLUSION

The Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in class XI SMK Bakti Jaya Depok through three cycles demonstrated that Spotify Podcasts were effective in enhancing students' speaking fluency. The class average improved from in cycle I (24%), 69.65 in Cycle II (47%), and 74.00 in Cycle III (72.41%), showing steady progress toward the study's success criteria. Positive changes were also observed in affective and behavioral aspects, as students developed from a "Fair" level to "Excellent" in communication fluent confidence, cooperation, respect, and responsibility. Moreover, the integration of Spotify Podcasts fostered active participation, to enhance speaking fluency like pronunciation and vocabulary, increased motivation, and created a more engaging learning environment.

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