THE USE OF AUDIOBOOKS IN DEVELOPING SEVETH-GRADE STUDENTS' READING SKILLS: A CASE STUDY FOR EFL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The research was conducted to develop students' reading skills by using an English story with Audiobooks. It seemed that the teachers could overcome if they were proficient in utilizing the internet and computer applications in the students' learning process because the students enjoyed the gadgets. In a sense, teachers should integrate supportive technology, problem-based approaches, and higher-order thinking skills. Based on these problems, the researcher was interested in developing students' reading skills by using Audiobooks apps. Moreover, the research investigated that students could significantly develop their reading skills by reading English stories with Audiobooks apps. It aimed to investigate the students' reading skills could significantly be developing by reading English stories with the Audiobooks app. The research applied a case study as the qualitative research method. The participants were three students from seventh-grade students. The researchers collected and analyzed the data from observations, tests, and interviews. Based on the finding and discussion, it can be concluded that the participants have achieved and exceeded in Standard Minimum Score (KKM). Besides, the students are enthusiastic and comfortable reading English stories with Audiobooks application in the learning process.

Keywords: audiobook app, English story, reading skill

INTRODUCTION

English is the international language which is almost used in every human life area, such as science, computers, education, diplomacy, and economic trade. Knowing English increases people's chances of getting an excellent job in global communication, the media, and the internet. English is the working language of many international organizations, such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), United Nations (UN), the European Union, and it is the language of global advertising. Moreover, in this 4.0 industrial era, almost all technologies are operated with English instruction (Purnama & Nurdianingsih, 2019). English is also the most-used language of the internet and accounts for more than half of all websites. For many people, learning English is a way to access a broader range of information, connections, and opportunities.

The internet provides very much information that can be accessed by the community in the whole world. The internet contains various media such as text, audio, graphics, animations, videos, and software that could be downloaded (Riyanto & Wagino, 2019). On the other hand, the internet can exchange ideas and communication among many people in different locations. Therefore, media online is a form of media-based telecommunications and multimedia (computers and the internet) whose contents consist of text, images, audio, and video. It can deliver extensive information on people's aspects of life.

There are a lot of mobile applications for learning English. People could use Duolingo, Cake, Hello English, Audiobooks, Grammarly, U-Dictionary, and others. So, if they have an interest in studying English, they could utilize them. Particularly for Indonesian students, the parts of English are still a foreign

language. These applications could help the students acquire the English language and help them do their tasks at school. When they use these applications, it could make the students more comfortable to study English.

According to Ryan et al. (2017), there are various kinds of social media available, including networking sites (e.g., Facebook and Instagram), instant messaging services (e.g., Whatsapp and Telegram), and blogging sites (e.g., Twitter and WordPress). Furthermore, audio-visual media also available on the internet, such as Zoom-meeting, Google-Meet, and WhatsApp-video calls. People around the world could easily speak and get information through video conferences. Language learners could share their feelings and experiences through these applications and sites and consider human beings' social nature (Avval, Asadollahfam, & Behin, 2021).

Social media's advantages are providing students with opportunities to pay attention to language and as a provider of input modification tools. It could provide various learning resources, such as the availability of resources or material. Learning styles would be used for collaborative projects as multimodal practice tools such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic as a fun medium. According to Agustini et al. (2018), the learning process' media should be efficient, flexible, and accessible. Furthermore, one of the solutions is using e-learning by mobile learning application as a media. In this research, the students could download the Audiobooks app in Google Play, and it is a free application. Audiobook apps are basically for reading while listening. It provides a transcription, audio, and an audiobook file.

Moreover, Audiobooks serve many book genres (e.g., children, comedy, adventure, fairy tales, fantasy, fiction, historical-fiction, history, humor, literature, mystery, non-fiction, philosophy, art, animals, short-stories, romance, and poetry). It has 150 classics English stories with a large number of the best storybooks. However, in the research, the participants read two English stories in the Audiobook app. They could listen to it on their phone or audio player to help them follow the speaker and dictionary function to understand which word they do not understand clearly. Audiobook application allows the learners to wrap up in the world of literature even in the middle of busy activities. They could have their virtual bookshelf right on their smartphone and listen to their favorite books on their way to work or while sweeping the floor. English stories with the Audiobooks app may help the students relax because they can listen to the audio while reading (Hardiah, 2018).

While people learn the language, there are four skills that they need for complete communication. People usually learn to listen first while they learn their native language. Then they learn to speak, then to read, and finally to write. Reading is a long-standing skill to be used both at school and throughout life. If the students want to get some information, they should read the text. The students can get the meaning in a written text by reading (Daniarti, Taufiq, & Sunaryo, 2020). It means that reading is an essential life skill. Devoid of the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost.

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Culture and Education makes the curriculum where the English language is a compulsory lesson for students. This curriculum is named K13 (2013 Curriculum). It is implemented in stages elementary school (SD), junior high school (SMP), and senior high school (SMA). Based on this curriculum, English as the foreign language (FL) contexts where exposure to the target language is mainly limited to school instruction (Kang, 2020). Since the students in Indonesia take a role as English Foreign Language (EFL) students, sometimes the teacher needs a hard effort to implement the English learning method to the students at the school.

Based on the previous research, the researchers have found that students at junior high school in Indonesia have difficulties learning English (Elihami, 2017), especially reading skills. The students are not interested in reading by using a printed book. Many of them prefer to play with their gadgets rather than read a book, so they lack reading interest. It shows that teachers have challenges in encouraging students' interest to learn English. By reading activity, the students get information and extend and improve their knowledge and experience. According to Mubarok and Sofiana (2017), reading skills have become an essential skill to be mastered by learners in the educational context nowadays. Therefore, the students need to understand something about the reading process itself. What should the students do when they read? If the teachers have a clear idea of how 'good readers' read, it will help them decide the technique that helps them read.

Teaching reading comprehension is vital for students to elevate their ability to identify the author's ideas. One of the receptive skills is reading skills that students must master reading comprehension. Moreover, Varita (2017) has stated that reading comprehension is the process of concurrent extracting and constructing meaning utilizing interaction and involvement with written language. Furthermore, comprehending is affected by the reader's material reading (Daniarti, 2017). It means that reading comprehension is a fair process because reading is practical for the acquisition of language. It provides that students understand what they read; the more they read, the better they get. Likewise, reading has an affirmative effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, spelling, and writing (Daniarti, 2017). According to Pranowo (2018), reading comprehensions are done by silent reading to capture the meaning of the word (term, phrase, etc.) to grasp the explicit meaning, infer the implicit meaning, summarize, predict, and evaluate.

It is known that nowadays the students enjoy using their gadgets. It seems that the teachers can overcome if they are proficient in utilizing the

internet and computer applications in the students' learning process. In a sense, teachers should integrate supportive technology, problem-based approaches, and higher-order thinking skills (Cakrawati, 2017). Based on these problems, the researcher is interested in developing students' reading skills by using Audiobooks apps. Moreover, this research investigates that students could significantly develop their reading skills by reading English stories with Audiobooks apps.

METHODS

The research applies the case study method because it carries out a limited scale (Aprianti, 2017). A case study could be defined as exploring multiple cases over time through detailed and in-depth data collection implicating multiple sources of information-rich in context. Moreover, a researcher may use multiple sources of information to gather data; observations, interviews, audio-visual materials, documents, and reports. The descriptive statistic provides primary information of participants' numbers in a study, their characteristics, and their effect on a test or outcome. Moreover, the researcher collects the data based on facts in the field.

As the teachers in the research, the researcher uses purposive sampling to get critical information from research participants. The researcher chooses three students of junior high school grade 7 at SMP 12 Tangerang as the research's participants. The method instruments use triangulation sources or multiple sources; they read surveys using the reading tests, interviews, and observations collecting the data from the field to prove the research's aims (Nuraini, Mulyana, & Aeni, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research aims to investigate students' reading skills that could significantly develop by reading English stories with Audiobooks apps. Observations, tests, and interviews present the result of this research. The research's observation has been enforced twice; the first observation is on Monday, May 27th, 2019. The second observation is on Tuesday, May 28th, 2019.

There are three aspects of the learning process in these observations, such as the seriousness of the students in the learning process, the enthusiasm of the students when doing the task, and students' participation in the learning process. Moreover, the aspect of the seriousness of students in the learning process divided into four parts, such as (a) giving attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction; (b) making comments or asking the question about the text to the teacher; (c) giving attention to the friend's opinion; and (d) commenting or asking the question about the text their friends. The second aspects (the

enthusiasm of the students when doing tasks) of the learning process is divided into five parts, such as (a) trying to understand the instruction by using various learning aids; (b) taking notes whatever they think necessary; (c) using various aids to accomplish the task, for example, dictionaries, textbooks, worksheets; (d) actively investigating the topic; and (e) actively discussing with the teachers and friend. Furthermore, the third aspect (students' participation in the learning process) is divided into two parts, such as (a) the students' participation in asking the question; and (b) students' answer the question from the teacher.

In the first observation, the teachers give an introduction to the Audiobooks application to the students. The first activity is the participants download the Audiobooks application on their cellphone. After that, the teachers begin teaching material using English story with Audiobooks application. Before the participants read the English story, the teachers explain the story's contents, starting from the characters, events, plot, and place. The English story's title is *Treasure Island, Chapter 1: At the Admiral Benbow*. The participants read and listen to it with this app and then discuss the story's contents with other participants.

After that, the participants answer the multiple-choice questions in Test 1 related to that English story. After that, they write a summary of the English story. When the participants summarize the story, only one participant pretty well sums up the story, and the other participants hesitate to compile their summary. It can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 The Result of The First Observation

No	Learning Process	Percentage
1	The seriousness of the students in learning process	
	a. Giving attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction	88%
	b. Making comments or asking the question about the text to the teacher	40%
	c. Giving attention to friend's opinion	50%
	d. Commenting or asking questions about the text of their friends	80%
2	The enthusiasm of the students when doing tasks	
	a. Triying to understand the instruction by using various learning aids (dictionary, book, text, etc., asking teacher or friends whenever they do not understand)	85%
	b. Taking notes whatever they think important	35%

Table 1 The Result of The First Observation
(Continued)

No	Learning Process	Percentage
	c. Using various aids to accomplish their tasks, for example, dictionaries, texkbooks, worksheet, etc.	88%
	d. Actively investigating the topic	30%
	e. Actively discussing with teachers and friends	45%
3.	Students' participation in the learning process	
	a. The students' participation in asking the question	50%
	b. Students answer the question from the teacher	70%
	TOTAL	660%
	AVERAGE SCORE	60%

Table 1 shows that the lowest of the participants' response in the learning process is actively investigating English story at Audiobooks (30%). It means that the participants are not enthusiastic about doing the tasks. Moreover, there are some indicators in the learning process needed to improve in the next observation, such as making comments or asking the question about the text to the teacher (40%), taking notes (35%), and actively having a discussion with the teachers and friend (40%). Besides, the highest of participants' responses in the learning process are giving attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction; and the students' enthusiasm when doing tasks by using various aids to accomplish their task (88%). It means that the participants have a good interest in trying to understand the lesson.

Most of the time in this activity, participants focus on looking for the text meaning in English stories. They try to understand the instruction using various learning aids (85%) and commenting or asking the text's question with their friend (80%). These activities sometimes are punctuated by small discussions and are entirely enjoyable in the learning process.

In the second observation, the participants are given a different story in Audiobooks entitled *Treasure Island, Chapter 2: Black Dog Appears and Disappears*. Then, they read and listen to this story. After that, they try understanding the story and answer the multiple-choice questions in Test 2. Those questions are based on that English story. After that, the participants write the summary and read it to the researcher and other students. When the students read their summary of an English story, two students look confident and make the summary almost right. The comparison of the result of observation between the first observation and the second observation can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that all of the learning processes

for each indicator increases. The highest development is 25% in the third aspect for taking notes if they think essential. The highest development in the first aspect is making comments or asking the text to the teacher and giving attention to the friend's opinion (10%). The lowest development is commenting or asking questions about the text to their friends (2%). On the other hand, the participants have a good sense of seriousness in the learning process. The second aspect's highest development is taking notes if they think essential (25%), and the lowest improvement is using various aids to accomplish their task, for example, dictionaries, textbooks, worksheets, and others (2%). It means that the participants have great enthusiasm when doing the tasks. Moreover, the third aspect's highest development is the students' participation in asking the question (15%), and the lowest development is that students answer the teacher's question. It means that the students' participation in the learning process is excellent.

The observations conclude that students' reading skills developed after reading the English story with the Audiobooks application. The first observation's result indicates 660% with an average score of 60%, and the second observation is 720% with an average score of 65,4%. Furthermore, the development of the student learning process in the second observation increases by 5,4%. It proves that there has a reasonably positive change in students' interest in reading the English text.

The researcher gives tests to the participants in the research. The tests consist of two-part; there are test 1 and test 2. By making the tests more reflective of situations, language content, and purposes, the teacher will make more accurate predictions about how the students will function using the target language in real life (Nazari, Bayati, & Rajabi, 2021). According to Raharjo, Yuliana, and Yudha (2018), providing quality education cannot be separated from the standard measures (KKM/*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*). On the other hand, the tests' goal is to note and measure the development of participants' reading skills with Audiobooks apps.

The participants answer the tests while getting the observations from the researchers. The tests are multiple-choice questions that included the topic, characters, events, plot, and English story in the Audiobooks app. After doing tests, participants write a summary of the story and then read it in front of the class. The frequency distribution and percentage of the students' reading development of test 1 can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that all participants' reading skills do not achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM). The participants still lack the meaning of vocabularies; they are still confused about investigating the story's topic. Moreover, they are not active in asking or having a discussion with their friends or teacher. At the next meeting, the teachers should be more interactive than before to help them by giving instruction or comments in the learning process. The frequency distribution and percentage of

Table 2 Comparison of the Result between the First Observation and the Second Observation

Aspects	Indicators	Percentage Observation 1	Observation 2	Change
The seriousness of the students in learning process	a. Giving attention to the teacher's explanation and instruction	88%	92%	+4
	b. Making comments or asking the question about the text to the teacher	40%	50%	+10
	c. Giving attention to friend's opinion	50%	60%	+10
	d. Commenting or asking questions about the text of their friends	80%	82%	+2
The enthusiasm of the students when doing tasks	a. Trying to understand the instruction by using various learning aids (dictionary, book, text, Etc., asking teacher or friends whenever they do not understand).	85%	88%	+3
	b. Taking notes whatever they think important.	35%	60%	+25
	c. Using variuos aids to accomplish their tasks, for example, dictionaries, texkbooks, worksheet, etc.	88%	90%	+2
	d. Actively investigating the topic.	30%	55%	+25
	e. Actively discussing with tutors and friends	45%	50%	+5
Students' participation in the learning process	a. The students' participation in asking the questions.	50%	65%	+15
	b. Students answer the question from the teacher.	70%	80%	+10
	TOTAL	660%	720%	+60
	AVERAGE	60%	65,4%	+5,4

Table 3 The Frequency Distribution and Percentage of the Students' Reading Development of Test 1

Classification	Score interval	Frequency	Percentage
The students that exceed the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≥ 70	-	-
The students that achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	= 70	-	-
The students that did not achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≤ 70	3	100 %
Total		3	100 %

the students' reading development of the second test can be seen in Table 4. Table 4 indicates that there is a significant development of the participants' reading skills. Two participants have achieved the KKM, and one participant has exceeded the KKM. The frequency distribution and percentage after the teaching and learning process of test 1 and test 2 can be seen in Table 5. Table 5 shows a significant development of the participants' reading skills with Audiobooks apps from test 1 and test 2. It shows that 100% of participants do not achieve the KKM in test 1. Compared with test 2, 75% of participants have achieved the KKM, and 25% of participants have exceeded the KKM. Furthermore, there is no participant who does not achieve the KKM in test 2.

The participants' interview is on Wednesday, May 29th, 2019, after some observations and tests. The interview questions are the open-ended questionnaire that consists of several questions (Januarty, 2018). Furthermore, the researcher interviews the participants personally. The researcher asks the participants; (1) Do you like reading English? (2) Have you read the English story? (3) Why do you like/do not like reading English Story? (4) Do you have difficulties reading English Story? (5) What difficulties do you have when reading English stories? (6) Do you know Audiobooks apps? (7) What is your opinion of these apps?

The first participant's answer can be seen in this

Table 4 The Frequency Distribution and Percentage of
Students' Reading Development of the Second Test

Classification	Score interval	Frequency	Percentage
The students that exceed the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≥ 70	1	25%
The students that achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	= 70	2	75%
The students that did not achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≤ 70	-	-
Total		**3**	**100%**

Table 5 The Frequency Distribution and Percentage after Teaching and Learning Process
of Test 1 and Test 2

Classification	Score interval	Frequency		Percentage	
		Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2
The students that exceed the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≥ 70	-	1	-	25%
The students that achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	= 70	-	2	-	75%
The students that did not achieve the Standard Minimum Score (KKM)	≤ 70	3	-	100%	-
Total		**3**	**3**	**100%**	**100%**

excerpt. The student AM interview could conclude that AM feels comfortable reading by using English story with the Audiobooks app. The audio feature could help him not be bored in reading English text.

"I like reading English because I have read an English story. It is exciting because this application has audio so I can listen too. Listening to the sound did not bore me, especially with a real English accent. Sometimes I have difficulties in understanding the story. The stories are too long. Nevertheless, I can use translation or discussing it with my friends. It helped me more comfortable to understand the contents of the reading in Audiobooks."

Next is student FA. The interview has concluded that student FA enjoys reading by using English stories with the Audiobooks app. The features like audio and online translations in this app could help him to increase his reading English text motivation.

"Now, I like reading English, even though I have not read an English story before. It is a nice activity, and I am not bored or sleepy when I read it. This app helped me know how to read and speak English well because the audio is available in this app. The audio helped me how to learn to pronounce too. We could repeat the speaker's sound over and over. However, I have difficulties in understanding the story. I should ask somebody or look for the translation on the internet. There were many unfamiliar words in

this English story. I think I will be a good reader someday."

Interview with student RDA who achieved standard Minimum Score (KKM) can be seen in this excerpt. It is concluded that student RDA enjoys reading by using English story with Audiobooks. However, she needs a long time to understand the English story. However, a small discussion with her friend or teacher, the audio and online translation features in this app could help her solve the reading problems.

"I like reading a novel in the Indonesian language, but it is my first time reading an English story with Audiobooks. I need a long time to understand this story. I have to find the meaning of almost all of the words in this text. I think I should be an independent learner by using online translation. However, sometimes my friends and teacher keep help and guide me. Nevertheless, I am interested in this application. It is easy to use. I could study reading, listening, and speaking too by Audiobooks. The audio helped us study pronunciation by listening to the native speaker's record, and we spoke while reading the English story."

Based on these interviews, it could be concluded that three participants give positive responses to the reading lesson by using English story with Audiobooks apps. They enjoy reading the English story, and the Audiobooks application is efficient to use. Besides, in

the learning process and interviews, the participants are enthusiastic and comfortable reading English stories (Putri, Widia, & Santoso, 2019) with Audiobooks application. The research implies that the participants have a good experience when they read while listening to the story. They could learn two skills (reading and listening) of English story simultaneously because of the Audiobooks app provided by transcription, audio, and an audiobook file. Moreover, while the students learn English story text, they could get many information and knowledge, although in a different language (Hanifah, Mulyana, & Nuraini, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

According to the test results, the participants have achieved and exceeded the KKM. As the last test (test 2), 75% of participants have achieved the KKM, and 25% of participants have exceeded the KKM. Furthermore, no participant does not achieve the KKM in the last test. As the research results, the use of Audiobooks apps develops students' reading skills. It is recommended that the teacher creatively finds some exciting applications that could motivate students to read English. The media or application in the learning process should be efficient, flexible, and accessible. It hopes the students would be more interested, active, and excited in the learning process.

The limitation of the research is focused on students' reading skills. Observations show that the students' reading skills developed by using the Audiobook application. The changes in the student learning process' development in the last observation has increased by 5,4%. It proves a reasonably positive change in the development of students' interest in reading the English text, due to students' high motivation to read English stories and supported by Audiobooks application that efficiently used.

According to the research, future research about media or applications for language education will be needed to develop the students' reading skills. Media or applications provide hope for EFL students and teachers to facilitate the learning process at home and school.

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