

The Role of Audio Visual Media in Supporting English Pronunciation: A Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

This study explores students' experiences and perceptions of using audio-visual media in supporting their pronunciation skills. A qualitative descriptive design is used to capture detailed and nuanced insights into participants' experiences. Ten undergraduate students majoring in English Education were purposefully selected as participants to provide in-depth perspectives. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, which encouraged open discussions while addressing themes closely aligned with the research objectives. This study reveals that students commonly use YouTube videos, language learning apps like Duolingo, and movies or TV shows as audio visual media to practice pronunciation. They also employ techniques such as mimicking native speakers, shadowing, and recording and playback to refine their speech. As a result, students report noticeable improvements in articulation, clarity, intonation, and fluency. The combination of exposure to authentic speech patterns, feedback, and consistent practice enables students to enhance their pronunciation, gain confidence in speaking, and communicate more naturally. These findings underscore the value of integrating audio-visual media into pronunciation practice for English learners.

Keywords: Audio Visual, Media, English Pronunciation

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengalaman dan persepsi mahasiswa mengenai penggunaan media audio-visual untuk mendukung keterampilan pengucapan. Desain penelitian deskriptif kualitatif digunakan untuk memperoleh wawasan mendalam dari sepuluh mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang dipilih secara sengaja. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa sering menggunakan video YouTube, aplikasi seperti Duolingo, serta film atau acara TV sebagai media untuk berlatih pengucapan. Teknik yang digunakan termasuk meniru penutur asli, shadowing, serta merekam dan memutar ulang. Mahasiswa melaporkan adanya peningkatan dalam artikulasi, kejernihan, intonasi, dan kelancaran berbicara. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya media audio-visual dalam praktik pengucapan bagi pembelajar bahasa Inggris.

Katakunci : Audio visual, media dan pengucapan Bahasa Inggris

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly advancing digital era, innovation in education has become essential to improving the quality of learning. One increasingly popular solution is the use of audio-visual media to support learning processes. Audio-visual media, as defined by Hardjito (2004), refers to a medium that combines both visual and auditory elements to present concrete experiences, aiming to clarify abstract concepts and

facilitate learning. Yadi (2022) and Melati (2017) defines audio-visual media as tools that deliver content through both visual and auditory channels, such as videos and recordings, making learning more effective and engaging. Hamdani (2011) and Rakmanina (2024) further elaborates that audio-visual media engages the senses of hearing and sight simultaneously, creating a more immersive learning experience. In the context of language learning, particularly English, audio-visual media plays a significant role in facilitating students' acquisition of essential language skills, including pronunciation. Accurate pronunciation is crucial for effective communication in English, and utilizing media that combines visual and auditory input can enhance students' ability to recognize and replicate proper pronunciation.

The importance of audio-visual media in language learning is highlighted by several studies. Nafizha and Lubis (2023) emphasize that audio-visual media can utilize both sight and hearing simultaneously, increasing students' comprehension and retention of material. Furthermore, Herlina (2014) points out that audio-visual media can help students grasp English pronunciation more effectively by providing clear examples of intonation, word stress, and articulation. Such media provide learners with authentic language input, which is essential for improving pronunciation accuracy.

Pronunciation is often one of the most challenging aspects of learning English for non-native speakers. Kobilova (2022) explains that mispronunciations can lead to misunderstandings in communication. Additionally, Srakaew (2021) notes that English has phonemes that do not exist in many learners' native languages, creating further difficulties in mastering pronunciation. These challenges underscore the need for innovative and interactive learning tools, such as the use of audio-visual media, to support pronunciation learning.

While there is a growing body of research on the use of audio-visual media in language learning, there remains a gap in studies specifically examining students' experiences using audio-visual media to improve pronunciation. Most existing studies focus on overall language acquisition or general listening skills rather than exploring pronunciation as a distinct component of language proficiency. For instance, Mutia et al. (2020) found that audio-visual media increased students' learning interest compared to traditional methods. However, their research did not specifically investigate students' personal experiences with these tools in improving pronunciation.

Understanding students' experiences and perceptions of using audio-visual media is crucial to evaluating its practical effectiveness in improving pronunciation. This includes exploring how students use audio-visual media independently to practice pronunciation. Investigating these experiences will provide valuable insights into the practical usability and impact of audio-visual media in real-world language learning settings.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of audio-visual media in supporting English pronunciation improvement among English education students, focusing on two research questions: (1) How do English Education students use audio-visual media to improve their pronunciation skills? (2) What improvements in pronunciation do English Education students notice after using audio-visual media for practice? By focusing on students' experiences and perceptions, this study aims to fill the research gap and provide practical recommendations for incorporating audio-visual media in pronunciation instruction.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design to explore the perceptions of English Education students regarding the use of audio-visual media in enhancing their pronunciation skills. Qualitative research is particularly effective for capturing detailed, nuanced understandings of participants' experiences, as noted by Creswell and Guetterman (2019). This method enables researchers to delve into the complexities of students' independent learning processes and the subjective ways they engage with audio-visual media to improve pronunciation.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select ten undergraduate students majoring in English Education as participants. Patton (2015) emphasizes that purposive sampling focuses on obtaining in-depth insights rather than broad generalizations, making it suitable for qualitative studies. Participants were chosen based on their willingness to share their personal experiences using audio-visual media for pronunciation practice. The sample included students from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, and academic progress to provide a comprehensive and well-rounded perspective.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to openly share their insights while addressing specific themes relevant to the research questions. The interview guide covered topics such as the effectiveness of audio-visual media, the types of media frequently used, and how these tools support their pronunciation learning process.

To analyze the data, thematic analysis was utilized. This process involved coding the interview transcripts, identifying recurring patterns, and interpreting these themes to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions and experiences. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, validation techniques such as member checking and peer debriefing were employed.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the purpose of the research and their rights as participants. Their confidentiality was guaranteed, and they were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study examines how English Education students at Universitas Nias utilize audio-visual media to improve their pronunciation skills. The findings, derived from interviews, shed light on the types of media students use, the techniques they employ, the features they find most beneficial, and the improvements they notice in their pronunciation. These results provide a comprehensive understanding of how these media facilitate pronunciation practice and the associated challenges. Below are the specific results related to the research questions:

How do English Education students use audio-visual media to improve their pronunciation skills?

As students integrate these techniques into their learning routines, they rely on various audio-visual media to support their pronunciation practice. These media tools provide valuable exposure to authentic language use and allow students to tailor their learning to their individual needs. This section will explore the specific types of media students commonly use, including YouTube videos, language learning apps, and movies, as well as the techniques they apply, such as mimicking native speakers, shadowing, and recording their speech. Through these methods, students gain deeper insights into pronunciation and work to refine their speaking skills.

a. Types of Media Used

1. YouTube Videos

Here are related responses from participants:

"I mainly watch YouTube videos by native speakers. They help me understand how words should sound in different contexts."

"I find YouTube really useful, especially channels that focus on pronunciation exercises. The slow-motion options allow me to catch difficult sounds."

"I watch TED Talks and other presentations on YouTube. It gives me exposure to clear, formal speech and helps me pick up on subtle pronunciation cues."

The responses indicate that students use YouTube videos to gain exposure to natural speech from native speakers. According to Wahyuni et al. (2021), YouTube is an online video platform that can be used to practice speaking skills and improve pronunciation. Additionally, Chowdhury (2019) highlights that YouTube has become a fundamental platform for knowledge sharing and an effective learning tool. Students can upload and watch videos from various fields, as well as acquire new skills through tutorials. The flexibility of pausing, rewinding, and adjusting playback speed allows students to slow down challenging pronunciations and focus on them. This shows that students value having control over their learning pace while observing authentic pronunciation models.

2. Language Learning Apps

Here are related responses from participants:

"I use Duolingo to practice words and phrases, and I find its speech recognition feature helps me figure out where I'm making mistakes."

"I like Duolingo because it breaks words down into smaller parts. The practice sessions help me with accurate pronunciation."

The responses indicate that apps like Duolingo offers students immediate feedback, enabling them to assess and correct their pronunciation in real-time. Duolingo presents a variety of challenges, including translation, pronunciation, listening, and writing (Chuyen et al., 2021). These apps also provide a personalized learning experience by adapting to the student's skill level and addressing their pronunciation errors, making them powerful tools for pronunciation improvement.

1) Movies and TV Shows

Here are related responses from participants:

"I watch English movies, especially with subtitles. It helps me hear the words and read them simultaneously, improving my pronunciation."

"I love watching TV shows with diverse characters. It's interesting to pick up different accents and speech patterns."

"Watching TV shows with natural conversations has really helped me get a feel for how native speakers naturally flow in their speech."

These findings suggest that movies and TV shows expose students to informal, natural conversation, which is vital for understanding everyday pronunciation. Watching characters in various social situations helps students recognize different accents, stress patterns, and speech rhythms, enhancing real-world communication. Subtitles reinforce pronunciation by providing written cues alongside auditory input. Agatha (2023) highlights that hearing unfamiliar vocabulary in movies aids pronunciation, while Alolaywi (2023) notes that movies also improve speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Hidayat (2023) adds that students enjoy learning pronunciation through audio-visual media due to its relaxed, unconscious learning process.

b. Techniques Employed

1) Mimicking Native Speakers

Here are related responses from participants:

"I often mimic native speakers from YouTube videos. It helps me learn how to pronounce words and sentences like they do, and I feel like it makes my speaking sound more natural."

"When I watch English movies, I pause the video and repeat what the characters say, copying their pronunciation exactly. This has helped me a lot with my fluency."

"Mimicking is really helpful for me. I watch TED Talks and repeat the sentences right after the speaker. It helps me get the flow and intonation right."

The responses suggest that mimicking native speakers is a key technique for many students. By repeating sentences and focusing on correct pronunciation, students improve their articulation and develop a more native-like accent, while also enhancing their understanding of rhythm and stress patterns. Rajaguguk (2024) notes that films provide not only pronunciation practice but also cultural and contextual elements that enrich learning. Mardiah (2023) highlights that mimicking English in videos significantly impacts pronunciation, emphasizing the importance of exposure to authentic language. This technique helps students internalize everyday expressions, intonation, and speech rhythms, while films offer real-life scenarios and idiomatic expressions not found in textbooks. Regular practice with native pronunciation encourages a more natural-sounding voice and improves fluency by familiarizing students with stress and intonation nuances.

2) Shadowing

Here are related responses from participants:

"I use shadowing a lot, especially when watching YouTube videos. I try to speak along with the video, matching the speaker's speed and intonation."

"Shadowing really helps me. I listen to a speaker's sentences and repeat them immediately. It improves my pronunciation and helps me understand their natural flow."

"Shadowing helps me with the pacing of speech. When I listen to podcasts or TED Talks, I try to say the words right after the speaker, and that helps me sound more fluent."

These findings demonstrate that shadowing helps students improve their pronunciation and synchronize their speech patterns with native speakers. Shadowing is an advanced language-learning technique where students repeat verbal expressions to enhance intonation and pronunciation (Putri, 2024). Research by Putri et al. (2024) in *The Use of Shadowing Technique to Improve Students' Speaking Skills* showed that students' speaking abilities improved significantly, with pretest scores averaging 51.00 and post-test scores in the experimental class reaching a mean of 67.43. Similarly, Rosyidi (2022) found that students at the Nusantara Global Education Institute rated the shadowing technique as highly effective, with a 97% positive perception. Shiota (in Putri, 2024) argues that shadowing is a valuable technique for improving performance skills, especially for students struggling with fluency or keeping pace in natural conversations. By repeating speech in real time, students become more attuned to rhythm, stress, and pauses in English.

3) Recording and Playback

Here are related responses from participants:

"I often record myself while repeating sentences from YouTube videos. When I listen to the recording, I can spot my mistakes and work on them."

"I record myself speaking and then listen to it. Sometimes, I don't realize I'm mispronouncing words until I hear it back."

"I record myself saying words and then compare them to how native speakers say them in movies or TV shows. This technique has helped me a lot to notice the subtle differences in pronunciation."

The use of recording and playback allows students to critically assess their pronunciation by comparing their recordings with native models, helping them identify areas for improvement. Wardana explains that recording helps students become accustomed to listening to correct pronunciation, improving their sensitivity to intonation, rhythm, and word stress. Regularly listening to their recordings helps students recognize and understand English pronunciation more effectively. This technique provides a clear sample of native speakers, aiding in better pronunciation. Siregar (2023) states that voice recording technology also helps students practice intonation, word stress, and consonant and vowel sounds, all crucial for speaking English well. Furthermore, it allows students to track their progress over time, boosting motivation and reinforcing proper pronunciation habits.

What improvements in pronunciation do English Education students notice after using audio-visual media for practice?

As students engage in these techniques and consistently use audio-visual media, they begin to notice significant improvements in several areas of their pronunciation. These improvements typically involve greater accuracy in articulation, better control of intonation and stress, and increased fluency in speaking. The techniques employed, combined with regular practice, contribute to these advancements. The following are the key improvements that students report:

1) Articulation and Clarity

Here are related responses from participants:

"I can now articulate the 'th' sound much better. I used to pronounce it like a 't,' but after mimicking native speakers, it's more accurate."

"I've worked on my pronunciation of 'v' and 'w.' My friends say I sound clearer now, and I think I'm more confident when I speak."

"Mimicking native speakers and shadowing helped me articulate words with 'r' sounds. I used to struggle with that, but now it's much clearer."

These responses indicate that students experience noticeable improvements in articulating difficult sounds through techniques like mimicking and shadowing, helping them overcome pronunciation challenges and make their speech more intelligible. Rahman et al. (2024) support this, stating that clarity of articulation is key in vocal technique. Articulation involves pronouncing words clearly, focusing on each letter, word, and sentence. Practicing vowels and similar sounds helps students understand how each sound is produced, improving pronunciation clarity. Additionally, Gündüz et al. (2024) note that articulation is related to motor performance and reflects the speed of syllable production, independent of personal factors like hesitation, pauses, or emotions. This suggests that good articulation not only enhances clarity but also contributes to fluency and effective communication.

2) Intonation

Here are related responses from participants:

"I've learned to use the right intonation for questions. I used to speak with a flat tone, but now I raise my voice at the end of questions."

"Intonation was always a challenge for me, but after practicing shadowing, I can now match the rise and fall of pitch like a native speaker."

"I'm more confident using the right intonation now. I used to get nervous and would end up speaking with a monotonous tone, but now I can make my speech sound more lively."

These responses indicate that students have developed a better understanding of intonation patterns and can now use them effectively in their speech. Proper intonation enhances emotional depth and clarity, making speech more engaging and easier to understand. Haycraft (1971) in Purba (2020) supports this, explaining that intonation is the pitch variation in a sentence, similar to the rise and fall of notes in music. It involves the movement between high and low tones, with English having two basic tones: falling and rising. Intonation is essential for expressing thoughts and understanding others. Additionally, Adawiyah et al. (2023) describe intonation as the combination of pitch that makes speech sound pleasant and lively, helping convey the speaker's emotions and intent, and ensuring the message is received effectively.

3) Fluency

Here are related responses from participants:

"I've gotten much more fluent. I don't hesitate as much anymore, and my sentences flow better."

"Before, I used to stop and think too much about how to pronounce words. Now, after practicing with videos, I speak much faster and smoother."

"Fluency has been one of my biggest improvements. Shadowing has helped me match the pacing of native speakers, so I can speak more naturally."

These responses suggest that students are becoming more fluent in their speech, meaning they can speak more naturally and quickly without overthinking pronunciation. This improvement is essential for effective communication, as fluency allows students to converse more easily and confidently.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the effective role of audio-visual media in enhancing pronunciation skills among English Education students at Universitas Nias. Through the use of YouTube videos, language learning apps, and movies or TV shows, students engage in varied and interactive methods of pronunciation practice. Techniques like mimicking, shadowing, and recording allow for deeper learning and self-assessment, leading to tangible improvements in articulation, intonation, and fluency. The findings suggest that the flexibility and diverse features of these media not only provide exposure to native-like pronunciation but also offer students personalized feedback, which contributes significantly to their pronunciation development. Ultimately, integrating audio-visual media into language learning practices can be an effective strategy for improving pronunciation and fostering greater confidence in speaking English.

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