



THE INFLUENCES OF USING PODCASTS ON IMPROVING ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS

PENGARUH PENGGUNAAN PODCAST TERHADAP PENINGKATAN KETERAMPILAN MENDENGARKAN BAHASA INGGRIS

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Abstract

Listening is essential for English learners, aiding in understanding spoken language and enhancing overall proficiency. Despite its significance, it is often seen as challenging and underemphasized in classrooms. Factors affecting listening comprehension include pronunciation, vocabulary, and individual differences. Modern platforms like podcasts offer flexible and convenient ways to practice listening skills, showing significant improvement in learners. Recognizing individual differences highlights the need for diverse teaching strategies. Further research on using podcasts to improve English listening skills is crucial for enhancing language learning.

Keywords: Use of Podcasts, Listening Skills, English

Abstrak

Mendengarkan sangat penting bagi pelajar bahasa Inggris, membantu dalam memahami bahasa lisan dan meningkatkan kemahiran secara keseluruhan. Meskipun penting, hal ini sering dianggap menantang dan kurang ditekankan di kelas. Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemahaman mendengarkan termasuk pengucapan, kosa kata, dan perbedaan individu. Platform modern seperti podcast menawarkan cara yang fleksibel dan nyaman untuk melatih keterampilan mendengarkan, sehingga menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan pada peserta didik. Mengenali perbedaan individu menyoroti perlunya strategi pengajaran yang beragam. Penelitian lebih lanjut tentang penggunaan podcast untuk meningkatkan keterampilan mendengarkan bahasa Inggris sangat penting untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran bahasa

Kata Kunci: Penggunaan Podcast, Keterampilan Mendengarkan, Bahasa Inggris

INTRODUCTION

Listening is widely recognized as a crucial skill for English learners acquiring a second language. It involves recognizing and understanding spoken language, which enhances overall proficiency. Effective listening allows learners to grasp the true meaning of information, making it a fundamental aspect of language learning. Despite its importance, listening is often seen as one of the most challenging skills to master (Nisa, Izzah, & Hadi 2022).

Pratiwi, Hidayati, and Gusnadi (2024) state that "Listening comprehension is vital for internalizing linguistic information necessary for language production. Although its significance in



language teaching is well-established, many students do not give it enough attention in classrooms (Utomo, Kusmaryati, & Sulistyowati 2019). This view is echoed by Kasim and Luwiti (2020), who highlight that listening comprehension is more difficult for some students than many teachers might assume" (p. 17). We share this view, acknowledging that listening is critical yet underemphasized in educational settings.

Several factors affect students' listening comprehension. Comprehending the pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and overall meaning conveyed by a speaker is essential in listening comprehension. This task poses challenges for students, particularly when the speaker is a fluent native speaker of a foreign language. Moreover, individual differences among listeners, such as age, emotional state, listening proficiency, status, information processing, and filtering, can impede effective communication (Rismayanti, 2018).

In today's modern era, English listening skills can be practiced at any time, in any place, and in various ways. This is largely due to platforms like Spotify, digital music, podcasts, and video streaming services, which offer content from artists worldwide (Nisa, Izzah, & Hadi 2022). These platforms offer a wide range of content, providing ample opportunities to practice listening in various contexts. Podcasts, in particular, are an effective tool for improving listening comprehension because they offer flexibility and convenience, allowing learners to practice anywhere and anytime. According to Jovanović (2021), the term podcast combines "pod" from iPod, a popular MP3 player, and "broadcasting." Despite the name originating from iPod, it is not necessary to own an iPod to listen to podcasts; they can be accessed on computers, mobile devices, or other MP3 players. This view is supported by Indahsari (2020), who explained that podcasts are distributed via the internet and can be played on mobile devices or personal computers (PCs). As long as there is internet access, one can listen to podcasts without needing an iPod.

Educational podcasts are particularly effective for improving listening comprehension. They offer a flexible and convenient way to practice, allowing learners to choose content that interests them and fits into their schedules. Podcasts provide exposure to different accents, speech patterns, and vocabulary, helping learners adapt to various forms of spoken English. Studies support the positive impact of podcasts: a study by Rizqika Amalia (2023) found that 77% of students believed podcasts helped improve their listening skills, and 37% reported noticeable improvement with regular listening. Another study concluded that podcasts are an efficient medium for learning listening skills, with students viewing them as an innovative and versatile tool for online education.

Podcasts can serve as an alternative to traditional radio, offering a wide range of topics and making them a convenient tool for enhancing listening skills. However, effectiveness varies among learners. Some may fully understand content on the first listen, while others may only partially understand or struggle significantly. Recognizing these individual differences highlights the need for diverse teaching strategies.

Further research, such as the proposed study on the "The Influence of Using Podcasts on Improving English Listening Skills," is necessary. By exploring this topic, educators can better understand how to use podcasts to enhance listening skills and adapt teaching methods to meet



diverse needs. We support this research initiative, believing it will provide valuable insights for improving listening instruction in language learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The approach that the researcher used in this research was quantitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2007:13) research data on quantitative approach in the form of numbers and analysis using statistics. This research design applied pre-experimental research. The researcher put one group and used pre-test and post-test to see the results of the test. The researcher wanted to focus on conducting this research in one place.

O1 : Pre-Test

X : Treatment

O2 : Post-Test

Research Design

2. Research Place

This research was conducted at STKIP Muhammadiyah Pagar Alam. It is located at Pagar Alam, Sumatera Selatan.

3. Population & Sample

The population of this research is students from Class of 2024 at SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam.

In order to get the sample, this study used Cluster Random sampling technique. It is a sampling technique where the number of samples is equal to the population. The sample was chosen students from class TKJT 2024 of totaling 25 People.

4. Instruments of the Research

In collecting data for this study, the researcher used quantitative approach. The specification of the analysis is quantitative approach. The data were obtained by using pretest, treatment, post-test.



5. Procedure of Collecting Data

Pre-test and post-test has given to evaluate whether there was a significant difference between student score and after the effects of audio podcasts on English listening skills students”

6. Technique of Data Analysis

a. Pre-test and Post-test

In data analysis, the data were collected through pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, and T-test calculated using SPSS.

b. Data Analysis

1. Scoring the students percentage listening of Pre-test and Post-test.

$$\text{Percentage of students} = \frac{\text{Students correct answer}}{\text{Total of Number}} \times 100$$

Gay, 2016

c. Rating Scale Classification

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	A	93-100	0	0%
2.	A-	84-92	0	0%
3.	B	75-83	1	4%
4.	B-	≤75	24	96%
	Total		25	100%

Pre-test Classification (Findings)

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	A	93-100	2	8%
2.	A-	84-92	5	20%
3.	B	75-83	5	20%
4.	B-	≤75	13	52%
	Total		25	100%

Post- test Classification Score (Findings)



1. The students listening score in fluency

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre Test	51.76	24	21.541	4.397
	Post Test	63.63	24	25.179	5.140

The table shows that the mean score of pretest was 51.76 and the standard deviation was 21.541, while the mean score of post-test was 63.63 and the standard deviation was 25.179. One might say that the understudies listening expertise has a significant effect after giving treatment by using audio podcast on the listening listening skill student.

2. The students listening score in accuracy

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences						Sig. (2-	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre Test -						.23	.001	
	Post Test	-11.863	14.717	3.004	-18.077	-5.648			

DISCUSSION

The researcher utilized podcasts as a treatment to teach listening comprehension. Students were given a listening comprehension test twice: once before the treatments (pre-test) and once after the treatments (post-test). The pre-test assessed the students' initial listening abilities, followed by two podcast-based treatments. The post-test evaluated the impact of the podcasts on their listening comprehension.

The treatment process was adapted from Harmer (2015). Initially, students were informed that they would receive a podcast link and were asked to predict the content. They then listened to the podcast and discussed the accuracy of their predictions. In the second listening session, they answered questions while listening. During the third session, they listened again with the script provided to check their answers. Students could ask questions and receive explanations from the researcher. Finally, they practiced speaking or imitating the podcast speaker to give and ask for



directions. The treatment focused on detailed listening and comprehension through student-centered activities, with the teacher acting as a facilitator and observer.

The first treatment session was conducted online via Google Meet, which proceeded smoothly. The second session was offline and encountered issues such as network instability and noise, which extended the time needed for the students to hear the podcast.

Data were collected from the pre-test and post-test scores. The mean gain score was 12.24, and the total deviation gain was 8702.061. The t-test value calculated was 4.26, higher than the t-table value of 2.037 at a 0.05 significance level with a degree of freedom (df) of 32. Since the t-test value exceeded the t-table value, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, indicating that the podcast had a significant positive effect on students' listening comprehension.

The findings align with Harahap (2020), who asserted that podcasts are beneficial for EFL learners in developing speaking and listening skills. Podcasts provide access to authentic materials, support self-regulated learning, and foster active learning. This research corroborates that listening to podcasts enhances students' understanding of spoken texts, making it a valuable tool in listening classroom activities.

The pretest results showed that the students' listening skills were poor, with most students struggling to understand what they heard and taking a long time to process the speaker's responses. Only one out of 25 students reached the KKM score, with an average score of 51.76.

After the pretest, the researcher implemented a treatment involving audio podcasts. During this phase, students showed a great appreciation for using audio podcasts to learn English. The medium motivated them, helping them understand and respond quickly, and keeping them engaged without feeling bored or sleepy. This led to increased enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning English.

The post-test results demonstrated significant improvement. Thirteen out of 25 students reached the KKM score, and the average score increased to 63.63. The study findings indicated that audio podcasts could enhance students' listening skills. Trianty R (2018) supports this, stating that podcasts help students develop their listening skills in English. Students in the experimental class enjoyed listening to English discussions more after receiving podcast-based instruction. They found it easier to listen to English spoken in various contexts.

Using audio podcasts for teaching listening can boost student engagement and interest in learning English. Students enjoyed using audio podcasts as learning resources, feeling happy, enthusiastic, and engaged with the speakers. They were also able to understand and retain language from the podcasts. This medium allowed students to practice listening at all levels, making it a useful tool for both students and teachers in the classroom.

According to Vilmante (2009), listening skills can be developed through consistent training, which is crucial for successful communication. Effective listening enhances the ability to learn and adapt to new information, knowledge, and skills.



Podcasts have become a valuable tool for improving listening skills, supported by expert opinions and research in language learning and communication.

Diverse Accents and Speech Patterns, According to language experts, exposure to various accents and speech patterns is crucial for developing robust listening skills. Podcasts offer a wide range of speakers from different regions, providing listeners with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with diverse linguistic variations. This exposure helps learners become more adaptable and better at understanding different speakers in real-life situations.

Authentic Context and Real-life Conversations, Experts emphasize the importance of contextual learning. Podcasts often present information in an engaging and conversational manner, which mirrors real-life communication. Dr. Richard Cauldwell, a prominent phonetician, argues that listening to authentic speech in context allows learners to grasp the meaning more effectively and pick up on the subtleties of the language.

Enhanced Concentration and Comprehension, Research by Dr. Paul Nation, a leading figure in vocabulary acquisition, highlights that regular listening practice helps improve concentration and comprehension skills. Podcasts require active listening, which involves focusing on the content and making sense of it as it unfolds. This process trains the brain to process spoken language more efficiently, leading to better overall listening skills.

Natural Speed and Fluent Speech, Experts also point out that listening to language at its natural speed is beneficial for learners. Podcasts typically feature speakers talking at a normal pace, which challenges listeners to keep up and understand the flow of conversation. This exposure is essential for developing the ability to comprehend fluent speech in everyday situations.

Consistent and Enjoyable Practice, Language acquisition specialists, like Dr. Stephen Krashen, advocate for the importance of enjoyable and consistent practice. Podcasts offer an engaging way to immerse oneself in the language regularly. This consistent exposure not only improves listening skills but also increases motivation and enthusiasm for learning.

In summary, podcasts are highly recommended by language experts for improving listening skills. They provide exposure to diverse accents, authentic context, and natural speech, all of which are critical components for effective language learning. Regularly listening to podcasts can enhance concentration, comprehension, and overall ability to understand spoken language.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Listening to podcasts multiple times helps students become familiar with the topics discussed by the speaker, improving their ability to find detailed information and specific descriptions. This effect is demonstrated by a t-test result higher than the t-table value indicating that podcasts positively impact students' listening comprehension. Based on the results of this research, several suggestions are offered for teachers and future researchers. Teachers should ensure the compatibility of the podcast with learning materials and classroom tasks, establish rules for technology use to prevent misuse, maintain a conducive classroom environment, and use podcasts



as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement. Future researchers should apply this media to other aspects of listening comprehension, different grades or levels, and various types of texts over longer periods. while considering the English proficiency level of the podcast speaker in relation to the students' proficiency levels.

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