

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PODCAST AS A LEARNING MEDIA TO IMPROVE THEIR LISTENING SKILL

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### Abstract

Despite the great number of research that focuses on the effects of Podcast on the student learning, the qualitative analysis that accounts for the students' voices on the role of Podcast in their listening activity is still under investigated. This paper is aimed at identifying the students' perceptions on the use of podcast as media to improve their listening skill. To achieve the objective, the qualitative study was conducted to 2 participants of English Education Department in one of Universities in Garut who were chosen by using purposive sampling. The participants were asked to join the interview and answer 7 guiding questions. The data which were analysed using qualitative analysis showed that the students shared positive views on the topic. In this study, most of the participants claimed that the use of podcast have helped them increase their English listening skill. The possible explanation to the claimed is probably due to the understanding of the participants when they were listening to some vocabularies in audio that using English. Upon exploring the situation, the use of podcast as media to improve student listening skills by the students' perspective can be concluded that it is effective based on their feelings. This study confirms that Podcast is a learning media that can contribute to the development of students' English listening skills.

**Keywords:** *podcast, perceptions, listening skills*

### INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the most important skills in language learning. Rost (1994) from Yildirim and Yildirim (2016) claimed that why learning listening important; the first one listening is one of a vital process which learners get inputs from that, learners also get provided by means of interaction, an authentic one will be provided a native speaker which will be challenging for the learners, and it will help teachers to build attention from the students. Moreover, upgrading the listening skills will help the learners in learning language and they will get some benefits as Mamasharifovich (2020) stated that numerous benefits from listening are; learners will be a better person due to the improving of their listening skills, it will be help the learners to improve their public speaking, and people around them will perceived them as an intelligent one.

To support the process of learning listening, it is necessary to have proper learning media. Azhari and Ming (2015) mentioned that learning a language is supported by three leading media: audio media, visual media, and audiovisual media. One of the modern audio learning media that has recently become popular is Podcast. Palenque (2016) stated that podcasts (the acronym from 'iPod' and 'broadcast') is an audio broadcasts which is shared via the Internet. Podcasts can also be said as a means for today's people to listen to numerous of different kind of podcast channel. According to Sukmawati (2021) that podcasts not only provide audio entertainment but it also provides English learners with thousands of audio to listen to native languages. Therefore, the use of podcast as learning media will help the learners to improve their listening skills.

However, limited informations regarding of the role on podcast on the students learning drives the researchers to conduct the study. A study from Amumpuni (2016) is only focus on The Implementation of Podcast in Teaching Listening at the First Semesters Students of IKIP PGRI

Madiun. Another podcast study from Prasetyo, Vianty and Jaya (2014) is only focus to the use of podcast to improve students' listening comprehension on descriptive text. Although, there are numerous research such as from Awalia (2021) and Rahmatia and Widiastuty (2018) with the title of the study focused on the perception of students in using podcast in listening class. They are little research in search the students perceptions on the use of podcast as a learning media to increase their listening skills. That is why, to fill the gap between the researchs, the researchers determine to focus to the students perceptions on the use podcast as a learning media to improve their listening skills. Specially, the study is projected to answer the following research question "What is the students' perspeptions of Podcast as a learning media to improve their listening skill?".

## **METHODS**

This research used a qualitative research. A qualitative method defines as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. This research was classified into descriptive research which involved collecting data in order to find the answer on the problem statement. As descriptive study, it focused on the students' perception on the use of podcast in listening skill (Creswell, 2009).

The participants involved in this study were two students at a university in Garut. The students selected as participants because all of them had already experienced in using podcast as the media in learning English before. For this study, interview was addressed to obtain data. Interview enable participants to discuss their interpretations and how they perceive the issue from their own point of view (Cohen., 2007). The aim of this research was to find the problems openly where the respondents were asked to give their opinion and ideas. The interview was conducted with two students as samples which were recorded by smartphone. The interview consist of seven questions regarding students' perspectives on implementation, barriers, effectiveness, and benefits of using podcasts as a medium to improve listening skills. Furthermore, the interview data were analyzed by using the transcription and then it was categorized using the coding process.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The use of podcasts in learning listening for college students was the issue this study sought to address. Moreover, this study was conducted through interview proseses which were linked to several theories. Additionally, in order to conduct a more thorough analysis, the implementation, benefits, and the difficulties that the students had using podcasts were also looked at. The result is that there are several theories that are related but there are also some theories that are not.

### **Findings**

The data from the analysis showed that Podcast was used in certain way by the students. The implementation of podcast by the respondents is only listen to the podcast and they will repeat it if there is something that they did not understand as they said in the interview.

R1:

*(...I only listen to it. If I listen to something that I don't understand with the word, I usually repeat the podcast...)*

R2:

*(Let's say that the podcast is 5 minutes long. I will listen it until finish and it continues like that.)*

This is completely different from the suggestions given by Amumpuni (2016) which is stated that there are three steps to teaching listening using podcasts: pre-activity, during-activity, and post-activity. In regards to the implementation of podcast, the study found that the podcast are use in a

simple way-listen it for several times, due to they were not using it in the classroom. It is in line with the statement of (FluentU, 2022). The ways to use podcast based on FluentU are; listen to each podcast for several times, study specialized vocabulary, read the comments and participate on it, and use the podcast as an icebreaker.

Another thing from the use of podcast is about the effectiveness, the podcast has their effectiveness as Saputra (2014) stated that the use of podcast in teaching listening is an effective media to increase the students listening skills. It is in line with the statement by the second participants (R2).

R2:

*(Very effective even though sometimes people think it's boring.)*

However, the first participant (R1), stated that to claim the use of podcast is an effective one is subjective or it is based on the people view.

R1:

*(In my opinion, if it is related to the effectiveness, it may be a question that is too subjective.)*

Considering the statement of the participants, the study find out that the use of podcast in learning listening is an effective way to increase learners listening skills. It is also in line with the study from Lio (2019) in Indahsari (2020) which is concluded that the use of podcast is an effective way in learning language.

The next section of the explanation was concerned with the struggles of the use podcast. Based on study by Asmi (2019) there are 3 obstacles in using podcast media: (1) Rely only on sound (2) Little students will get bored if they only listen to sound and don't add a little music (3) Podcast-based audio media should not be used for material that is too long. Some of those are related to the statement of the participants.

R2:

*(At first, it was a bit difficult to find a platform with podcasts. Second, because in the beginning my listening skills were still minimal, so I didn't quite understand what the podcaster was saying, even though the audio had been played repeatedly and sometimes I got bored if the discussion was too serious. Lastly, sometimes it is difficult to hear a word that you don't understand and after searching for its meaning...)*

R1:

*(Following the path brought by the podcast host is the obstacle.)*

Regarding the interview of participants, it is concluded that participants struggle in learning listening via podcast is caused by the lacking of learners skills in understanding the podcast. It is also in a row with the study by Rachmaniputri, Purnawarman & Gunawan (2021) that the struggles on the use of podcast in learning listening are; the barriers in the information processing, the barriers in English proficiency, material and the medium.

The last finding of this study is about the benefits of the use of podcast to increase listening skills. According to Ahmad, Meng, and Sultan (2020) the benefit of using podcasts is in language learning, it can be linked to podcasts. It is proved by the participants' statements:

R1:

*(The benefits can increase our sensitivity in analyzing what other people are talking about in English. We can also take the context according to what is being discussed. Sometimes, as Indonesians, when we speak English, we only stick to what the word he says means, not what context we are talking about so that we can translate it according to context. Then we can also follow how they talk because by listening we can imitate what they are talking about so that gradually we can also improve our speaking skills.)*

R2:

*(The advantage of listening to podcasts every day is the same as the term "Exercise is make you perfect" and from that it is also very helpful in the spirit of listening to something in English. Second, the ability to listen is easier to understand and understand what is being heard. Learn more about what podcasters mean. When in listening learning class, you can also follow a little further in listening. When you listen to something in any media, you understand a little and know what is being said. Third, in addition to the benefits of improving listening skills, I also feel like I want to be a podcaster who definitely uses English, and is more willing to respond (talk) when listening to something.)*

Even though the theory only mentioned a benefit, but in fact there are more than one benefit which people get from the use of podcast to increase the listening skills. Based on the participants claimed, the benefits of using podcast in learning listening are increasing our listening skills and help the learners to learn listening easier. It is in line with the study by Sansinadi, Whardany & Winarko (2020) that stated the benefits of using podcast in learning listening is made the students easier to learn listening.

## **Discussion**

In this part, the researcher discussed the research findings. This study aims to determine students' perceptions of the use of podcasts as a medium to help improve listening skills. Data obtained from interviews on samples that already meet the criteria. Based on the above findings on the perception of podcast media, the researcher can conclude that all respondents agree that they experience an increase in skills after listening to podcasts. The first statement from respondents that this podcast is implemented in several steps; 1) Looking for a platform and choosing the appropriate podcast theme 2) Listening repeatedly until they understand the meaning of the podcast discussion 3) After getting used to listening to podcasts respondents understand when they hear audio from native speakers, because listening skills can be acquired over time with a lot of effort practice. This finding is in line with research according to Amumpuni (2016) pre-activity, during-activity, and post-activity are the three processes of using podcasts to improve listening abilities and in line with Bustari & Achmad (2017) the use of podcasts to improve listening skills has produced notable outcomes.

The second finding based on the results of the interview shows that if it is related to the effectiveness of podcast media, it may be a question that is too subjective. Subjective here because the reaction felt by someone is different, but according to this respondent stated that podcast media is effective in receiving audio messages even though sometimes they feel bored. This is in line with a survey such as that conducted by Tyagi (2013) showing that what defines 'listening skills are the key to receiving messages effectively.

Further findings based on the results of interviews stated that the use of podcast media has obstacles. These obstacles were agreed by respondents that it was rather difficult to find a platform with podcasts and sometimes they did not understand what the podcaster was saying. In addition, respondents stated that they find it difficult to follow the flow of podcasters who also feel bored. These difficulties are almost in harmony according to Asmi (2019) who found 3 obstacles in research using podcast media: 1) Relying only on sound 2) Small students will get bored if they only listen to

sound and don't add a little music 3) Podcast-based audio media should not be used for material that is too long.

The final finding of this result is the benefits of using podcasts to improve listening skills every day. The benefit emphasized by the respondents is that the use of this podcast increases our sensitivity in analyzing what other people are talking about in English. Second, they can take and translate the context according to what is being discussed. Then we can also follow how podcasters speak because listening can imitate what they are talking about, so that gradually we can improve our speaking skills. These results support research according to Stanley (2005) the potential for podcasting as a new medium to improve second language learners' speaking and listening abilities is enormous, and according to Bustari, Samad, & Achmad (2017) the ability to speak in English students improved after being given podcast media, and supported by Saricoban (1999) states that listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. Research in terms of this benefit is also in line with listening as pedagogical terms refer to 'speech perception', 'speech comprehension' and 'spoken language' (Huei-Chun, 1998). This case study also confirms the benefits of podcasts being very helpful in listening to something in English, and it supports other researchers that the use of podcasts also has a positive impact on increasing students' online learning motivation (Bolliger, Supanakorn, & Boggs, 2010).

In some of these studies, it can be concluded that podcasts are widely studied regarding their perspectives in the field of listening learning, teacher learning media and motivation to increase student interest in learning. While in this study, the researchers only focused on looking at the podcast perspective to improve listening skills. So the shortcomings of this study are the difficulty of finding a suitable sample, it is difficult to find the same research background, and also our focus is only on how the perspective can improve its capabilities. The researchers feel that this research is still far from the perfect word due to the lack of participants number, the limited of the time and also the lack of previous study that have the same topic as this study.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Overall findings showed that students have a positive attitude towards the use of podcast in learning English. The findings suggest that the students podcast very helpful in the spirit of listening to something in English. Podcasts can be played back when you hear a word that is not understood. The podcast could help them in learning English and they have willingness in using podcast as an alternative way to learn English. The content of the podcast and clear native pronunciation derived from podcast could hone their skills especially listening skill.

However, besides all the benefits gained from podcast, there are also problems that the students encountered in using podcast. Students might feel bored and lose focus when listening to podcast. Students it was a bit difficult to find a platform with podcasts. Student sometimes it is difficult to hear a word that you don't understand and after searching for its meaning and Following the path brought by the podcast host is the obstacle.

In this study, the researchers suggest that teacher should increase the use of podcasts in listening classes due to the effectiveness of podcast. Also, the students should increase the frequency of listening podcasts both at home or school to sharpen their English listening skills. Additionally, the researchers suggest to add more participants for the future research to find the effectiveness of podcasts in learning English.

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