

Exploring the Students' Perception Towards the Use of Podcast in Listening Skill

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Abstract

This study is with the intention of exploring the use of podcasts as a learning medium as well as the research findings about students' perceptions towards podcasts, which explain either the benefits or drawbacks of podcasts' implementation as a learning process. Furthermore, this study was conducted at English Studio as an English course located in Pare, Kediri, and East Java involved six students. To gain the data, the researcher use qualitative research and conducted interviews with each of the English Studio students acting as a sample, asking questions related to the theme known as students' perceptions towards the use of podcasts in listening ability. The research conducted showed that most students gave a positive impression of podcasts, particularly in listening ability; they argued that podcasts were able to contribute to their learning process. There are three types of podcasts that students have a tendency to listen to: conversation, monologue, and interview podcasts. Also, this research found that podcasts could not only affect and enhance students' motivation but also flourish their English skills, including pronunciation and vocabulary. In contrast, while listening to podcasts, students often found it difficult to comprehend the sentences and what the speakers were talking about. This was occasionally caused by a lack of vocabulary and accent. What is more, the challenges came from the duration of podcasts. Students found that it was too long, which made them lazy to listen and made them feel bored and less interested.

Key words: listening skill, podcasts, students' perception

Introduction

When learning a language, listening is among the most crucial abilities. According to Rost (1994) and Yildirim and Yildirim (2016), the first listening is an essential process that provides learners with inputs. It also provides learners with interaction; an authentic one will be given by a native speaker, which will be difficult for the learners and help teachers to get the attention of the students. Furthermore, improving listening abilities will facilitate language learning and provide several advantages. According to Mamasharifovich (2020), these advantages include the ability to become a better person, enhance public speaking, and make one appear smarter to others.

Accompanying the process of learning listening is the need for appropriate learning material. Three main media, auditory, visual, and audiovisual, are cited by Azhari and Ming (2015) as supporting language acquisition. A recent development in the field of contemporary audio learning media is the podcast. Palenque

(2016) defined podcasts as audio broadcasts distributed over the Internet, derived from the terms "iPod" and "broadcast." One may also describe podcasts as a way for people of today to listen to a wide range of podcast channels. Podcasts, claims Sukmawati (2021), provide hundreds of audio recordings for English learners to listen to in addition to audio enjoyment. Thus, the utilization of podcasts as instructional material will enable the students to enhance their listening abilities.

Previous research by Rahmatia and Widiastuty (2019) found that students liked podcasts when listening in class. Podcasts can also help students learn listening and speaking, especially listening and speaking. Most students agree that podcasts are easy to access as there are many podcasting websites available on the internet.

Gonulal (2020) conducted relevant research which found that thorough listening practice with podcasts and vodcasts is very effective in improving L2 listening skills, as well as

increasing expression and knowledge of words and phrases. In addition, Amin & Bandjarjani's (2020) research shows that the use of podcasts is completely positive. Learning to listen through podcasts can also help imitate vocabulary.

Methods

The methodology of this study was qualitative. An inquiry process centered on creating a complex, comprehensive image with words, conveying specific perspectives of informants, and carried out in a natural context is what a qualitative approach characterizes as. This study fit the description of descriptive research, which entails gathering information to address the issue statement. It was a descriptive research that focused on how the students saw the usage of podcasts for listening skills (Creswell, 2009).

Six students of English Studio as one of English course located in Pare, Kediri, East Java were the study's participants. The students chosen as participants had all previously used podcasts as a learning tool for English. Data collection for this research included interviews. Participants in interviews are allowed to express their opinions and how they see the matter from their own perspective (Cohen, 2007). Finding the open issues where the respondents were invited to share their thoughts and opinions was the goal of this study. Six students served as examples for the smartphone-recorded interview. Seven questions were asked of the students on how they would use podcasts as learning medium towards their listening abilities, types of podcast that they prefer to listen as well as any obstacles in their way. Moreover, the transcription was used to examine the interview material before it was coded.

Results

This research aimed to understand students' perceptions of English podcasts in terms of listening skills during the 2024 academic year at English Studio in Pare, Kediri, East Java. Six students were interviewed as respondents, and the data collected was analyzed through oral interviews. The study found that most students believed that listening skills could be improved by using English podcasts. Three indicators were used to assess students' perceptions of podcasts: impression, supporting media, types of podcats, and obstacles. The study provides valuable insights into the perception of English podcasts in the context of listening skills.

From the results of interviews regarding students' perceptions of the use of podcasts as a learning medium, it shows that several students responded positively to the use of podcasts as a learning medium: What do you think when listening to a podcast?

Apart from the positive responses given by students, there were also several negative responses to the use of podcasts as a learning medium:

From these results, the researcher concluded that the positive response to the use of podcasts as a learning medium was more dominant than the negative side that students felt when listening to podcasts.

Based on the another result of interviews conducted with several English Studio students, regarding how often they listen to podcasts as a learning medium to help develop their learning skills. Most interview participants like to spend time listening to podcasts: How often do you listen to podcast as a part of your english language learning routine?

Many students often spend their time listening to podcasts. However, there are also those who don't like or rarely listen to podcasts as a medium for the learning process in an effort to improve their listening skills.

MTN: *Only in my free time, usually on holidays like Saturday and Sunday, if I have time, but more often.*

WLN: *I don't listen to podcasts very often, I only listen to podcasts when I have assignments from my English tutor.*

Podcasts play a very important role in helping students' learning process, more precisely in developing listening skills. Most of them like to spend their time listening to podcasts, most of them tend to spend some minutes, although there is a few student who rarely listens to podcasts, they do it when he gets an assignment from his teacher, and when they are in free time only. So, overall, podcasts are very helpful for students in achieving learning goals.

There are many types of podcasts that can be found on websites and on the internet, each type has advantages and disadvantages, but each type of podcast can influence students' perceptions of podcast users as a learning medium. The use of various types of podcasts has also been carried out or applied to students at the English Studio with the aim of finding out what types of podcasts they like by conducting

interviews with several English course students: What types of podcast do you prefer listening to?

The interview results above show that the most dominant types of podcasts that students often listen to are three types, namely conversation podcasts, monologue podcasts and interview podcasts. Students like listening to coverage podcasts because they are like talk shows which are usually attended by celebrities as guest stars, monologue podcasts, they like them because this type of podcast is mostly made for students who are learning English. Meanwhile, students like listening to Podcast Interviews because the discussion is clearer and based on the source's knowledge.

Apart from asking students what types of podcasts they like more, interviews were also conducted to find out what types of platforms or applications that students usually and frequently visit as a source of learning to listen to podcasts. There are either many websites or applications that students can use to browse and listen to types of podcasts, such as via YouTube, Spotify and others. Questions regarding this matter were also asked to several students selected through interviews: What kinds of application do you usually use to listen to podcast?

From the results of the interview above, it can be explained that there are many types of applications that students can use to listen to podcasts as learning media, but the ones most commonly used by students are Spotify and YouTube, for different reasons, one of which is that students use YouTube because Youtube can activate subtitles without any charge so students can listen to podcasts while viewing subtitles.

When listening to podcasts, it is very likely that students will find or experience difficulties as obstacles, both internal and external. There are several obstacles, problems or challenges that often occur, namely: students have difficulty understanding and determining the meaning of words in the text, the difficulties to understand the accent, and not understand the main idea was that the student difficult to get a statement that tells the speakers point about the topic. This also happened to several English studio students, and researchers conducted interviews with them regarding their obstacles when listening to podcasts: Is there any difficulty during listening to podcast?

From the results of the interview above, the problems that students often face are a lack of English vocabulary which can hinder their understanding of the topics discussed in the podcast, plus academic English vocabulary which is rarely used or not commonly used in everyday life. conversation. Apart from that, the accent also harms them in understanding or grasping the subject matter and the speaker's speed in conveying it. As a result, they cannot understand it well.

To overcome obstacles, problems or challenges that are often faced by students, one way is to activate subtitles which are usually in the application as an optional feature. This feature can help students understand sentences, vocabulary, accents and also the main idea of what they hear. The use of subtitles or text scripts is also recommended for English Studio students, meaning they are allowed to use them as a solution to problems that often occur. This is proven by conducting interviews in regard to Students initiative to overcome the challenges existing during listening podcast with several students: Do you often use subtitle while listening to podcast?

From the results of the interview above regarding the use of subtitles when listening to podcasts to overcome existing problems shows that the six students used subtitles as the best way to overcome existing problems. One in six students said they often use subtitles but there are times when they don't, and another one uses subtitles because they are very helpful, while there are also those who tend not to use subtitles.

Discussion

This chapter explores the research objectives and students' opinions on using podcasts to enhance their listening skills at the English Studio, Pare Kediri. The study involved six students as interview respondents, who provided written notes and voice recordings. The data was collected through qualitative descriptive research, resulting in a problem formulation. The findings are then discussed with expert references to confirm the findings on students' perceptions of podcasts' use in improving listening skills.

Interviews with English Studio students reveal a positive perception of podcasts as a learning medium. Research by Sartika (2020) supports this, stating that podcasts enhance students' listening abilities with immediate impact. They also increase motivation to improve listening skills, understanding, and self-confidence.

Rahmiyati, Merry, Eliza (2021) suggest podcasts can improve self-efficacy, self-confidence, vocabulary, and encourage independent learning. Shella & Wahju (2023) found podcasts to be fun and entertaining, while Velia & Novrina (2021) found that most students enjoyed podcasts. Abdulrahman et.al (2018) argued that podcasts offer real content and interesting learning activities, making them a fun and enjoyable learning tool. Overall, podcasts are a valuable tool for English Studio students, providing a fun and engaging way to learn media.

Research shows that some students find podcasts boring due to their lengthy durations. Robi (2016) found that students may feel bored and lose focus when listening to long English recordings. Velia & Novrina (2021) found that students prefer podcasts between 15-30 minutes long, as long durations can cause boredom. Chowbury & Haque (2021) also suggested that podcasts should not be too long for EFL students, as they may become bored due to their long duration. Therefore, it is crucial for podcasts to be shorter to avoid boredom among students.

The use of English podcasts as a learning medium has been found to significantly improve students' listening skills. Students argue that podcasts are essential for effective communication and learning, as per research by Kayani (2017). Hasibuan & Male (2022) also support this, stating that podcasts are crucial for teachers to use appropriate learning methods to achieve optimal results. Despite some students feeling lazy due to the long duration of podcasts, the advantage of podcasts as a learning medium is that they can enhance English language skills, particularly listening skills, and help with sensitivity to hearing problems. Overall, podcasts are essential for both teachers and students in the learning process.

Students are recommended to use these apps from people around them or advertisements. Another popular choice is Spotify, which offers millions of podcasts and music worldwide for free. According to Arifin et al. (2017), YouTube provides a vast collection of videos on various topics, making it an ideal choice for learning. Additionally, Spotify offers a variety of new ways to listen to digital music, as noted by Amanda (2023). Overall, students find podcasts to be a valuable learning medium.

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Podcasts have been found to be beneficial for students in improving their English vocabulary, accent, pronunciation, and sound patterns. Studies by Oanh & Anh (2022) and Sunita & Yousef (2021) have shown that podcasts can reduce fear, increase confidence, improve oral performance, and expand vocabulary. The most beneficial effect of podcast-assisted learning is motivating students to learn pronunciation, as it serves as a guide. Additionally, podcasts can help solve students' anxiety about English pronunciation, as they are directly spoken by native speakers, leading to improved and upgraded pronunciation. Overall, podcasts offer a valuable tool for students to enhance their English language skills.

Students often face challenges when listening to podcasts, both internal and external. These challenges include difficulty understanding words, accents, idioms, slangs, and main concepts. Research conducted in English language studios has shown that students often face difficulties in understanding podcast content. A study by Velia & Novrina (2021) found that students face various challenges, including unfamiliar words, idioms, and slangs. Additionally, unstable internet connections can be a problem. Rachmaniputri et al. (2021) found that students struggle to recognize words and interpret podcast messages due to issues with spoken features like accents, speech rate, and clarity. These findings highlight the importance of understanding and addressing these challenges when listening to podcasts.

Conclusion

Podcasts are a positive learning medium that boost motivation, understanding, and self-confidence among English Studio students. They make learning enjoyable and reduce stress. Despite some students finding podcasts boring due to long recordings, they are a fun and enjoyable way to learn English. Podcasts improve listening skills, effective communication, and enhance vocabulary, accent, pronunciation, and sound patterns. They help detect pronunciation problems, assess abilities, and identify sound patterns, making them essential for effective communication and learning.

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