
PODCAST UTILIZATION TO ENHANCE STUDENT'S LISTENING SKILL

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ABSTRACT: Listening skill is one of language skills which is crucial to promote language users' communicative competences. It is essential for the teachers to utilize appropriate media to create a supportive learning atmosphere. Podcast as one of ICT tools can be optimized to provide the students with periodical listening sources to help practicing the student's listening skill. This research explored Podcast utilization in listening class and aimed at finding out whether or not Podcast utilization could enhance students' listening comprehension and compare the students' listening comprehension between the students who were taught using Podcast and the students who were not taught using Podcast. A quasi experimental research was applied as the research design. This research involved eighty-eight students selected using purposive sampling technique. Listening comprehension test was administered to obtain the data. The obtained data were analyzed by using Paired Sample T-test and Independent Sample T-test. The result of Paired Sample T-test showed that there was a significant progress in student listening comprehension after they got treatment by using Podcast. The result of Independent Sample T-test revealed that the progress of experimental group exceeded the progress of control group in their listening comprehension. It proved that utilizing Podcast could enhance students' listening skills.

Keywords: *Podcast, listening skills, ICT utilization*

PEMANFAATAN PODCAST UNTUK MENINGKATKAN KETERAMPILAN MENYIMAK

ABSTRAK: Keterampilan menyimak merupakan salah satu keterampilan Bahasa yang sangat penting untuk mempromosikan kemampuan berkomunikasi. Sangat penting bagi para guru untuk memanfaatkan media yang tepat untuk menciptakan suasana belajar yang mendukung. Podcast sebagai salah satu media berbasis TIK dapat dioptimalkan untuk menyediakan media berbasis audio secara berkala bagi siswa untuk melatih keterampilan menyimak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pemanfaatan Podcast dalam kelas menyimak dan bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah pemanfaatan Podcast dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menyimak siswa atau tidak dan membandingkan keterampilan menyimak antara siswa yang diajar menggunakan Podcast dan siswa yang tidak. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi eksperimental. Penelitian ini melibatkan delapan puluh delapan siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Tes pemahaman menyimak diberikan untuk memperoleh data. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis dengan menggunakan Paired Sample T-test dan Independent Sample T-test. Hasil Paired sample t-test menunjukkan bahwa terdapat kemajuan yang signifikan dalam keterampilan menyimak siswa setelah mereka diajarkan menggunakan Podcast. Hasil Independent Sample t-test menunjukkan bahwa kelompok eksperimen mengalami kemajuan yang lebih signifikan dibandingkan kelompok kontrol. Hal tersebut membuktikan bahwa pemanfaatan media Podcast dalam pembelajaran menyimak mampu meningkatkan keterampilan menyimak siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Podcast, keterampilan menyimak, pemanfaatan TIK*

INTRODUCTION

Listening is a complex process of communication since it involves the listeners to do mental process to receive, understand, interpret, and construct the exact meaning from the aural input simultaneously (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Nadig, 2012; Rost, 2002). It means that when listening the spoken input, the listeners are not simply receiving the aural messages, but also decoding and reconstructing the message meaning as the whole. Listening skill is a crucial language skill. It is the key to all effective communication since we spend most of time to listen in our daily communication and it also helps the listeners to acquire an understandable input (Hamouda, 2013). In language learning context, listening skill is considered as a fundamental capacity which supports acquiring language aspects and developing other language macro skills (Latif, 2015). In addition, Richards (2008) affirms that language learning depends on listening, which provides the aural input that serves as the basis for language acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication. It is a crystal clear listening skill holds important roles not only for daily communication, but also in language teaching process.

Despite of its importance, mostly English language learners consider listening skill as difficult language skills to be achieved. There are some common problems faced by the students during listening practice. Mostly students could not recognize strings of spoken words. They encountered problem to separate sounds into words as they were not accustomed to adapt appropriate intonation, and stressed syllables, whereas, word recognition is the basis for successful listening comprehension (Hamouda, 2013; Rost 2002). Next, unfamiliar accent or pronunciation of spoken words, lack of authentic material exposure, and the absence of listening practice, also affect the students' listening skill (Munfangati, 2014). In addition, Goh (2000) confirmed that there are some internal problems hindering the students' development of listening skills, such as lacking motivation, insufficient vocabulary stocks, and lack of understanding structure. While for external factors there are some problems such as poor quality of recording or listening sources and conventional teaching method. Moreover, the ignorance of universities to give more attention to listening teaching practice becomes another factor contributing to the low achievement of listening skills. Most of universities emphasize more on the development of reading, grammar, and vocabulary (Hamouda, 2013). Consequently, it remains the most neglected language aspects of language teaching (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Osada, 2004).

It cannot be denied that the teacher's failures in creating and exploiting learning atmosphere for listening class such as planning a set of meaningful listening practice, making use of authentic listening materials, and applying appropriate learning approach, become the most influential factors contributing to the low level of listening achievement among students. In line with this, Huang (2004) argues that limited understandings of classroom instruction or lesson and materials can be another problem faced by students in learning English. Moreover, Abdulrahman, Basalama, and Widodo (2018) suggested that teaching listening depends much more on the teacher's role. They also argued that the teachers of English in Indonesia have not ultimately utilized the authentic learning sources for teaching English authentic learning sources for English language teaching, whereas selecting appropriate and authentic language material is the main consideration for teaching listening. It is the teacher's responsibility to have commitment in planning and creating appropriate learning environment to promoting best listening practice for their students. It is the teacher task to select the best media to assist the students in practicing their listening skill for both inside and outside the classroom.

The rapid change of technology has provided many implications to the language learning (Istanto & Indrianti, 2011). This condition offers the teachers many alternatives to adopt audio-based tools as their learning media as well as learning sources for their listening class. Podcast is one of audio-based media that brings a new way for the students to improve their listening skills on the go. Podcast has attracted a rapid attention from educators since 2004 or 2005. Also, it has been one of the hottest issues in education (Zhao & Jiao, 2012). The term of Podcast was derived from “iPods” and “broadcast”. Podcast is defined as a web-based digital audio or video file which can be streamed online or downloaded to portable devices such as tabs, smartphone, laptop, and personal computer to be repeatedly listened offline (Constantine, 2007; Sze, 2006).

Podcast has been widely used to empower the learning process. Many benefits can be exploited by the teachers and the students when Podcast is incorporated in listening practice. First, Podcasts has unique feature and different than other audios in terms of its content. The audio content presents authentic listening source which allows every listener benefit from it. Podcast covers a wide range of content, such as songs, jokes, stories, poems, or some specific language skill features pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar that can be applied as teaching material sources (Sze, 2006). Using Podcast is considered as motivating and innovative ways to promote both language learning process and students’ learning engagement. Besides, teachers can also make use of Podcast as supplementary lecturing materials and off-campus courses (Copley, 2007; Spies, 2011). Podcasting provides the students with a freedom to manage their own time learning. Podcasting enables the students to take their own control over their learning (Patten & Craig, 2007) and provides the students with full access of authentic and a real-life learning materials or sources (Gromik, 2008; Thorne & Payne, 2005). ELT Podcasts can be utilized as the most suitable and potential media for providing extensive listening as well as intensive listening practices for the learners (Stanley, 2006) since it has a key feature enabling the students to have 24/7 access to audios and videos and the students can pause or resume the audios or videos they listen to or watch on the basis of their needs to have a better comprehension (Yaman, 2016). It means that the students can choose what, how, and when they want to listen, practice, and learn from the audio or video provided in the Podcast.

When Podcasting started to become a well-received tool for audio-visual material production and delivery, many academics and scholars began to explore and study its potential as one of teaching and learning technologies. Some studies have revealed that Podcast integration in ELT had positive responses among the teachers and the students (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2009; Kim & King, 2011; Rahmaniputri, Purnawarman, & Gunawan, 2021). Some studies also reported that the use of Podcast could reinforce the students to enrich more vocabulary at their own pace (Borgia, 2010; Putman & Kingsley, 2012), promote autonomous learning (Cross, 2014), and potentially increase both intrinsic and extrinsic learning motivation among the students (O-Bryan & Hegelheimer; 2007). In the context of teaching listening, Podcasts have been proved contributing significant effects. Hawke (2010) proved that Podcast could encourage the students to have listening practice through top-down and bottom-up strategy. Moreover, a study conducted by Ashraf, Noroozi and Salami (2011) showed that the experimental group who used podcasts for their listening activities performed better than the control group. In line with this, Abdulrahman, Basalama, and Widodo (2018) also found that Podcasts had significantly improved the students’ listening skill. They also found that the students had positive responses toward Podcast integration. The students perceived that Podcasts

was a motivating tool mediated them with authentic materials, interesting listening activities, and meaningful tasks. Based on the previous elaboration, this study attempted to investigate the use of Podcast to practice students listening skill and to measure whether the use of Podcast could enhance students' listening comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

A quasi experimental research design was used to conduct the research since this research involved experimental and control groups. The research explored the utilization of Podcast as the teaching media of listening practice for experimental group. The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 11 Palembang. The followings are the procedures administered in this research: 1) identifying research problems and objectives, 2) designing research plan, 3) constructing the instrument, 4) trying out the instrument, 5) collecting the data, 6) analyzing the data, 8) interpreting the results, 9) verifying the research hypotheses, and 10) reporting the results.

The objects of this research were eighty-eight students of eleventh grade who were selected using purposive sampling. Those students were categorized as poor in their listening skills. Those students were then divided into two groups: experimental and control group. The data were obtained by administering listening comprehension test. The researchers previously devised 50 items of multiple choice for listening comprehension test. Then, the devised test was tried out to find out which items were valid to be used to gather the data. After validation process, it was found that out of 50 items, only 25 items were valid. Those items measured the following aspects of listening skill: identifying general information, determining the text purpose or function, identifying detailed information, and decoding the word meaning. The test was then administered twice for each group to measure students' progress before and after the treatment phases. After the treatment phase, the obtained data were analyzed using Paired Sample T-Test and Independent Sample T-Test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Before administering inferential analyses, the gathered data from both of experimental and control groups were statistically analyzed.

The Results of Statistical Analysis

Based on the statistical analysis for the test results for both of experimental and control group, the students listening skills were improved. The summary of the statistical analysis results can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis for Listening Comprehension Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-exp	44	44	76
Post-exp	44	56	92
Pre-con	44	44	72
Post-con	44	48	76

Table 1 presents that the highest score of experimental group pre-test was 76 and the lowest score was 44. Then, for the experimental post-test result, it was found that the highest score was 96 and the lowest score was 56.

Meanwhile, the pre-test results of control group showed that the highest score was 72 and the lowest score was 44. Then, the control group post-test results showed that the

highest score was 76 and the lowest score was 48. It could be concluded that after the treatment phase, the students for both of experimental and control group could enhance their listening comprehension skills.

The Result of Paired Sample T-Test

To verify whether the students' listening skill of experimental group were improved or not after the treatment phase, Paired Sample T-test was run. Table 2 below presents the data of Paired Sample T-test result.

Table 2. The Results of Paired Sample T-Test

	Mean	T	df	Sig (2 tailed)
Post-Ex Pre-Ex	6.909	7.076	43	0.00

Based on the table above, it could be seen that the value of t_{obtained} (7.076) was higher than the value of t_{table} (2.016) and the significant coefficient of Paired Sample t-test was 0.00 and it was lower than 0.05. It indicated that Podcast utilization contributed a significant progress toward students' listening comprehension skill.

The Result of Independent Sample T-Test

Independent Sample T-test was applied to find out the difference in students' listening skill between the experimental group and the control group students. Table 3 below presents the result of Independent Sample T-test.

Table 3. The Result of Independent Sample T-Test

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.180	.673	4.861	86	.000

Based on the result of Independent Sample T-test above, it revealed that the value of t_{obtained} (4.861) was higher than the value of t_{table} (1.987) and the significant value (0.00) was lower than 0.05. It highlighted that the two groups were significantly different on their listening comprehension achievement after they were given different treatment. The result of Independent Sample T-test revealed that the students who were intervened using Podcast during listening practice could perform better than the students who got direct instruction.

Regarding with what have been elaborated in the previous section, it could be claimed that Podcast utilization was effective to help the students enhance their listening achievement. It might be caused by utilizing Podcast the teacher provided a meaningful listening practice for the students. The teacher facilitated the students with intensive listening practice by allowing them to access a periodical audio material which can be consumed everywhere. During the integration of Podcast, the students could access a set of periodical audios. The daily practice using of Podcast made the students became used to consuming aural input. Podcast is an aural input media which enable the students to

listen to the audio intensively to practice their listening skill when they were learning inside and outside the classroom (Stanley, 2006; Patten & Craig, 2007).

In addition, after the two groups were given treatment intensively, it could be interpreted that their listening comprehension improved. It could be seen from the mean score for each group. However, the experimental group progress exceeded the progress of the control group. It could be seen from the result of Independent Sample T-Test. Podcast facilitated the students with a more flexible way of learning. To conclude, Podcast could significantly improve the students' comprehension in listening skills.

CONCLUSION

The results of data analyses revealed that the students for the two groups improved their listening comprehension after they got treatment. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in their listening comprehension after they were taught using Podcast. It confirmed that Podcast could enhance the students listening comprehension since it can provide the students with an intensive listening practice. It highlights that the use of Podcast as a digital teaching aid can be an alternative to facilitate the students' listening practices inside and outside the classroom. The teachers of English can optimize the use of Podcast to assist the student in listening class. It is suggested that teachers of English firstly analyze what students' needs for their listening practice. After that, the teachers can start creating their own Podcast or simply adopting the ready-made Podcasts to be used as learning sources.

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