



The Effectiveness of Podcast on Listening Skill for Vocational School Students

Rizkia Ade Putri Sabrila^{1*}, Tri Wintolo Apoko²

*rizkiaadeputris@gmail.com

^{1,2} Faculty of Teacher Training & Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr.
Hamka, Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

Podcasts are digital audio files that can be accessed by everyone with an internet connection where the content is ready to be listened to without minding the time and place. Currently, podcasts are listened to not only for entertainment but also for educational purposes, one of which is to improve students' listening skills. Listening skills have an important role for students, especially in high school, but some of them still face difficulties. After the researcher conducted informal observations at Vocational High School 18 Jakarta, some students stated that listening is a difficult and boring activity. Based on those problems, this research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using podcasts on students' listening skills at Vocational High School 18 Jakarta. With a one-group pre-test post-test design, this research utilized the pre-experimental method, which was conducted in three meetings. The samples for this research were 33 students of Accounting Department chosen randomly. To gather the data, the researcher used a listening test with 15 multiple choices and a 10 fill-in-the-blank form as the instrument, both for the pre-test and post-test. IBM SPSS 24 was used to perform quantitative analysis on the data. The result of the data analysis revealed that the students' mean score in the post-test was higher than in the pre-test ($87.03 > 55.15$). Thus, it was found that the significant value was 0.000 which was lower than the alpha of 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). It can be concluded that the H_1 is accepted and the H_0 is rejected. This study recommends that teachers should consider podcasts in teaching listening skills.

Keywords: *Listening Skill, Podcast, Vocational School*

Introduction

In learning English language, there are four basic skills that need to be mastered to fully comprehend the structures. The four competencies of learning English language consisting of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Sukmawati & Eka, 2018). These four skills are the basic requirements for one to be able to implement the language and practice it in communication. Listening is the first basic skill and ability in learning a new language that beginners should learn before practicing the other three skills (Sudewi, 2021). Thus, listening has an important role in educational life for students to understand the material and to communicate effectively.

In class, students use listening skills more than any other skill. When compared to other language abilities, listening is employed far more frequently - 9% of time is spent writing, 16% of time is spent reading, 30% of time is spent speaking, and 45% of our time is spent listening (Wulandari et al., 2021). This occurs because before being given assignments, students must listen to the explanation of the material and the teacher's instructions. However, there are still many students who have difficulties in listening. Students usually face some problems in listening such as the low quality of recorded materials, speed delivery and the difficulty in distinguishing between words (Nushi & Orouji, 2020).

To overcome the students' problems in listening, there are several media that teachers can use to teach listening, such as podcasts. Typically, podcasts are collections of audio and video files that are updated frequently on the internet and can be downloaded by subscribers (Arif, 2018). Podcast refers to a combination of hardware and software that allows users to automatically download audio files that they can listen to at any time at their convenience (Mulia et al., 2021). As a learning media, podcasts can make students enjoy their learning activities. Podcasts also encourage students to take an active role in their language learning. Furthermore, podcasts not only allow students to discover a variety of language sources, but they can also enhance their learning of the target language because they provide authentic English experiences in the classroom. One of the advantages that podcasts provide is that there are pauses and replay options so students can monitor themselves while listening to podcasts (Saeedakhtar et al., 2021).

The components contained in a podcast vary depending on the type of the podcasts (Ramli, 2017). There are some podcasts that only play audio without any visuals, while there are podcasts that play audio with pictures. Other podcasts provide users with a mix of audio and visuals. With a variety of podcast types, students can choose the podcast based on their references. However, it is important for students to choose podcasts based on their ability level. Based on its separation, ELT podcasts are divided into three categories which are authentic podcast, teacher-created podcast, and student-created podcast (Melati et al., 2020). Authentic podcasts are suitable for students in advanced level and some are suitable for students in intermediate and beginner levels.

Several researchers have carried out previous studies regarding the

effectiveness of podcasts on students' listening skills. It was found that podcast applications provide effective learning of students' listening skills (Sari, 2021). Another relevant research was conducted by Harahap (2020) who explored podcast effects on listening skills for university students. This study found that students were happy with podcasts as they helped them in learning English.

The previous studies mentioned above have similar aims to examine the effectiveness of podcast on students' listening skill to this current study. However, this study has a difference context that lies in the sample. This study examines vocational high school students on the use of Podcasts in listening skill.

Based on the informal observations conducted at the Vocational High School 18 Jakarta, some students said that listening is difficult and they could not catch on the information when they listened to spoken English words. It implies that they experience some difficulties with listening tasks. There were three difficulties found after doing the observation. The first, they had less interest in listening. That is because they thought that listening was a boring activity. Some students felt bored when teacher used the same type of audio for listening activity. Secondly, they often found it difficult to identify words in English conversation at high speed. Many of them could not grasp the meaning of a conversation or speech as the speaker spoke with a lack of pauses. The third one is that the students were confused by the variety of accents. Both native and non-native accents that were unfamiliar could seriously hinder learners' listening comprehension although being familiar with an accent can help them (Saraswaty, 2018). They are more used to listening to American accents because it is more familiar to them. When they find a speaker, who uses a different accent, it confuses them to catch the words spoken by that speaker.

The research question of this study is, "Is there any significant effectiveness of using podcast on students' listening skills?" From that research question, it is interesting to conduct this research to find out the answer to the question of this research and find out problems faced by students when carrying out listening activities. However, the researcher believes that students' listening skills can be improved by using appropriate methods, such as podcasts. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using podcasts on students' listening skills.

Method

With a one group pre-test post-test design, this research utilized the pre-experimental method. A pre-experimental design was used to determine whether the research subjects were affected after being given treatment. The pre-test was given to the students at the beginning of the meeting and the post-test was given to the students at the end of the meeting after they had been given treatments for three meetings.

The research populations were 10th grade students at Vocational High School

18 Jakarta in the academic year 2021/2022. For the samples of the research, 33 students of Accounting Department were included, consisting of 27 female students and 6 male students. The samples for this study were selected using the technique of simple random sampling, which means that every person in the population has a possibility of being chosen as a subject (Taherdoost, 2018).

The instrument used was a listening test in the form of a pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was administered to students to determine the level of students' listening skills before being given treatment, while the post-test was provided to students to assess whether their listening abilities had improved after the treatments were given. The pre-test and post-test each had 15 multiple-choice questions and 10 fill-in-the-blank questions. The audio file's origin was a YouTube download that was then converted into an audio podcast.

To measure the validity of the instrument for listening test, the researcher conducted a validity and reliability test using IBM SPSS Statistic 24. The try-out of the instrument was applied to a pilot sample involving 35 students, and the sample of this research were not included. The result of the validity test showed that the r -observed $>$ r -table (0.05) for all items. It meant that all the items were valid. The reliability of the instrument was tested and resulted in Cronbach's alpha of (0.794), which indicated good reliability. After examining the normality, the researcher further examined the data from the pre-test and post-test using the paired sample t -test using IBM SPSS Statistics 24.

Results

The Description of the Pre-test Score

SPSS 24 was used to calculate the highest score, the lowest score, mean, and standard deviation of pre-test. The following table distributes students' listening score before the researcher gave the treatment to the students:

Table 1. Table of Descriptive Statistic of Pre-test

<i>Descriptive Statistic</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	33	40	72	55.15	7.467
Valid N (listwise)	33				

There were 33 students that participated in the pre-test, as shown in table 1 above. The minimum and maximum scores of post-test were 40 and 72 respectively, with a mean of 55.15 and a standard deviation of 7.467. After getting the statistical data, SPSS 24 was used to construct a categorization of students' listening skill. The following table shows how students' listening skill were categorized during the pre-test:

Table 2. Students' categorization in pre-test

No	Score	Classification	Frequency
1	91 – 100	Excellent	0
2	76 – 90	Good	0
3	61 – 70	Average	4
4	51 – 60	Poor	20
5	< 50	Very Poor	9

From the table 2 above, the result of the categorization showed that 4 students got average score in listening. There were 20 students who gained poor score in listening. There were 9 students who got very poor score in listening. The result above showed that most of the students had poor listening skills. It could be inferred that the students had to improve their listening skills.

The Description of the Post-test Score

The researcher used SPSS 24 to calculate the highest score, the lowest score, mean, and standard deviation of post-test. The following table distributes students' listening score after the researcher gave the treatment to the students:

Table 3. The Descriptive Statistic of Post-test

<i>Descriptive Statistic</i>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	33	76	96	87.03	6.636
Valid N (listwise)	33				

As it can be seen on the table 3 above, there were 33 students who took part in the pre-test. The minimum and maximum scores of post-test were 76 and 96 respectively, with a mean of 87.03 and a standard deviation of 6.636. After getting the statistical data, the researcher used SPSS 24 to construct a categorization of students' listening skill. The following table showed how students' listening skill were categorized during the post-test:

Table 4. Students' categorization in post-test

No	Score	Classification	Frequency
1	91 – 100	Excellent	12
2	76 – 90	Good	21
3	61 – 70	Average	0
4	51 – 60	Poor	0
5	< 50	Very Poor	0

From the table 4 above, the result of the categorization shows that 12 students got excellent scores in listening and 21 students got good scores in listening. To be concluded, the majority of students had better skills in listening after the treatments.

Testing Requirements Analysis

To ascertain if the data were normally distributed or not, the normality test was carried out. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test and the Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test are two examples of methods that can be used to test for normality (ORCAN, 2020). If the probability value of the t-statistic is greater than the level of significance 0.05 then the data were normally distributed.

Table 5. The Result of Normality Test

<i>Normality Test</i>			
Kolmogorov-Smirnov			
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	0.137	33	0.121
Post-test	0.137	33	0.122

From the table 5 above, the significant value is $0.121 > 0.05$ for the pre-test. The significance of the post-test is $0.122 > 0.05$. The result showed that both the pre-test and post-test values were greater than 0.05. Therefore, it is possible to infer that the pre-test and post-test data were normally distributed.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 6. The Result of Paired Sample T-test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre- test Post- test	-31.879	8.971	1.562	-35.06	-28.698	-20.413	32	0.000

The outcome of the paired sample t-test is shown in table 6. It showed that the value of significance (2-tailed) was 0.000, lower than 0.05. Moreover, the result of t-count was negative. It means that the average after the treatment was greater than the average before the treatment. Then, it could be said that (H_i) was accepted and (H_o) was rejected.

Discussion

This objective to this study was to investigate the effectiveness of podcasts on listening skill for vocational school students. Listening by using podcasts as a media of learning to improve students' listening skills has a good effectiveness. Based on the results, it was found that the mean score of the pre-test was greater than the mean score of the post-test. Moreover, the result of the paired sample t-test showed that the value of significance (2-tailed) was 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Thus, it could be inferred that there were significant differences between students' listening scores before and after learning by using podcasts. This showed that the use of podcast was effective in improving the listening skills of Accounting Department students at Vocational High School 18 Jakarta.

As the results showed there was an effectiveness of podcasts in listening skill, there were several relevant studies which found podcasts had a good effect on students' listening skill. When carrying out listening activities in class, students show enthusiasm towards the use of podcasts as a learning media (Abdulrahman et al., 2018). They felt that podcasts provided authentic material and interesting activities so that their motivation to learn English was also increased. The result is similar to the previous research by Sari (2021) who showed that podcast applications helped students in the learning process. Therefore, students' listening skills improved significantly.

This research is also supported by the finding of NamazianDost (2017) who investigated the effect of using podcasts on listening comprehension. They discovered that using podcasts was a successful method for teaching and learning English. According to the results of the study, the listening comprehension of students who listened to podcasts increased compared to students who did not listen to podcasts. Furthermore, the results of the research are compatible Hadi (2021) who analyzed the effect of using podcasts on students' listening comprehension. The finding showed that the use of podcasts had a huge impact and beneficial influence towards students' listening skill.

In addition, podcasts provided many advantages for students. Podcasts could draw students' interest as a digital tool for language learning because of the variety of content available (Indahsari, 2020). A previous research conducted by Fatika & Rahayu (2021) showed that the use of podcasts in learning listening was interesting for students and made them feel happy and comfortable. Podcasts also helped them to improve their listening skills at any time. Thus, students could practice listening independently as podcasts could be downloaded via smartphones and listened to repeatedly without time restrictions. Students could also listen to podcasts independently anywhere and anytime. Moreover, this provided comfort and convenience for both teachers and students as podcasts could help teachers'

performance by enabling them to tailor instruction to suit student needs (Ifedayo et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it was revealed that the mean score of students in the post-test was greater than in the pre-test. It indicated that the students had better listening skills after being given treatment using podcasts. It is therefore possible to draw the conclusion that the use of podcasts has considerably enhanced the listening skills of students at Vocational High School 18 Jakarta. However, the research that has been conducted has limitations in terms of providing the treatment to students, which was relatively short and was only carried out for three meetings. This current study also has a limitation in the context of the samples, as there were 33 students of a vocational high school located in Jakarta, and it is believed that the samples could not represent all the students of vocational high schools in Indonesia.

In line with the findings of this research, using podcasts was beneficial for both the researcher as a teacher and the students. The researcher found the ease of teaching listening. That was because the podcast audio can be downloaded from various sources on the internet. The audio can also be played through a laptop or smartphone depending on the situation at the time of teaching.

This study proposes suggestions to several parties, such as teachers, students, and other researchers. Teachers should have considerations when choosing audio podcasts to teach listening, such as the duration of the audio podcast, the theme of the podcast as well as podcast sources that are easily accessible to students. Teachers are also responsible for maintaining a peaceful atmosphere in the classroom when students listen to podcasts to make learning successful. For students, the researchers suggest them to select podcasts based on their interests. In addition, students can start by listening to podcasts that have a short duration and listening to them repeatedly. Thus, it can improve students' listening skills if it is done consistently. Then, this research is intended to be a guide for further researchers, but they are suggested to review this research, which still has shortcomings. Additionally, further researchers can also develop this research by identifying the efficacy of podcasts in improving other language skills such as writing, reading, and speaking.

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