

The Effectiveness of Podcast on Students' Listening Skill at SMK Prima Bekasi

Agus Kurniawan

English Education Departement, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Panca Sakti, Bekasi, Indonesia

*Correspondence Email: aguskurniawan7337@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to measure the effectiveness of using podcasts as a learning medium to improve students' listening skills in Grade X of SMK PRIMA Bekasi in the academic year 2024/2025. The research method applied was a quasi-experimental design using a Non-Equivalent Control Group Design. The sample consisted of two classes, namely the experimental class (30 students) taught with podcasts and the control class (30 students) taught using conventional methods. The research instrument was a listening skill test consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions and 10 short-answer questions, administered as both a pre-test and a post-test. The results indicated a significant improvement in the listening skills of the experimental class. The average pre-test score in the experimental class was 57.47, which increased to 78.3 in the post-test, with a gain score of +20.83. In contrast, the control class only improved from 55.37 in the pre-test to 61.63 in the post-test, with a gain score of +6.26. The independent samples t-test showed a significance value ($p < 0.05$), meaning there was a significant difference between the learning outcomes of students in the experimental class and those in the control class. Therefore, this research concludes that podcasts are proven to be effective in enhancing students' listening skills. Podcasts provide flexibility, varied topics, and authentic language exposure that help train concentration, enrich vocabulary, and familiarize students with different accents and speaking styles.

Keywords: Listening skill; podcast; students' perception

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INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, especially many that have gone digital, learning methods are increasingly developing in teaching listening skills. Podcasts have become one of the media that have been widely used in the world of education because of their flexibility and are watched by teenagers to adults. As well as presenting material in an interesting and interactive manner. Problems is listening are still many students who have difficulty when speaking in a second or foreign language. There are factors such as lack of focus, different accents and limited vocabulary often hinder the ability to capture some of the meanings they hear.

The first skill that learners should acquire is listening because it is determined to be the most basic of the for major skills of language development. Podcast as a learning solution to offer a more efficient listening experience than the classroom. There are stories, interviews, conversations with each others. It makes it easier for students to be helped and get used to various accents and speaking styles. In addition its uses can also be adjusted to each students speed, so they can brighten the audio or repeat it as needed.

Although many researches explained that listening which has a role important in learning should be taught, there is still a lot of students who are poor in listening. Based on the researcher's informal observation in several Senior High School, some students feel that listening or hearing the sounds then putting them into mind is difficult to do. It means that they any problems while doing listening.

This study was conducted in the X grade Accounting class at SMK PRIMA BEKASI, with students who generally have a fairly good interest in learning English, but tend to be weak in listening skills. Based on direct observations in the classroom during the learning process, the researcher noticed that students often had difficulty understanding spoken material, whether read by the teacher or played through audio. Some students appeared unfocused while listening, easily distracted by the classroom environment or conversations with peers, and some did not listen at all when the audio was played. The English teacher at the school also acknowledged that the listening skills of students in the 10th grade were still weak, as evidenced by the results of listening exercises that often fell below the minimum competency standard (KKM).

Based on the previously identified problems, the main issue in this study is the low listening skills among senior high school students and the limited use of podcast media as an alternative and effective audio-based instructional tool. In addition, quantitative studies examining the effectiveness of podcasts in the context of secondary schools remain scarce, necessitating an empirical study to address this research gap.

To comprehensively and systematically understand this issue, this study formulates the following research questions: Is there a significant difference in students' listening skills before and after using podcast media in Indonesian language learning? What is the level of students' listening skills before using podcast media in Indonesian language learning? What is the level of students' listening skills after using podcast media in Indonesian language learning?

METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of using podcasts as a learning medium to improve students' listening skills. The research is designed to answer several key questions: to what extent students' listening skills change after receiving instruction through podcasts, how their listening abilities were prior to the intervention, and what outcomes they achieve after learning with podcast-based materials. These research questions form the foundation for testing the effectiveness of podcasts in enhancing oral

comprehension among Grade X students.

The research was conducted at SMK PRIMA Bekasi, located on Jl. Swadaya, Kp. Sawah, Jatimurni, Pondok Melati, Bekasi City, West Java. The school was selected as the research site because of its commitment to fostering active English learning, which aligned well with the study's objectives. The research took place in July, encompassing several stages: preparation and administration of a pre-test, implementation of the learning process using both podcast-based and conventional methods, administration of a post-test, and subsequent data analysis. All activities were carried out during scheduled English class hours, integrated with the school's regular timetable.

The method applied in this research was a quasi-experimental design, specifically a **Non-Equivalent Control Group Design**. This method was deemed suitable for classroom-based research since it is often not feasible to randomly assign students into groups while maintaining normal classroom structures. A quasi-experimental design still allows researchers to apply treatment and observe its impact, offering objective and measurable quantitative data, demonstrating clear differences in learning outcomes, and accommodating the realities of school settings where full randomization is not possible.

The population of the study consisted of all Grade X students at SMK PRIMA Bekasi in the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. From this population, two classes were selected through purposive sampling: class X-A (30 students) served as the control group and class X-B (30 students) served as the experimental group. These classes were chosen because they had relatively balanced academic abilities based on their previous semester report card scores, and their sample sizes were sufficient for a limited-scale experimental study.

The control group (X-A) received listening instruction through conventional methods, such as listening to dialogues from textbooks or standard audio recordings. Meanwhile, the experimental group (X-B) received instruction using podcast media, specifically the YouTube podcast entitled "*Lack of Critical Thinking Skills in Indonesian Society Ft. Cinta Laura*". Both groups took a pre-test and a post-test, which enabled the researcher to measure their listening skills before and after the intervention and to compare the effects of different teaching approaches.

Data collection relied on a structured listening test designed to capture various dimensions of listening comprehension. Conceptually, listening is defined as the ability to receive, comprehend, and interpret oral messages, whether delivered directly or via mediated formats. Podcasts, in turn, are understood as digital audio media containing conversations, stories, interviews, or educational material that are accessible both online and offline. Operationally, listening in this study refers to students' ability to understand the content of audio materials—either a podcast or teacher-read text—as measured by their performance on listening tests.

The research instrument consisted of a 40-item listening test, comprising 30 multiple-choice questions and 10 short-answer questions. The test blueprint was based on four indicators: identifying factual information, understanding the main ideas, interpreting implied meanings, and drawing conclusions from spoken content. This instrument provided a comprehensive measure of students' listening abilities, both prior to and after the intervention, and allowed for a meaningful comparison between the experimental and control groups.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine how effective podcasts are in improving students' listening

skills. Two groups of Grade X students participated, namely the experimental class that was taught using podcast-based listening activities and the control class that received instruction through conventional methods without the use of digital audio media. Each class consisted of thirty students, and both groups were administered a pre-test before treatment and a post-test after the instructional period. The scores obtained from these assessments served as the main source of data for analysis and comparison between the two groups.

The results of the post-test revealed that students in the experimental class generally achieved higher and more varied scores than those in the control class. While the control group's scores tended to cluster at lower ranges, the experimental group showed a broader spread across higher score intervals. This indicates that podcast-based learning not only improved overall performance but also encouraged a wider spectrum of achievement, demonstrating that some students made remarkable progress while others still benefited to a moderate degree. The variation itself reflects the individualized nature of how students engage with and benefit from podcast materials.

Measures of central tendency further confirmed these findings. The mean, median, and mode of the experimental group were consistently higher than those of the control group. The average score of 78.3 in the experimental class contrasted sharply with the control group's mean of 61.6. This clear gap suggests that the integration of podcasts in listening instruction provided students with a significant advantage. Moreover, the alignment of median and mode values in the experimental group shows that the performance trend was consistently above that of the control group, reducing the likelihood that the outcome was due to a few outliers.

Analysis of dispersion values provided additional insight. The experimental class displayed higher standard deviation and variance, suggesting greater diversity in learning progress. While this might initially appear as inconsistency, it actually demonstrates that podcasts allowed for differentiated learning outcomes, enabling some students to achieve very high scores while others still showed meaningful improvement. By contrast, the control group displayed much narrower variance, with most students clustered around low to mid-range scores, indicating limited progress overall.

Descriptive statistics as a whole highlighted the significant gap between the two groups. The experimental class not only improved from an average of 57.47 in the pre-test to 78.3 in the post-test, but also achieved a mean gain of 20.83. The control group, while also showing improvement, only increased from 55.37 to 61.63, with a mean gain of 6.26. This evidence demonstrates that podcast-based learning was more impactful in developing listening comprehension skills than conventional instruction. The improvement in the experimental class was not marginal but substantial, underlining the effectiveness of podcasts as a learning tool.

Before hypothesis testing was carried out, assumption tests were conducted to confirm whether the data met the requirements of normality and homogeneity. The results showed that the experimental group's data was normally distributed, while the control group's data slightly deviated from normality. However, given the sufficient sample size of thirty students per group, the parametric tests remained robust. Homogeneity tests revealed that the variances between the groups were acceptable for further analysis, enabling the use of independent samples t-tests to test the research hypothesis.

The hypothesis testing results were conclusive. Paired sample t-tests for both groups showed significant improvements from pre-test to post-test, but the magnitude of improvement differed greatly. The experimental group achieved a statistically significant gain, with a t-value of 26.29 and $p < 0.0001$, confirming the substantial impact of podcasts. The control group also recorded a statistically significant

improvement, but with far smaller gains, reflected in a t-value of 25.95 and $p < 0.0001$. Most importantly, the independent samples t-test comparing the two groups' post-test results revealed a highly significant difference ($t = 28.23$, $p < 0.0001$), affirming that the improvement in the experimental group was far beyond that of the control group.

The hypothesis of the study, which proposed that the use of podcasts would lead to significantly better listening outcomes compared to traditional teaching methods, was therefore strongly supported. The experimental class not only demonstrated higher scores but also showed broader learning progress. The findings validate that the integration of podcasts in English listening instruction provides meaningful advantages, making it a promising method to address challenges in teaching listening comprehension.

These findings are consistent with previous research that highlights the benefits of digital audio media. Studies have shown that podcasts provide authentic language exposure, varied topics, and engaging materials that keep learners motivated. In this study, podcasts offered students the opportunity to hear conversational and communicative styles of English with clear intonation and articulation. Furthermore, the ability to replay content provided flexibility and allowed students to learn at their own pace, helping them overcome difficulties such as unfamiliar accents and varying speech speeds.

The effectiveness of podcasts can be explained by their unique features. Unlike traditional audio recordings, podcasts often reflect real-life communication, exposing students to natural language use rather than scripted dialogues. This not only enriches vocabulary but also sharpens the ability to infer meaning from context. Additionally, podcasts introduce students to different accents and speaking styles, preparing them for authentic communication outside the classroom. These characteristics collectively make podcasts more effective than conventional listening materials.

Despite these positive outcomes, it is worth noting that the study also faced some limitations. The relatively short duration of the podcast material limited opportunities for students to develop deeper inferential listening skills, which require longer and more complex texts. Furthermore, classroom conditions such as noise and time constraints sometimes interfered with the learning process. The sample size of sixty students, while adequate for analysis, was still limited in scope, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Technical issues such as audio quality and availability of devices also posed challenges during implementation.

Nevertheless, the implications of the study are significant. Teachers are encouraged to integrate podcasts into their listening instruction as a flexible, engaging, and effective medium. Schools may consider developing podcast-based programs that students can access independently, both inside and outside the classroom. Moreover, this study provides a foundation for designing interactive audio learning strategies that not only improve listening skills but also foster learner autonomy. By adopting podcasts, educators can better align with the needs of digital-native students who are accustomed to multimedia learning environments.

In conclusion, the results of this research strongly confirm that podcasts are effective tools for improving listening skills. The experimental group showed remarkable improvement compared to the control group, both in terms of average scores and learning variation. Statistical evidence clearly demonstrated the superiority of podcast-based instruction over conventional methods. While further studies with larger and more diverse samples are recommended, the findings of this research provide convincing support for the integration of podcasts into English language teaching, particularly in enhancing listening comprehension among senior high school students.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the use of podcasts as a learning medium significantly improves students' listening skills compared to conventional methods. The experimental group not only achieved higher post-test scores but also displayed a greater mean gain, indicating that podcasts provide substantial benefits in developing listening comprehension. Statistical tests confirmed that the differences between the experimental and control groups were highly significant, thus validating the research hypothesis. Podcasts, with their authentic language input, varied topics, and flexibility, have proven to be an effective tool in fostering students' ability to understand spoken English.

Beyond the statistical outcomes, this study highlights the pedagogical value of podcasts in modern language learning. Their ability to expose students to natural speech, diverse accents, and contextual language use equips learners with practical listening skills necessary for real-life communication. Although the study faced certain limitations such as sample size and time constraints, the overall results suggest that podcasts can serve as a valuable supplement to traditional instruction. Therefore, educators and institutions are encouraged to incorporate podcast-based activities into English teaching practices as a means of enhancing listening competence and engaging students in meaningful, technology-driven learning experiences.

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