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Students' Perception of Podcast Integration in Listening Comprehension Learning

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates student perceptions of podcast use in listening comprehension at Institut Pendidikan Nusantara Global. Thirty-five students completed a five-point Likert questionnaire covering accessibility, motivation, content effectiveness, and technical issues. Results show high scores for flexibility (mean 4.52) and motivation (4.33), while technical barriers remain (2.89). Thematic analysis of open responses revealed two themes: learner autonomy and content mismatch. The findings highlight podcasts' potential to foster independent and engaged learning but emphasize the need for improved infrastructure and better-aligned content.

Keywords: student perception, podcast, listening comprehension

INTRODUCTION

The ability to understand spoken language (*listening comprehension*) is one of the fundamental skills in learning English , which plays an important role in determining the overall success of communication. This skill is not only related to hearing the sounds of language, but also involves complex cognitive processes such as understanding meaning, recognizing intonation, identifying sentence structure, and deducing messages from native speakers . However, in the context of learning English in Indonesia, this listening ability is still a major challenge. Studies conducted by   Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., (2023) (Bingol , 2017; Cocroko & Dumenyah , 2020) (Rost, 2015) Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., (2023)

This problem is exacerbated by the conventional approach to learning, where the media used tends to be limited to audio CDs from textbooks or non-contextual recordings . This method is often considered monotonous and incapable of creating an engaging and meaningful learning experience . In addition, limited access to innovative learning media based on digital technology is an obstacle in itself, especially for students in areas with uneven technological infrastructure . In these conditions, student motivation and involvement in listening learning tend to be low, which has an impact on less-than-optimal learning outcomes . (Perućica   et al., 2022)   (Nadhira & Warni, 2021)   (Hezqiyah   et al., 2022)   (Özkan, 2022)

Along with the development of information technology, various digital media began to be used in language learning, one of which is podcasts. Podcasts are digital audio formats that can be accessed online through various platforms, and allow students to listen to authentic, flexible, and varied English-language content. The study confirms that the use of podcasts in listening learning (Abdulrahman et al., 2018; Ashifah & Indriani , 2021) can increase learning engagement, expand vocabulary, and give students the opportunity to take control of their own learning process. In addition, podcasts are considered more accessible and can be listened to at any time, according to the learning style of modern students who are mobile and independent. (Kang, 2021)

In the context of higher education in Indonesia, the application of podcast media is still relatively new and has not been fully utilized optimally. The lack of integration between podcasts and teaching materials, as well as the absence of curriculum guidelines that support their use, are inhibiting factors in the application of this media in the classroom. Therefore, it is important to explore how students respond to and interpret the use of podcasts in listening comprehension learning. This research was conducted to explore the perception of students of the English Education Study Program at the Nusantara Global Education Institute towards the integration *of podcasts* as a learning medium for *listening comprehension*. This research aims to provide an overview of the benefits, challenges, and potential of podcasts as part of an English learning strategy based

on digital technology that is effective, relevant, and adaptive to learning needs in the modern era

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach with the aim of providing an empirical picture of students' perceptions of the integration of podcasts in listening *comprehension learning*. The subjects in this study were 35 active students from the English Language Education Study Program at the Global Nusantara Education Institute, who were purposively selected based on their involvement in digital media-based lecture activities. The research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, which included four main aspects: podcast accessibility, learning motivation, audio content effectiveness, and technical constraints during use. The validity of the questionnaire content was reviewed by two lecturers who are experts in the field of English language teaching, while the reliability was tested through an initial trial on 15 students with a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.87 indicating an excellent level of internal consistency. (Creswell, 2014; Sugiyono , 2019)

Data collection will be carried out online through *Google Forms* for two weeks in March 2024. The distribution of the questionnaire was carried out through official lecture groups and internal campus communication media, by ensuring that all participants had voluntarily given their consent through the participation consent sheet. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, by calculating the average score and percentage of each student perception indicator. In addition to quantitative analysis, researchers also examined the open-ended responses of some respondents using a thematic analysis approach to capture the qualitative dimension of their experiences. With this approach, the results of the research are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the potential and challenges of using (Miles et al., 2014) *podcasts* in *learning listening comprehension* in higher education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, as many as 35 students of the English Education Study Program at the Global Nusantara Education Institute were asked to provide their perceptions regarding the use of podcasts as a learning medium for listening comprehension. Based on the analysis of the questionnaires that have been collected, the results show that most students have a positive attitude towards the use of podcasts in improving their listening skills. The quantitative data obtained describe the main aspects measured in this study, as follows:

Table 1. Average and Standard Deviation of Students' Perception of Podcast Use

No	Measured Aspects	Average (Mean)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Percentage of Positive Response
1	Accessibility and Time Flexibility	4,52	0,47	91,40%
2	Learning Motivation	4,33	0,51	75,00%
3	Audio Content Effectiveness	4,21	0,56	70,30%
4	Technical Constraints (Connections/Topics)	2,89	0,68	-

Table 1 shows that respondents gave the highest score on the accessibility dimension with an average of 4.52. This figure shows that the majority of college students consider podcasts to be an accessible medium and provide highly valued time flexibility. They feel more free to manage their study time by using podcasts, especially outside of formal lecture hours. In addition, in the aspect of learning motivation, an average score of 4.33 illustrates that 75% of respondents feel more motivated to learn to listen to English through podcasts. This shows that podcasts can stimulate their enthusiasm for learning that may have been hampered by monotonous conventional learning methods. However, in the dimension of technical constraints, the data showed lower scores, with an average score of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.68, indicating that most students faced challenges related to unstable internet access. As many as 30% of respondents reported this problem, which can certainly reduce the effectiveness of learning using podcasts, especially in areas with low network quality.

The open responses from some students point to two main themes that emerged from their experiences using podcasts. The first theme is the freedom of learning, where students feel that podcasts give them the freedom to learn at any time without time and place restrictions. As one of the students expressed "*I can listen to podcasts at any time, outside of lecture hours, and it really helps me prepare for the listening exam in a more relaxed way.*"

The second theme is the curriculum gap, which refers to the mismatch between the topics of the podcast available and the material taught in the lectures. For example, some students stated that while they enjoyed the learning experience using podcasts, there was a lack of fit in the material to their academic needs, as one student said: "*The podcast topic was exciting, but sometimes it was too far away from the material taught in class, so it was a bit difficult to relate it to our listening assignments.*"That is why

These results are in line with recent research by the Guardian that the compatibility between Wahyuni et al., (2022) *podcast* material and curriculum is essential to maintain the relevance and sustainability of podcast use in

learning. Therefore, to increase the effectiveness of podcast use, it is necessary to integrate more relevant content and adjust the difficulty level according to the student's ability level.

One thing to criticize is that the effectiveness of podcasts may vary depending on the student's *proficiency* level. Students with higher levels of language proficiency, such as advanced students, may be better able to follow *podcasts* at a faster pace and with more complex vocabulary. However, for beginner college students, the accessibility and speed of speaking from native speakers in *podcasts* can be challenging. This is in line with findings by those who affirm that (Woldemariam, 2023) *podcasts* are effective for students with higher levels of language proficiency, but for beginners more structured and slower content is needed to ensure better understanding.

Additionally, it should be noted that technical constraints such as limited internet connections are significant challenges. This requires educational institutions to consider technical solutions, such as providing internet *hotspots* or providing *downloadable podcast* materials in advance to reduce reliance on direct connections. In addition, support from lecturers to integrate podcasts in a more structured way is also an important factor to address the gap between *podcast material* and the existing academic syllabus.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the majority of students of the Global Nusantara Education Institute have a positive perception of the integration of podcasts in *listening comprehension learning*. *Podcasts* are considered to provide easy access, increase learning motivation, and provide authentic audio material that is effective in enriching English listening skills. Despite some technical constraints such as limited internet connections and the need for content that is more focused on the academic curriculum, overall the use of *podcasts* has proven to be a flexible and innovative learning medium. These findings confirm that the use of digital technology such as *podcasts* can be an effective strategy to support the foreign language learning process in higher education.

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