

The Effectiveness of English Language Podcasts in Enhancing Listening Skills

Astri Astri¹, Abd.Kamaruddin², Muhammad Arid³, Anjar Kusuma Dewi⁴
¹²³⁴ Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia

Corresponding Email: astrilingkeh@gmail.com

To cite this article:

Astri, A., Kamaruddin, A., Arid, M., & Dewi, A. K. (2025). The Effectiveness of English Language Podcast in enhancing Listening Skill. *ENGLISH FRANCA: Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, 9(2 November), 387–394.
<https://doi.org/10.29240/ef.v9i2.November.13338>

Abstract. The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of English-language podcasts in improving the 11th grade student's performance at SMA Negeri 2 Palu. The study adopted a pre-experimental design where there was one set of pre-tests and post-tests. A sample of 34 students from class XI E participated. Pre-tests were made prior to treatment in order to measure preliminary listening performance of the students. The task was listening sessions with selected English-language podcasts from the YouTube channel "Easy English." After the intervention, a post-test was done to assess students' listening comprehension. Mean score increased significantly from 64.41 (pre-test) to 81.91 (post-test). Statistical analysis by Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test also verifies that there is significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the two estimates. These findings suggest that English podcasts become helpful for learning the listening technique for students. Podcasts are an appealing addition to English language learning as they have both an authentic and interesting character, and are easily applied, particularly for enhancing listening comprehension.

Keywords: English Language Podcasts, Listening Skills, Effectiveness

Introduction

There are four basic skills in English learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is one of the four skills considered the first and most important skill to acquire, especially at the beginner level, as it lays the foundation for comprehending spoken language and communication (Sudewi, 2021). Unlike reading or writing, listening involves all senses and is cognitively demanding due to its temporary nature and lack of visual cues (Oxford, 2019). As a further contribution to learning and practice skills, listening has been found to assist in achieving vocabulary mastery, assist the learning of grammar and pronunciation patterns, and have impact on the comprehension of communication (e.g., intonation, idiomatic expressions, cultural references) more generally (Hamouda, 2020).

Although listening is a very important skill, it remains one of the most difficult skills for students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This study shows that students have difficulty understanding spoken English due to a lack of vocabulary, limited listening comprehension, and an emphasis on a teacher-centered approach (Saputra et al., 2022).

During the study at SMA Negeri 2 Palu, researchers found that many 11th grade students had difficulty understanding English audio material involving native speakers. Students were confused and did not understand unfamiliar words, fast speech, and various accents, which resulted in a lack of motivation and engagement during listening tasks. This challenge represents a common pattern in Indonesian EFL classrooms, which lack diverse

Article info:

<http://journal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/english>

Received 30 September 2025, received in revised form 24 October 2025; Accepted 20 November 2025

Published by Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Curup on behalf of ENGLISH FRANCA: Academic Journal of English Language and Education. This is an open-access article under the CC BY-SA license

and authentic listening skills, often resulting in ineffective listening instruction.

Podcasts are an engaging way to teach language (D. Indahsari, 2020). Podcast-based learning has been shown to improve student comprehension, expose them to authentic English accents and conversational practices, and allow for repeated listening, which has been proven to enhance their understanding (Nisa & Candraloka, 2024). In line with the above, Yoestara & Putri (2019) also concluded that the use of podcasts in classroom activities can improve listening test scores and students' motivation to engage in English language learning.

This work contributes to the literature by exploring the use of podcast-based instruction in a real Indonesian senior high school classroom and its application via a quasi-experimental design. Previous studies evaluated students' perceptions, but in this study, we focus on students' actual improvement of listening skills through results obtained from pre- and post-test scores, hence bringing empirical verification of the effectiveness of podcasts in teaching. It also discusses practical application in the curriculum and claims podcasts can be an interesting substitute for traditional methods.

The objective of this study is to examine whether English podcasts improve the listening ability of the Grade XI students in SMA Negeri 2 Palu. Through concentrating on organized learning experiences with podcasts as materials, the study seeks to offer practical and data-driven instruction and pedagogical suggestions for teachers of EFL languages to include media that are modern and flexible, with the intention of integrating these learning experiences with their classroom.

Listening is one of the skills that students find difficult. Many classes, especially in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), are quite difficult and are influenced by various factors such as limited vocabulary, lack of exposure to native English accents, and traditional learning styles that may not be entirely appealing to students. When the researcher worked as a teaching assistant at SMA Negeri 2 Palu, it was found that most 11th grade students had difficulty understanding English recordings, especially those delivered by native speakers. This difficulty was caused by vocabulary barriers and a lack of activities, which made the main concepts in the listening texts difficult to understand.

There is a potential to build other language skills alongside podcasting, which also helps support listening skills. Following up on the lectures, students can use podcast content for post-teaching discourse exercises (speaking, discussion, written reflections). The experience is thorough, sounds very similar to the language people use in other times of everyday life and fosters a significant increase in motivation and proficiency in the language.

Thus, with all these factors in mind, the present study explored the effectiveness of English podcasts in enhancing the listening skills of the Grade XI students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu. This research seeks to evaluate the effect of podcast-based instruction on listening comprehension skills among students, as well as give recommendations for integrating podcasts into the English language curriculum.

Theoretical Framework

Listening Skills

English has four skills, they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of important skill is Listening skills. Listening is one which forms the basis of understanding spoken language, capturing information and interpreting meaning. Nevertheless, Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Palu have several challenges when it comes to acquiring listening skills which derive from the limited access to authentic and engaging English audio materials. Hence, scholars have to think of alternative ways students can gain effective skill in this area.

Podcasts remain a promising alternative. Podcasts are audio or video files that are updated regularly and can be downloaded via the internet, Arif (2022), while Mulyani (2021) explains that podcasts are the product of a combination of hardware and software that makes it easy for users to access audio content flexibly. In language learning, there are various benefits associated with podcasts. Per Indahsari (2020), listening to podcasts can

build students' self-confidence when it involves frequent English exposure. Syahabuddin and Rizqa (2021) also suggested that podcasts offer an interactive learning environment, access to native speakers and material relevant to the times which enhance listening skills.

Research findings from an overview of several recent studies have also corroborated the benefit of podcasts in listening training. Rahimi and Riasati (2019) stated that podcasts offer authentic input and offer students access to a variety of things, making learning flexible; the students can refer back to information as needed. Putra (2020) noted that the use of podcasts significantly improved students' listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition compared to conventional methods.

On the other hand, according to Sari and Yusuf (2021), podcasts promote independent learning because students can access the material outside of times when they have classes, which results in deeper engagement and better language absorption of the material. Also, it correlates with the findings of Wijayanti (2023), which mentioned that podcast-based learning would boost the motivation of the students and would be better contextualized for learning, particularly if the podcast topic matches their interest. Nasution et al. (2022) found podcasts promoted the mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) intervention, enabling students to access language material anytime, anywhere on mobile devices, creating greater routine of exposure to the language. Chen and Zhang (2023) also indicated that podcast integration is effective in building a student-centered learning context as well as the development of both linguistic and metacognitive listening strategies.

On the other hand, podcast-based learning is faced with some challenges. Technology-based solutions, like laptops, speakers, and projectors, can increase costs and require careful preparation from teachers. Furthermore, a time limitation during the time of learning, on the other hand, can act as a barrier to the effective use of podcasts. To address this issue, educators should direct an instructional practice for listening students to familiarize students with unknown vocabulary and podcast materials specific to student levels of understanding and learning requirements. It is also vital to match the content of podcast with learning objectives and to inspire active listening via some asking questions as well as reflection activities to enable students to process the information at a deeper level.

This research focuses on academic research regarding podcasts and language usage, especially to facilitate the enhancement of students' listening skills. This study's findings may help the implementation of effective alternative approaches by English teachers, and ultimately serve as good practice for further investigations, with students adopting their own, sustainable listening strategies in the process.

Material and Method

For this study, the listening comprehension exam used in the pre-test and post-test phases will be the primary source of information. The five listening comprehension indicators constitute a total of 10 multiple-choice and 10 true/false questions in every test. These indicators comprise (1) general comprehension such as student ability to understand the gist or central idea of the audio; (2) comprehension of specific information which evaluates student ability to remember salient facts or details from the audio; (3) inferential comprehension, such as making inferences from implied information in context; (4) lexical comprehension, which refers to recognizing vocabulary and expressions in the audio; (5) understanding tone and structure, including intonation of the speaker and sentence structure employed in the audio content.

Every correct answer got scored 1, while every wrong answer got a score of 0. The pre-test and post-test audio content varied but were similar in subject matter level and difficulties. The "Easy English" YouTube channel known for sharing actual information that suits students' natural abilities acted as a recording tool for hearing which was used to learn. Using pre-experimental design such as one-group pre-test and post-test model was employed in this investigation.

This study concentrated on the same group of Grade XI SMA Negeri 2 Palu students, who underwent a pre-study intervention and after-study intervention. This design seeks to

assess the influence of English language podcasts on students' listening comprehension by comparing their pre- versus post-intervention performance. Purposive sampling was the selection procedure on 34 participants from Class XI E.

For this, we selectively used a non-probability sampling technique, where students with a similar level of English proficiency as revealed by their previous academic records and recommendations from their English teacher. Class XI E was chosen based on its potential to be available and suitability the group as a whole to offer consistent treated sessions, namely podcast-based listening.

Students' listening performance was also assessed using the standard format, and was evaluated using the same criteria for both pre-tests and post-tests. SPSS version 24 was used to analyse the extracted data. The data distribution was tested for normality first, in order to check the data were uniformly distributed. Based on these results suggesting the distribution was not normal (significance < 0.05), we conducted the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. This non-parametric test is appropriate when comparing two similar samples from the same group. The significance level was $p < 0.05$ and the improvement in listening scores of students after treatment reached statistical significance.

Results and Discussion

Result

Pre-test Result

Before attending to class members, the test for a pretest must be conducted, in which class XI E was given 10 multiple-choice and 10 true-or-false English question items which was taken on February 25, 2025.

The highest recorded pretest score was 85 and the lowest was 20. In total, the 34 total participants have an aggregate score of 2,310 with an average score of 67.94. In turn, this mean score represents the average level of students' listening comprehension before the integration of podcast-based instructional systems. It indicates the students' listening proficiency was moderate and highlights the need for improvement through appropriate methods of teaching.

Post-test Result

Following therapy, the researcher performed a test of the same form as before the treatment, but with a different story used. On March 21st, 2024, the researcher administered the post-test to class XI E. The evaluation entailed 10 multiple-choice assessments and 10 true-or-false assessments. The post-test has the highest score of 100 and the lowest score of 55. The total score obtained by all 34 students is 2,810, resulting in an average of 82.65 after the treatment. This average on post-test scores indicates a significant change in students' listening comprehension after podcast-based learning. The higher scores indicate that the treatment did have a beneficial impact and the listening skills enhanced in the students compared to those before the treatment.

Distribution Statistic

After calculating the obtained scores from the students' pre-test and posttest, the researcher then calculated the average value, minimum value, maximum value, and standard deviation using the SPSS v.24 program. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented as follows:

Table 1.

Distribution Statistic Analysis Results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	34	20	85	64.41	14.183
Post-test	34	55	100	81.91	11.743
Valid N (listwise)	34				

According to Table 1, there are significant differences in the pre-test and post-test mean scores. Before receiving the treatment, the mean for the pre-test was a score of 64.41, meaning that the listening skills of students were relatively low. On the other hand, the post-test mean is 81.91, indicating a significant increase in students' performance after receiving podcast-based learning. The standard deviation for the pre-test is 14.183, while the standard deviation for the post-test is 11.743. This decrease in score variability suggests the students' performance became more consistent after the treatment. Overall, the increase in the mean score and the reduction of the standard deviation both confirm that the treatment had a positive influence on students' listening abilities.

Hypothesis Testing

Since the data from the pre-test and post-test were not normally distributed, the researcher used a non-parametric statistical method, namely the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, to analyze the differences.

Table 2.
Ranks

			N	Mean Rank
Post-test - Pre-test	Negative Ranks	0a	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	33b	17.00	561.00
	Ties	1c		
	Total	34		
a Post-test < Pre-test				
b Post-test > Pre-test				
c Post-test = Pre-test				

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test which was a test conducted to discover if there was a significant improvement in students' listening skills after receiving treatment. These tests compared the pre-test and post-test scores of those students in the same group. For comparison 33 of 34 students scored higher on the post-test and this was indicated by positive ranks ($M = 17.00$) with total rank sum = 561.00. There were no negative ranks, meaning no students performed worse after treatment; thus, only one had the same scores on the two testing, thus a tie was formed. The lack of a negative rank, and the prominence of a positive rank, indicated that almost all students showed improvement in listening skills. The mean rank score indicates students progressed in a linear pattern indicating that the podcast-based learning intervention had a positive significant effect on their listening.

Table 3.
Statistics Test Result

	Post-test - Pre-test
Z	-5.031 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
b. Based on negative ranks.	

According to the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results, the Z value is -5.031 with an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.000, as shown in the table. Since the significance value is below 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This finding confirms that students' listening skills improved notably after undergoing the podcast-based learning treatment. The negative Z value simply reflects the direction of calculation and does not influence the interpretation. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of podcast-based learning had a significant and positive impact on enhancing students' listening abilities.

Discussion

According to the results of this study, the study revealed a marked improvement of the listening ability of Grade XI students in SMA Negeri 2 Palu students listening with English language podcasts in the classroom. Average score rose from 64.41 in the pre-test to 81.91 in the post-test, which show treatment effectiveness. Moreover, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test statistical analysis supported a significant difference between the pre and post test results; Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The result strongly suggests that podcasts enhance students' listening comprehension.

English podcasts help students get to hear authentic spoken English, complete with native speaker pronunciation, intonation, along with vocabulary that are from native speakers' voices in authentic speech and spoken English and other real-life situations. This natural exposure makes it better natural, it helps students to become closer to the cadence and pace of conversation as it occurs in real life and the natural speech, enabling them to become more able to decode spoken language correctly.

Rahimi and Riasati (2019) have emphasized that authentic audio input is an essential part of the listening ability of students in how students develop listening skills and listening, especially in the presence of genuine real words. Likewise, Putra (2020) reported that students who listened to podcasts achieved significantly higher listening responses than those who were immersed in traditional listening materials. Podcasts also provide students the opportunity to listen at their own pace, replaying, pausing and repeating as needed. Through repetition this provides access flexibility, promotes learning autonomy and solidifies understanding through exposure. Wijayanti (2023) emphasizes the role of the repetitive listening in promoting the retention of vocabulary and forms of expression, while Chen and Zhang (2023) assert that podcasts allow self-managed learning strategies such as selective attention and monitoring.

These types of metacognitive practices are crucial preparation to foster independent and self-monitoring listening in students. Moreover, the educational influence of podcasts is motivational in a big way to increasing students' motivation. Sari and Yusuf (2021) find that when students are exposed to engaging and familiar audio content, they are more motivated. In this research, the "Easy English" YouTube channel had both accessible and crisp conversations, and helped to keep the students engaged in the study. Nasution et al. (2022) also further write that mobile-assisted podcast learning enhances student engagement by providing that content can be accessed during almost any time and place, diminishing traditional educational constraints and enhancing the regularity of listening practice.

The study also shows the significance of embedding podcasts in structured stages of learning. Rather than listening passively, students were asked to perform pre-listening predictions, while listening (taking notes) and post-listening summary. As Therina (2023) indicated, audio materials are more effective in combination with guided activities promoting critical thinking and comprehension. By following this framework, students' understanding increased and skills of reading comprehension, processing information (information extraction), inference, and evaluation improved.

In Conclusion, this study adds to the emerging evidence that podcasts are an

effective way to develop listening skills of English as a foreign language (EFL) student. In addition to previous studies conducted by Syahabuddin and Rizqa (2021) and Rmelah and Pornwiriya (2023), the findings in this study confirmed that podcast-based instruction increases the proficiency of the language and learner motivation in learners. By providing students authentic exposure to English — and one that is flexible and learner-centered — podcasts could be a powerful medium in the language classroom. Thus, English teachers are advised to weave podcasts into their pedagogical practices as part of their classes rather than adding content to a program. A key part of developing listening comprehension. By offering authentic, flexible, and learner-centered exposure to English, podcasts can be a powerful tool in the language classroom. English teachers are therefore encouraged to integrate podcasts into their instructional practices, not only as supplementary material but as a core component of listening comprehension development.

Conclusion

According to the paper “Effectiveness of English Language Podcasts in Enhancing Listening Skills of Grade XI Students of SMA Negeri 2 Palu,” the conclusion I draw is that through the presentation of these English podcasts, the students’ listening skills were also improved. Test participants of one intervention (YouTube channel “Easy English” podcast materials) showed a substantially positive outcome compared to the control and traditional teaching group. We conclude therefore, that the use of podcasts in listening lessons provides learners with the opportunity to listen to authentic examples of language input, expand their vocabulary, improve their pronunciation knowledge, and make the development of their spoken English knowledge within contexts overall possible. Using a pre-experimental design in this study has very clearly indicated that English podcasts can be a useful adjunct for English language educational programs and especially for those with listening skill needs.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful completion of this study. Special thanks are extended to the supervising lecturers, Abd. Kamaruddin, M.Ed., Ph.D, and Drs. Muhammad Arid, M.Pd, for their invaluable guidance. Appreciation is also given to the principal and English teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Palu for their support and to the students who participated in this research. This research was independently conducted without external funding.

References

- Andriani, A., Pertamina, D., & Novianti, L. T. (2024). Exploring Undergraduate Students’ Perspectives on the Integration of Podcasts for Enhancing Listening Skills. *The Art of Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, 5(1), 48–65. <https://jurnal.stkipahsingaraja.ac.id/index.php/tatefl/article/view/690>.
- Arif, M. (2022). Pemanfaatan podcast dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di era digital. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 7(1), 45–52.
- Chen, L., & Zhang, Y. (2023). Podcast-based learning for EFL students: Enhancing listening skills through mobile-assisted language learning. *Journal of Language and Educational Technology*, 11(2), 55–67. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jlet.v11i2.567>.
- Indahsari, D. (2020). Using podcast for EFL students in language learning. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 5(2), 103–108. <https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v5i2.767>.
- Indahsari, R. (2020). The use of English podcast to improve students’ listening skills. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 5(2), 100–109.
- Mulyani, S. (2021). Podcast sebagai media pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris yang fleksibel di *Journal of ELT Research*, 8(1), 78–86. <https://doi.org/10.22236/jelt.v8i1.790>.

- masa pandemi. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 9(1), 67–74.
- Nasution, R., Lubis, M. F. C., & Hakim, A. (2022). Integrating mobile-assisted language learning through podcasts in EFL classrooms. *International Journal of Educational Research Review*, 7(3), 143–150. <https://doi.org/10.24331/ijere.987654>.
- Ningtyas, T. R. (2025). *The Role of Digital Media Communicative Competence in Enhancing Students'*. 11(1), 1070–1077.
- Nisa, T. D., & Candraloka, O. R. (2024). *The effectiveness of the combination of podcast and two stay two strays in teaching listening*. 5(2), 287–297.
- Putra, A. Y. (2020). The effectiveness of using podcast in teaching listening comprehension. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 5(1), 112–124. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v5i1.321>.
- Rahimi, M., & Riasati, M. J. (2019). The impact of using podcasts on EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Teaching English with Technology*, 19(1), 56–71.
- Rmelah, M., & Pornwiryakit, T. (2023). The effectiveness of using English podcast on students' listening achievement. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 19(2), 220–231.
- Sari, F. M., & Yusuf, M. R. (2021). Encouraging autonomous learning through podcast media
- Sari, N., & Fithriyana, R. (2019). Exploring EFL Students' Problems in Listening Comprehension. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 4(1), 47–52. <https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v4i1.1722>.
- Setiawan, I., & Wahyuni, S. (2024). A Systematic Literature Review: Podcast as Teaching Media to Improve Listening Skill. *JED: Journal of English Development*, 288–302.
- Sudewi, P. W. (2021). Need Analysis of Listening Skills in the EFL Class at Sulawesi Barat University. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(2), 511–520. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v9i2.2344>.
- Syhabuddin, & Rizqa, N. (2021). Improving students' listening ability through the use of English podcast. *English Education Journal*, 12(1), 23–31.
- Therina, N. (2023). Improving listening comprehension through podcast-based pre, while, and post listening strategy. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 9(1), 40–50.
- Wijayanti, N. (2023). Students' perceptions on the use of English podcast in learning listening.
- Yoestara, M., & Putri, Z. (2019). PODCAST: An alternative way to improve EFL students' listening and speaking performance. *Englisia Journal*, 6(1), 15. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3805>.