



HOW PODCASTS HELP IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS

Sagatova Muborak Payzidinovna

The University of Journalism and Mass communications

Senior Lecturer of Department of Foreign Languages

muboraksagatova.@700gmail.com

Ithomova Gulsanam Davlatjonovna

The University of Journalism and Mass communications

1st year student of Department of Foreign Languages

gulsanamithomova872@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examines how podcasts help improve listening skills to learning languages and investigates the effects of podcasts for students' listening skills. This suggests that teachers should use podcasts in pre-, during, and post-listening activities to encourage greater comprehension and autonomous learning.

Keywords: podcast, listening comprehension, listening skills, listening teaching methods and etc.

Learning English requires mastery of four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these four skills, listening is the most frequently used basic skill in both the learning process and everyday communication. Listening plays a crucial role in not only learning English process, but it needs every kind of languages. Through listening, students acquire language input that forms the basis for speaking and understanding the context of communication. However, many students still experience various obstacles in understanding English speech, ranging from the speed of the speaker, diverse accents, to unclear audio quality. These factors often make students feel frustrated and lose motivation, so that listening is considered a boring and difficult activity to master.



To overcome this challenge, educators have begun introducing various forms of learning media, one of which is podcasts. Podcasts are digital audio or video files that can be accessed flexibly via the internet, anytime and anywhere. The main advantages of podcasts lie in their authentic, varied, and reputable nature. The pause and replay features allow students to control the pace of learning according to their individual abilities. Thus, podcasts are not only an enjoyable medium but also effective in improving listening skills, as students can practice repeatedly without the pressure of classtime.

Despite their advantages, podcasts are not without challenges for language learners, particularly for beginners. The natural pace of native speakers can make it difficult for those with lower proficiency to follow, especially when regional accents, idiomatic expressions, or cultural references are involved. To address this, it is recommended that teachers should guide learners toward podcasts that are appropriate for their language level, gradually introducing more advanced content as learners progress. For instance, "Elementary stories" is very suitable for beginners. Additionally, the length of podcast episodes may pose a challenge for sustained concentration. For novice learners, extended listening periods can be overwhelming, which can lead to frustration and disengagement. To mitigate this, starting with shorter podcasts or segmenting longer episodes can help learners build their listening stamina.

The term "hearing" is mostly confused with "listening", although hearing may or may not be conscious of hearing in general. The listening process begins with conscious listening and is an important step in listening process. Thus, because of hearing is complicated then it needs various components that will lead to understanding. According to Goh (2000) Identify this component as follows:

- a. Distinguish sounds
- b. Criticize the word.



c. Identify grammatical word groups.

d. Identify the "pragmatic unit"

e. Associate linguistic signals with paralinguistic signals (intonation and stress) and non-linguistic signals (signals and objects relevant to the situation) to construct meaning.

f. Use knowledge of background and context to predict and confirm meaning.

g. Remember important words and ideas.

In collecting data, the researcher used students' listening test as an instrument of the study. Students were given a pre-test in the first meeting. They listened to a learning material podcast and given some test. Then, the result were noted as the development of their listening skill until the end of the test. Data were collected from the instrument in the form of 30 multiple choice items for pre-test. Then, in analyzing the data, statistical data formulas are required in relation to the methods used. In analyzing the data, the test was used to test the significance.

Podcasts can help improve their listening skills while learning English as a foreign language, according to findings of this systematic literature review. After podcasts were incorporated into learning activities, most of the studies reviewed showed that students' listening comprehension, vocabulary recognition, pronunciation awareness and confidence improved. Students were able to process spoken language more deeply and at their own pace thanks to authentic audio input, flexible access, and the opportunity to listen repeatedly. This is in line with the results of (Salainti), who noted a significant increase in students' listening scores after using English-language video and audio podcasts. It is also consistent with research by (Rachmaniputri et al. 2021), which showed an increase in engagement and a decrease in anxiety during listening tasks.



Overall, evidence shows that instructional design, material suitability, and consistency of implementation greatly influence the quality of podcasts. This is despite some issues, such as technical problems and difficulty understanding fast speech. When podcasts are incorporated at the pre-listening, during listening, and post-listening stages, research typically shows more consistent improvements. Podcasts increase student motivation, facilitate understanding, and support a more engaging listening experience, making them a useful and powerful learning resource. Therefore, podcasts offer a great option for teachers who want to improve listening outcomes and enrich English language learning in modern digital classrooms.

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