

PODCAST-ENHANCED SPEAKING LEARNING: A STUDY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract

This study aims to explore students' perceptions of podcast-enhanced speaking learning and identify its benefits and challenges in the EFL classroom at STKIP Taman Siswa Bima. The research employed a qualitative descriptive design supported by simple quantitative analysis. The participants were 25 second-semester students of the English Education Study Program. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage calculations, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis, including data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. The findings revealed that students generally had positive perceptions toward the use of podcasts in speaking learning. Most students agreed that podcasts improved their pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and motivation in speaking English. Podcasts were also considered interesting and flexible learning media because students could access the materials anytime and practice independently. However, some students experienced difficulties in understanding fast speech and unfamiliar vocabulary. Despite these challenges, the study concludes that podcasts are effective tools for enhancing speaking skills by providing authentic language input and creating a more engaging learning environment. Therefore, lecturers are encouraged to integrate podcasts into speaking instruction with appropriate guidance and material selection to maximize learning outcomes.

Keywords: Podcasts, Speaking Skills, EFL Learning, Students' Perception, Pronunciation, Fluency

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a core skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, enabling learners to express ideas, opinions, and emotions in both academic and social contexts. Despite its importance, many learners encounter persistent challenges such as limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation, and low confidence (Brown, 2004). These issues are particularly evident among early-stage university students who are still developing their foundational language competence.

At STKIP Taman Siswa Bima, second-semester students often demonstrate hesitation in speaking activities. Classroom observations suggest that students tend to avoid participation due to fear of making mistakes and lack of exposure to authentic English input. Traditional teaching approaches, which emphasize textbook-based learning, may not provide sufficient opportunities for meaningful communication practice.

In response to these challenges, integrating technology into language learning has become increasingly important. One promising tool is podcasting. Podcasts offer authentic audio materials that expose learners to real-life language use, including natural pronunciation, intonation, and conversational expressions (Indahsari, 2020). Unlike conventional materials, podcasts are easily accessible and can be used flexibly, allowing students to learn beyond the classroom.

Speaking is a productive language skill that requires the integration of multiple linguistic components, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Brown, 2004). Effective speaking ability depends not only on knowledge of language forms but also on the ability to use language appropriately in context.

Podcasts have emerged as a valuable tool in language learning due to their accessibility and authenticity. According to Hasibuan and Male

(2021), podcasts provide exposure to native or near-native speech, enabling learners to improve their listening and speaking skills simultaneously. This aligns with the input hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition.

Listening plays a significant role in speaking development. Novianty (2023) argue that learners must receive sufficient input before they can produce language effectively. Podcasts provide this input in a contextualized and engaging manner, making them an ideal resource for EFL learners.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of podcasts. Farangi et al. (2015) found that podcast use improves speaking fluency and pronunciation. Indahsari (2020) highlighted increased student motivation and engagement, while Saifullah (2024) reported positive student perceptions toward podcast integration. Additionally, Koçak and Alagözlü (2021) emphasized that repeated exposure to podcast materials enhances speaking performance.

However, some studies also note challenges, particularly for lower-level learners. Lutfu et al. (2024) found that fast speech and unfamiliar vocabulary may hinder comprehension. Therefore, proper scaffolding and material selection are essential for successful implementation.

Furthermore, podcasts support repeated listening, which is crucial in language acquisition. Repetition helps learners internalize language patterns and improve both listening comprehension and speaking production. Therefore, the integration of podcasts into speaking instruction is expected to create a more engaging and effective learning environment.

This study aims to explore students' perceptions of podcast-enhanced speaking learning and identify its benefits and challenges within the EFL classroom context.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design supported by simple quantitative analysis to obtain both numerical trends and in-depth insights. The research was conducted at STKIP Taman Siswa Bima and involved 25 second-semester students from the English Education Study Program.

Data were collected using two instruments: a Likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire consisted of statements related to podcast use in speaking learning, with response options ranging from Strongly Agree to Disagree. The interviews were conducted with selected participants to explore their experiences and perceptions in greater detail.

The data collection process was conducted in two stages. First, the questionnaire was distributed to all participants. Second, interviews were conducted to complement and validate the questionnaire findings.

Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage calculations based on the formula:

$$Percentage (\%) = \frac{Frequency}{Total Respondents} \times 100$$

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, including data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. This approach allowed the researcher to identify recurring themes and patterns in students' responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Students' Responses with Percentage

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SA%	A%	N%	D%
Improve pronunciation	12	10	3	0	48%	40%	12%	0%
Increase confidence	10	9	4	2	40%	36%	16%	8%
Improve fluency	11	10	3	1	44%	40%	12%	4%
Increase learning motivation	14	8	3	0	56%	32%	12%	0%

The results indicate that students generally have positive perceptions toward podcast-enhanced speaking learning. Based on the questionnaire data, 88% of students agreed that podcasts improve pronunciation, while 84% stated that podcasts help improve speaking fluency. In addition, 76% of students reported that podcasts increase their confidence in speaking English. The findings also reveal that podcasts positively influence students' motivation and engagement in learning. Around 88% of students agreed that podcasts increase their learning motivation, and another 88% stated that podcasts enhance classroom engagement. Furthermore, 92% of students considered podcasts to be interesting learning media, indicating that podcasts can create a more enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere.

These findings are consistent with the study of Koçak and Alagözlü (2021), which emphasized the role of authentic input in improving speaking ability. Exposure to real-life language use through podcasts helps students develop better pronunciation, intonation, and speaking patterns. In addition, repeated listening activities enable learners to internalize language structures, which supports fluency development, as suggested by Farangi et al. (2015).

Another important finding is the role of podcasts in promoting independent learning. Students reported that they could access podcast materials anytime and practice speaking at their own pace. This flexibility increases learning frequency and supports continuous improvement, which is in line with Indahsari (2020).

However, several challenges were also identified. Some students experienced difficulty understanding fast speech and unfamiliar vocabulary while listening to podcasts. These findings support the study conducted by Lutfa et al. (2024), who argued that podcasts may become challenging for lower-level learners without proper scaffolding. Therefore, lecturers should

provide vocabulary support, pre-listening activities, and guided practice to help students better understand podcast materials.

Overall, the integration of podcasts creates a more interactive, flexible, and student-centered learning environment. Podcasts not only improve students' speaking skills, particularly pronunciation and fluency, but also enhance their confidence, motivation, and engagement in learning English.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that podcast-enhanced speaking learning has a positive impact on second-semester students at STKIP Taman Siswa Bima. Podcasts improve pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and motivation by providing authentic input and flexible learning opportunities.

Despite some challenges, such as difficulty understanding fast speech and limited vocabulary, podcasts remain an effective tool for EFL speaking development. With appropriate guidance and material selection, these challenges can be minimized.

Future research is recommended to involve larger samples and experimental designs to further validate the effectiveness of podcasts in language learning.

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