

IMPLEMENTING PODCASTS APPROACH IN TEACHING EFL LISTENING CLASSROOM: IMPROVEMENT ON COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: Listening is the key to all effective communication without the ability one can misunderstand messages, have miscommunication and messengers can easily become frustrated or irritated. English teaching media are very important to help students get new concepts of the language ability and language competences. Podcast is one such media. The objective of this research is implementing podcasts in teaching listening. This research is classroom action research, which was carried out through four steps, action, observation, and reflection. The subjects of the research were 30 seven-grade students of SMP N 2 South Bengkulu. The qualitative data collection was taken by using interview, observation sheet, and documentation. The quantitative data collection was taken by using a listening test. In the listening test in cycle 1, the students were at "poor", in cycle 2, the students were at "average" category, in cycle 3, the students were at "good" category. It shows that there was an improvement in the students' listening achievement. It means podcasts can improve students' listening achievement by adapting the material with the students' need and interest.

Keywords: podcasts approach, listening

INTRODUCTION

According to Kavaliauskiene (2008), a podcast approach to teaching listening has emerged due to the hi-tech developments. One of them is using podcasts. The term 'podcast' was first coined in 2004, and it is defined as an internet audio publishing. Audio recordings are designed to be downloaded and listened to on any portable MP3 player, or on a personal computer. Different from other audios, podcasts are sent online automatically via a website. It offers language teachers and students a wide range of extra listening practice possibilities both inside and outside the classroom. Using podcasts approach to develop students'

listening. Podcasts are designed as a way of describing the technology used to push audio content from a website to consumers of that content, who usually listen to it on their iPod or other MP3-enabled audio player whenever they want.

There were some problems found at SMP N 2 South Bengkulu in the context of the teaching and learning English listening. Listening was rarely conducted, only about two or three times a month. This made students unfamiliar with listening and also became layman by listening to native English speakers. They also could not listen to the whole sentence in the recording because they lack of practice. The problem was related to

the teacher. The teacher had difficulty to find the listening materials. The last problem is the listening input given by the teacher was not yet interesting.

Morris (2010) conducted a study by using podcasts and mobile assessments to enhance students' learning experience and academic performance. The researcher finds that podcasts and mobile assessments have a positive impact on student performance. Similarly, Wiyanah (2015) claims that using podcasts can minimize students' difficulties in learning.

Considering the role of listening skill in English language learning and the positive impacts of using podcast in listening, thus the aim of this research is to investigate the effect of podcasts on the eight-grade students' listening ability of SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Teaching of Listening

Brown (2001) suggests that learning to listen really means learning to respond and continue responding to listening as a chain. Listening ability means the ability of listening in order to understand the meaning of what is being listened to. The listening process will help students respond to what is asked or said. Listening is the key to all effective communication.

The Definition of Media

Kozma (1991) defines media as a technology, symbol system, and a processing capability. The most obvious characteristic of a medium is its technology: the mechanical and electronic aspects which determine its function and to some extent, its form and other physical features.

English teaching media are very important to help students get new concepts of the language ability and language competences. The types of media for teaching listening vary greatly. Some medias that can be used in teaching listening are podcasts, games, virtual worlds, and

simulations, and video (Siemens and Tittenberger, 2009).

The advantages of podcasts

According to Constantine (2007), the advantages of podcasts are: 1) students can benefit from global listening, even if they only listen to from three to five minutes a day; 2) students will be exposed to a new language; 3) middle level learners have a need for authentic texts and are exposed to a variety of voices.

Podcasts are not just for listening. Often there are transcripts provided along with worksheets. A number of websites interact with students and ask them to write questions or comments. One innovative use of a podcast is having students listen to the podcast and read the transcript. Then, students will make a recording of the material on a cassette and turn it into a teacher along with a written journal. The teacher then listens to the student's recordings and provides appropriate feedback to the students. This type of activity helps the students to develop fluency in reading, to improve pronunciation, and to acquire new vocabulary words.

Podcasts in the Teaching of listening

According to Kaushik (2010), podcasts are audio files available on the internet. It is a combination of the two words broadcast (a term used for television and radio transmissions and iPod (the famous portable media MP3 player developed by Apple computer Inc.). Podcasts have been compared to radio broadcasts because they usually have one producer (or a group of people producing them). and audio transmissions are sent to multiple listeners.

The different from podcasts is that, unlike radio, the person listening does not have to listen to them at the time of broadcasting. Radio transmitters, podcasts are stored on the web as digital sound files and these sound files can then be transferred to a computer or any digital device, such as

an iPod or MP3 player. The listeners can then choose when they listen.

Morris (2010) conducted a study by using podcasts and mobile assessments to enhance students' learning experience and academic performance. The researcher finds that podcasts and mobile assessments have a positive impact on student performance. Similarly, Wiyanah (2015) claims that using podcasts can minimize students' difficulties in learning.

METHODS

The Method of the Research

The research was a classroom action research. It aims at finding and implementing podcasts to improve the listening ability of eight-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu. According to Suharsimi (2006), there are four steps to do classroom action research, planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

According to Kemmis (1980), action research consists of analysis, fact finding, conceptualization, planning, implementation, more fact-finding or evaluation, and then repetition. The samples of the research were the eight-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 South Bengkulu in the Academic Year of 2019/2020 which consisted of 30 students.

Data Collection

The data was collected qualitatively and quantitatively. According to Moloeng (2005), in a qualitative data, source of primary data were the actions and the words, and additional data like the written data, document, picture, or statistical data. The qualitative data was obtained by interviewing the students and the teacher, having observations during the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, the quantitative data was obtained by using a listening test.

Data Analysis

The students' listening mean score and the percentage score of each cycle qualitative data were analyzed by using the following formulas.

The mean of the students score:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Notes:

\bar{X} = means of the students score

$\sum X$ = total score of the students

N = the number of the students

The percentage of the students score from the calculation was categorized by using the students' score interval proposed by Nugiantoro (2011):

Table 1. Students' Score Interval

Score	Category
80 - 100	Excellent
70 - 79	Good
60 - 69	Average
50 - 59	Poor
< 49	Very Poor

Students' listening ability score:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

P = the class percentage

R = the numbers of students who passed the passing grade

T = the total number of the students

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pre-Assessment of Listening Test

Table 2. The students' listening Score of Pre-test

No.	Score Interval	Category	Frequency (Students)	Percentage (%)
1.	80 - 100	Excellent	-	-
2.	70 - 79	Good	2	6,6%
3.	60 - 69	Average	6	20%
4.	50 - 59	Poor	8	26,66%
5.	< 49	Very Poor	14	46,66%

Based on the table 2 above, the students listening ability was poor. In the pre-assessment, there were 2 students in "good" category; 6 students in "average" category; 8 students in "poor" category; and 14 students in "very poor" category. It shows that student's ability in listening ability needed improvement. There were no students who were in "excellent" category. The calculation showed that the student's average in listening ability was in a "very poor" category.

The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 1

Table 3. The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 1

No.	Score Interval	Category	Frequency (Students)	Percentage (%)
1.	80 - 100	Excellent	1	3,3%
2.	70 - 79	Good	5	16,66%
3.	60 - 69	Average	7	23,33%
4.	50 - 59	Poor	12	40%
5.	< 49	Very Poor	5	16,66%

Table 3 shows that there was a student in "excellent" category; 5 students in "good" category; 7 students in "average" category; 12 students in "poor" category; 5 students in "very poor" category. It explains that the students' ability in listening still required an improvement. The calculation showed that the students average in listening ability was in "poor". Therefore, the second cycle was conducted.

The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 2

Table 4. The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 2

No.	Score Interval	Category	Frequency (Students)	Percentage (%)
1.	80 - 100	Excellent	4	13,33%
2.	70 - 79	Good	4	13,33%
3.	60 - 69	Average	14	46,66%
4.	50 - 59	Poor	7	23,33%
5.	< 49	Very Poor	1	3,3%

Table 4 shows that there were 4 students in "excellent" category; 4 students in "good" category; 14 students in "average" category; 7 students in "poor" category; and one student in "very poor" category. There were no students who were in "very poor" category. The calculation showed that the students average in listening ability was in "average" category. Thus, the researcher conducted the cycle 3.

The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 3

Table 5. The Result of Listening Test in Cycle 3

No.	Score Interval	Category	Frequency (Students)	Percentage (%)
1.	80 - 100	Excellent	8	26,66%
2.	70 - 79	Good	16	53,33%
3.	60 - 69	Average	4	13,33%
4.	50 - 59	Poor	1	3,3%
5.	< 49	Very Poor	1	3,3%

Table 5 shows that there were 8 students in "excellent" category; 16 students in "good" category; 4 students in "average" category; one student in "poor" category; and one student in "very poor" category. It shows that the student's ability in listening has increased. The calculation showed that the students average in listening ability was in "good" category and the means of the students score was 76,2.

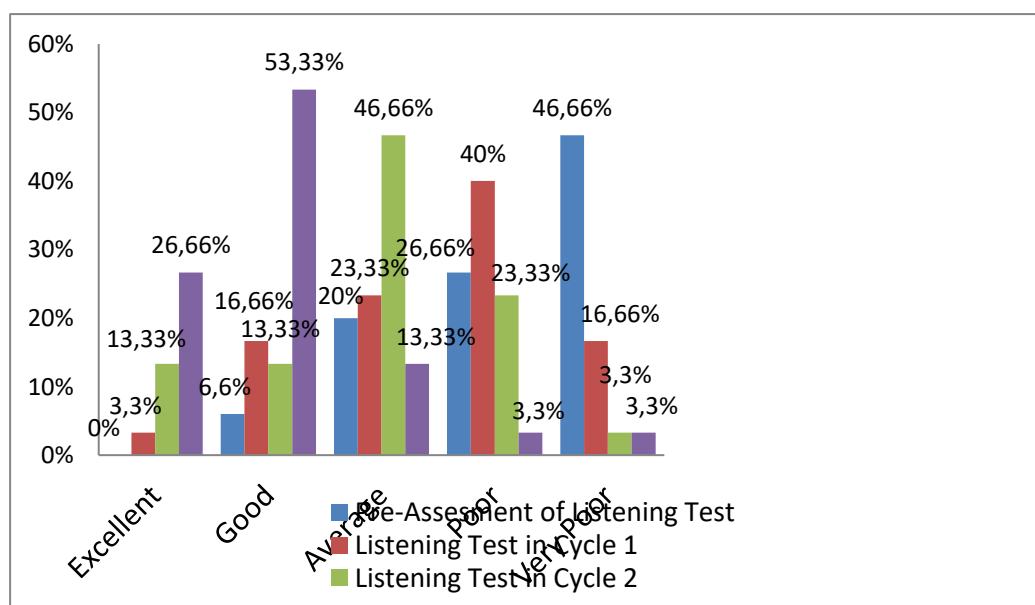


Figure 1. The Result of Pre-Assement of Listening Test, Listening Test in Cycle 1, Listening Test in Cycle 2, and Listening Test in Cycle 3 in percentage

The results showed the improvement of the students' score from the pre-asesment of listening test, listening test in cycle 1, listening test in cycle 2, and listening test in cycle 3. In the pre-asesment of listening test, many students were in very poor category. Similarly, in the listening test in cycle 1, many students were in the poor category. In the listening test in cycle 2, students' listening score was increased to "average" category. In cycle 3, most of the students were in "good" category. It means there were improvement in students' score in each cycle.

Most of students were more active and enthusiast during the teaching-learning process. This is in line with Constantine's claim (2007) that podcast helps students in learning English especially for listening activities. Podcast as a learning medium for listening is an application for listening. Podcasts keep students interested and it is useful for them. The media can help the teachers teach in the listening class and increase the students' listening ability. Therefore, the students can understand and

memorize many vocabularies from podcast as learning media.

At this point, the podcast media appears to be very useful for improving students' listening achievement. Podcasts can be viewed or listened by using portable digital media players. In this way, students always had access to the listening source that can help them in increasing their ability and enhancing their listening habit.

The podcast as learning media have so many varieties of topic that made the students were not bored with listening process. The teacher could choose the topic based on the students' ability. Therefore, the students and the teachers can use the podcast easily as learning media in the class.

Moreover, the use of the podcasts with applying some actions was successful in improving the students' listening ability. The findings can be concluded from observations during the teaching and learning process. Besides, it was also supported by result of the pre- asesment of listening test, listening test in cycle 1, listening test in cycle 2, and listening test

in cycle 3 of the students' listening achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

Podcasts can improve students' in listening by adapting the material with the students' needs and interest. The teacher can create some fun activities using podcasts approach for the students, so the listening process becomes more interesting for the students.

The students' listening ability improved in each cycle and they became more enthusiast and interested in listening through podcasts.

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