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A Qualitative Study On The Impact Of Listening Podcast On Students' Pronunciation

Article Info

Article Information

Received :

Revised :

Accepted :

Key Words: *Listening, Podcast, Pronunciation*

Abstract

This qualitative study investigate English Department Students's perception of the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation ability. The study was conducted with the participation of 7 students enrolled in English Education Department at Tarbiyah Faculty, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University. Data were collected through semi-structured interview, investigator notes and performance tracking record. The results show that podcast can help students in improving the quality of their pronunciation, effective to enhance pronunciation, helpful to develop students' confidence in speaking English, and also encourage them to understand native better, to enrich students' vocabularies, also useful to gain their listening and speaking skills. Regardless its positive aspects, there are some obstacles that the students faced when they listen to podcast, such as find unfamiliar vocabulary, sometimes podcast do not provide subtitles so that it makes more difficult for them to understand the contents of the podcast.

Abstrak :

Kata Kunci:
Mendengarkan, Podkas,
Pengucapan

Penelitian kualitatif ini menguji persepsi Mahasiswa Prodi Bahasa Inggris tentang dampak mendengarkan podcast terhadap kemampuan pengucapan mereka. Ada 7 mahasiswa PBI yang berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, catatan peneliti dan catatan pelacakan kinerja. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa podcast dapat membantu siswa dalam meningkatkan kualitas pengucapan mereka, efektif untuk meningkatkan pengucapan, membantu mengembangkan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris, dan juga mendorong mereka untuk memahami bahasa penutur jati dengan lebih baik, untuk memperkaya kosakata siswa, juga berguna untuk mendapatkan keterampilan mendengarkan dan

berbicara mereka. Terlepas dari aspek positifnya, ada beberapa kendala yang dihadapi siswa ketika mendengarkan podcast, seperti menemukan kosakata yang tidak dikenal, terkadang podcast tidak memberikan subtitle sehingga semakin sulit bagi mereka untuk memahami isi podcast.

INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation that was one of the most commonly neglected aspects of language pedagogy newly gained a revival of interest because of its reprioritized role in speech perception and recognition. In line with this revitalization, pronunciation teaching approaches in English as a foreign language (EFL) have modified their stance by encouraging language learners to study and practice pronunciation outside the classroom walls. Luckily, EFL learners now have enough resources to practice pronunciation and benefitted from the rapid growth of internet-based technologies. One of them is Podcast. Podcasting, one of the promising tools, enables learners to express themselves by addressing an authentic audience purposefully in a real-life situation. There have been some studies demonstrate that listening to podcasts enriches language skills, particularly pronunciation and listening skills. However, a review of the available literature shows that the impact of podcasts and podcasting on pronunciation teaching in teacher education has not been sufficiently examined. Hence, in this paper, we investigated the influence of podcasting on learners' perceptions on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation.

As a way of word productions . Pronunciation is the act of making sound of the words. Pronunciation is production of significant sound which is used as a part of a code of particular language and achieve meaning in the context of use (Gilakjani, 2016). For language learners, pronunciation is the basic element that should be mastered in order to communicate well and properly; resulting in the smoothness of the communication (Sayuri, 2016). By learning how to pronounce the words, EFL learners can create conversation correctly that the conveyed information can be understood by the interlocutors.

When learning new things, students often experience some obstacles. It does similarly with the process of learning pronunciation; there are several difficulties that commonly appear. According to Gilakjani et al., (2011), the main obstacle is that

learning pronunciation seems to be difficult due to the difference in pronunciation styles, accents, and sound system between learner's mother tongue (L1) and their target language (L2). The influence of attitude, instruction, age, personality, and mother tongue also become the inhibiting factors in learning pronunciation (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). Due to their failure to fully understand some of the previously mentioned ideas, students tend to speak English, with their mother tongue accent, so that they can minimize pronunciation errors as many as possible.

Podcast media is very popular among the wider community, not only among adults, but also among high school students, and even college students. (Constantine, 2007) examines podcast subjects on several levels and addresses questions about podcast excellence, the selection of the most useful podcasts, and discusses how to maximize learning from podcasts. A number of websites interact with students and ask them to write with questions or comments. An innovative use of podcasts is to have learners listen to podcasts and read their transcripts (Constantine, 2007). Then the student can make a recording of the material on tape and hand it over to the teacher along with a written journal. The teacher listens to the student's recording and provides appropriate feedback to the students. This type of activity helps students to develop their fluency in listening, reading, speaking, pronunciation, and to acquire new vocabulary.

Podcasts can be regularly updated on the web using really simple syndication (RSS) which makes it easy to upload automatically to a web. The duration of a podcast vary from a few minutes to up to an hour, or even longer. The content of the podcast is available in various topics prepared by speakers so that people can easily choose certain topics that they find interesting to listen to. Since podcasts and other Internet-based communication tools are very dynamic and may change more frequently than traditional print products, many podcast consumers and producers use a companion tool called RSS (Really Simple Syndication), though it is not absolutely necessary to have RSS in order to produce and use podcasts or blogs (<https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/92830399>). Students can listen to podcasts easily and comfortably after downloading them, which are digital media files available on the web and can be downloaded anytime and anywhere via electronic devices. There are various types of podcast, as (Santo, 2023) group it into 8 main types of

podcast, namely:podcasts, namely, interview podcasts, Conversation podcasts, Podcast monologue, Storytelling/Investigation Podcast, Roundtable podcasts, Theatrical podcasts, Podcast reused, Hybrid podcasts.

In this era of growing technology, EFL learners can utilize many of technology-based media in developing their pronunciation ability, one of which is podcast. Podcast is a digital audio file created and uploaded to an online platform for sharing with others (Yoestara & Putri, 2019). Furthermore, it is an audio recording that can be listened by everyone by utilizing the internet (Ractham & Zhang, 2006). It can be accessed flexibly and also can be listened through various existing of media electronic. What makes it interesting is that anyone can be a podcaster (the speaker of podcast); meaning that people from different native languages can serve as speaker in their own podcast. Therefore, nowadays, through podcasts people from different regions can listen to the actual speaking of native speakers even though they have never met them physically in the real life. In this study's context, EFL learners can utilize this media to learn better English pronunciation for English native speakers. Furthermore, the themes of podcasts are various depending on the users' interest. This makes it even more attractive because EFL learners can learn.

There are a number of previous researches concerned with investigating the benefits or the use of podcast in English learning. One of the studies was conducted by (Abdolmanafi-rokni, 2013) at Golestan University, Iran, who investigates the effectiveness of listening to audio-stories on fostering EFL learners' pronunciation. This study used the pre-test before receiving the treatment and post-test after the treatment to find out the effectiveness of listening to podcasts in improving students' pronunciation. The result of the study shows that listening to podcast was effective in learning pronunciation. Another qualitative study in the form of Classroom Action Research was conducted by (Riyani, R., & Sari, 2020), The objective of this research was to know whether Podcast can improve the first year students' pronunciation in speaking English at UNISRI, Surakarta in 2019/2020 Academic Year. The result of the research showed that the use of podcast helped students to get exposed to correct pronunciation. Another study done by (Al-harbi, 2019), this study aimed to see the podcast as the new evaluating strategy to enhance Saudi EFL learners' pronunciation. The participants of this study were twenty-three Saudi students of English at Qassim

University. They were all asked to listen to five English podcasts during six-week period of time and were then asked to complete the distributed questionnaire concerned with their attitude upon listening to the podcast and its impact on their pronunciation. The result of this study also showed that the students had positive attitudes and a high acceptance rate to the use of the podcasts.

The results of the previous researches indicate that the use of podcasts in language classes is useful to improve student English skills, one of which is pronunciation. So it is Inspired by the previous researches showing the benefits and ease of accessing podcasts as a learning tool, this research attempts to examine the use of podcasts to improve students' pronunciation ability, especially at the English Department of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University (UIN) of Banda Aceh. This study basically concerned with improving EFL students' pronunciation skills, where podcasts can be a useful instructional media. With these general goals in mind, the present study aims at answering the following research question: What are EFL students' perceptions on the impact of listening to podcast on their' pronunciation?

METHOD

This research employed qualitative research method in which it is defined as the process of inquiry to understand social or human problems, based on building a complex and holistic picture, formed with words, reporting on the detailed views of informants, and carried out in a natural atmosphere (Cresswell, 1994). Furthermore, according to (Bogdan, Robert C. dan Biklen, 1982) qualitative research is descriptive in which the data is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Regarding this study, this research is included as qualitative method since it is concerned with investigating the student's perceptions on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation ability. (Creswell, Hanson, Plano, Hanson, & Clark, 2007) also state that qualitative research methods function to "build on the data obtained and seek to explore participants' views in more depth". In order to examine participants' perceptions, this study used interviews as one of the instruments of the qualitative method. This study was look into how students perceived of effects listening to podcast on their pronunciation ability.

Participants

This study was conducted with the participants of 87 English language education department students at UIN Ar-Raniry in the 2019-2020 academic year. The students had prior listening instruction or had already taken Vocabulary and Pronunciation course. The sample are taken purposively with the following criterias 1). Students of the English language education department at UIN Ar-Raniry batch 2020; and 2). Students who listen to podcasts regularly (2-3 times a week). From the sampling technique and criteria above, the researcher took 7 participants.

Data Collection Technique

Various data gathering instruments were employed to get reliable data. The present study is the transcripts of semi-structured interview, other instruments were used to triangulate the findings of the study are investigator notes, activity records and direct verbal interaction among individuals. The interview was done face to face and the data recorded by using a smartphone. The interview questions were focused on investigating student's perceptions on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation.

Data Analysis procedure

Because the main goal of qualitative analysis is to identify conceptual similarities or differences and to discover types, classes, sequences, pattern or whole (Jorgensen, 1989) the data analysis of the present study consisted of examining, categorizing, tabulating and recombining evidence to draw empirically based conclusions (Yin, 2009). Data reduction is the first step that was done in the data analysis of this study. Reduction refers to the data resume, selecting the main points, focusing on the important things, looking for a theme. Therefore, the reduced data provided a clearer picture and make it easier for researchers to collect further data. In this process, the data obtained from the interview was selected according to the theme of the questions that have been previously set, and data that not match the theme reduced, then from the results of selecting the data, the data was divided into important points and converted into good language.

After the data were reduced, the next step was to display the data which means the process of processing data simply in the form of sentences, narratives, or tables. From the data display, the researcher draws conclusions in order to answer the

research question in this study. This is useful to help the researcher in making meaning from the data. This makes it easier for readers to understand the information contained in the data. Finally, after displaying the data, then the verification or conclusion drawing come next which enables the researcher to answer this present study's research questions and objectives. therefore, the conclusions cover the impact of listening to podcast on students' pronunciation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this research is to investigate students perception on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation skills. To find the answers, the researcher conducted face-to-face interview where the questions focuses on the single research question with the purpose to find out students' perception on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation. Accordingly, the findings are separately elaborated below based on the research questions. Furthermore every participants are coding based on their initial names.

The findings for this research question topic were derived from the answers of interview questions number 1 to 6. It was found that they have different perceptions as elaborated below.

a. how often students listen to podcasts

The first question in the interview was asking the participants to give their perceptions about how often students listen to podcasts. Most of them often listen to podcasts to improve their pronunciation ability as shown in the following.

FN	<i>"Yes, I often listen to podcast to improve my pronunciation ability. Cause when I listen to podcast I try to repeat some of the pronunciation".</i>
RD	<i>"Yes I have, I listen to podcast to learn English better".</i>
AZ	<i>" Yes I have listened to podcasts, I think listent to podcast is interisting and I enjoy it".</i>
FR	<i>" Yes I have, I listent to podcast to gain new vocabularies ".</i>
BT	<i>"I listen to podcast".</i>

Based on the interview, all of participants suggested that they listent to podcast to learn English, listent to podcast can increase students' vocabularies, listening, and improve pronunciation ability.

b. How often do they listen to podcast

Second question was asked to participant is how often they listent to podcast, most of them gave the answer that they listened to podcast for several times in a week.

FN	<i>"I listen to podcasts about 2 times a week because I like to improve my listening skill, besides it I can also increase my pronunciation because podcasts speak [spoken] by native"</i>
RD	<i>"I like listen to podcast because I want to fix my error pronunciation, I listen to podcast when I scrolling for Tiktok, via Spotify and Google, sometimes it just for three minutes. So I can say that I listen to podcast about 2-3 times in a week"</i>
AZ	<i>"I seldom listen to podcast, I just listen to podcast when I interest, a listen to podcast about 3 times in a mounth, even though seldom listen to podcast, but I believe that English podcast can improve our pronunciation ability".</i>
FK	<i>"I often listen to podcast, because that is possible with what I need to learn, listen to podcast I know many of new vocabularies, besides it I also learn to listening and pronunciation".</i>

Based on the interview, most off the participants answered that thay listent to podcast several times in a week, they gave the same reasons that listen to podcast can increase their English, such improvement on their listening skill, they get more new vocabularies, and increase their pronunciation ability".

As stated by AZ above.

From her answer above, even though she seldom listens to English podcast, but she spends about 3 times in a mounth to listen it, and she believed that listend to podcast can improved her English skills.

BT adds as;

"Listen to podcast for several times in a week, I going to podcast when I scrolling for Instagram and suddenly an interesting podcast come in screen, then I will continue to watch it at YouTube, I listen to podcast to know many things in English so that I hope my English better".

Based on the answer from BT, she also listens to podcast for several times in a week, it sometimes occurs when she is scrolling for Instagram, then suddenly an interesting English podcast pops up to the screen; she continued to watched it at You Tube.

c. listen to English podcast can help in improving pronunciation.

Most of participants believed that listen to podcast will help them in improving their pronunciation ability.

FN	<i>" I believed that listening to podcast can improve my pronunciation ability, because when listening to podcast we listen to correct word that pronounce by native speaker, we will remember how to pronounce appropriately when we speaking".</i>
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RD	<i>“Definitely listen to English podcast can help my pronunciation, especially when a wrong or difficult pronunciation said by native, so that we know how to pronounce it appropriately”.</i>
FR	<i>“I think that listen to pronunciation can help my pronunciation, because I heard the correct pronunciation from the native, so I imatated them as I can”.</i>
AZ	<i>“Definitely if there is a word that is difficult to pronounce, and when we try to say it often make mistakes, so after listen to English podcast, pronunciation will sound better”.</i>

d. Listening to Podcast is effective to improve pronunciation.

In this point, participants asked about the effectiveness of listening to podcast in improving their pronunciation, and their belief in using podcast as an effective tool to improve their pronunciation.

FN	<i>“Sometimes, a podcast effective to use in learning english, especially pronunciation, but sometimes podcast is not possible to improve pronunciation, there also some trouble in podcast”.</i>
RD	<i>“Yes, podcast can be an effective way to improve pronunciation, but not only the one way to improve pronunciation effectively, I mean there are also another way to improve pronunciation, such listening to music, watching to english movie and etc”.</i>
FR	<i>“I think podcast really effective in improving my pronunciation, because we listent to the native how they pronounce the English words”.</i>
AZ	<i>“I think that listening to podcast can improve my pronunciation, but not single way to improve that, the point is that I agree if podcast can be a tool that used to improve students’ pronunciation”.</i>

BT adds her opinion:

“Podcast can be an effective way to improve pronunciation, as student or teacher we can choose podcast as media to improve pronunciation in English, because in podcast delivered several interesting topics, possible, and easy to understand by students”.

OJ states:

“I agree that podcast can use as the media in improving pronunciation, because when listening to podcast we listen directly to native speakers, if we learn the pronunciation that native pronounce, so it will help in developing our pronunciation”.

Most of participants argued that listening to podcast is effective way to improve pronunciation, they believed that listening to English podcast can be an effective way, and teachers or students can choose English podcast as their learning media, because podcast can deliver topic easily and interestingly.

e. Listening to Podcast can develop confidence in pronouncing English.

Participants also believed that listen to podcast can develop their confidence in pronouncing English when they speak.

As RD says:

"Yes listen to podcast definitely can develop confidence in pronouncing English, because when we listening to the native speakers we seem repeat what they said".

AZ adds :

"Because when listening to podcast we can record back what have native said, so when speaking English we will more confident of what we heard".

FR states:

"Because we have learn how to pronounce the word correctly, so that make us confidence when we say it in our communication, because we listend how native said the words".

All of the participants argued that listening to english podcast can develop their confidence in pronouncing English, but there is an opposite opinion from FN, she believed that listen to podcast can not develop her confidence in pronouncing English, as she said :

"No, I dont believe that listen to podcast can developed my confidence in pronouncing English, because we just listen to podcast, but if we speak english we must have partner, in my opinion, to develop our confidence, we need practice with a native speaker of English too, listent to podcast can not improve my confidence in pronouncing English".

f. After listening to the Podcast several times, participants understand what the English native speakers say.

After participants listen to podcast several times, they understand of what native speakers say better than the previous one.

FN states:

" I can uderstand some off the words that native says, but I don't get some, I think listent to podcast is helpfull in improving pronunciation in English".

RD argues :

" I understand some word if there a subtitle, and Ithink if native off the podcast used American accent is easly to uderstand than British even there no subtitle".

FR said;

"I understand what native say, but sometimes not really understand but overall I understand what they say, because I listen to American podcast so then I get more clearly rather than British podcast".

AZ gave her answer as:

" It depends on the topics, if the topics are talking about politic, medical, and law, I don't not understand much about them, but if the topic about history, the dayly activity of the speaker , I can understand it"

Based on four of the participants' responses, they said that they understand what native speaker say, event they not get all, however they can

catch the point. Participants argued that they can understand if the topic discussed about simple and easy to understand. As BT add her opinion.

BT adds:

“Overall, I can understand the point of the speaking, even though, there also something that I cannot understand such find unfamiliar vocabularies, so that I will choose podcast with subtitle”.

OJ gives her statement:

“I choose a simple topic of I listen or watching to podcast, so that I get what the native speakers said, and if I speak to friends or native, they will help me if there something that I cannot understand”.

DISCUSSION

This study focusses on exploring students' perception on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation; the participant of this study was investigated through an interview. The findings show that there were many perceptions and opinions from participants. The research question used in this study is only one, which only focuses on students' perception on the impact off listening to podcast on their pronunciation skills. There are six interview questions on the impact of listening to podcast; Whether or not students listened to podcast, How often students listen to podcast? do students think that listening to English podcast can help them in improving their pronunciation? Do they think that listening to English podcast is effective to improve their pronunciation? Do they think that listening to podcast can develop thier confidence in pronouncing English, if so why? After listening to podcast several times, do they really understand what the English native speakers on the podcast say?

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be infered that listening to English podcast has an impact on improving students' pronunciation skills. It can be said that the pronunciation of the students has increased better than before. Moreover, students were able to improve several aspects of English learning such as new vocabularies, listening skills, and confidence in speaking. Although some aspects did not have much impact for some participants, but listened to podcast still had a positive impact for them. In addition, students become more enjoyable and flexible when learning pronunciation through podcast. Briefly, podcast can help students' pronunciation because through podcast students listened directly to native speakers, they can also choose the topics that they interest one, and podcast is easy media to access. Even

though, there is always obstacles in listening to podcast such students cannot understand all of the native speaker words and if podcast itself play without subtitles. Moreover, listening to podcast can help students to increase their pronunciation and still have another positive impact.

The findings in this study is relevant to the result of the previous research, in which students feel the positive effects of using Podcasts in learning English, especially pronunciation, even though they sometimes experience problems in implementing them. Students have a positive perception of the use of Podcasts in improving their pronunciation ability. According to (Sari, 2020), by listening to podcast, students can improve their pronunciation and vocabulary mastery so that they also can speak more during the speaking activity. According to (Abdelhak, 2016) he found that podcasts proved to enhance students' pronunciation and help teachers to facilitate task of teaching. Moreover, Podcast also can help students in learning new vocabularies, listening skills, and speaking skills. Podcast had a significant influence on Students' Pronunciation Mastery as the case of the study at First Semester of Eleventh Grade of MAN 1 Lampung Tengah in the Academic Year 2022/2023 (Amalia, 2023). One of the advantages of this is that students can choose the content as they interest, so that they become more relaxed and enjoy listen to podcast. Another study conducted applying podcast media in teaching speaking showed positive result. In addition, after listening to podcast several times, students developed their confidence in speaking; moreover they can understand the point of views. (Ramli, Rosmayanti, 2023) found that using podcast as a digital media in learning English can shape students' pronunciation and confidence as shown by the findings. This research also show that podcast also can use as an effective teaching and learning media to improve pronunciation in classroom. Students believed that podcast can help them to improve their pronunciation and develop confidence, and at the same time prevent misunderstanding in communication. In brief, using podcast as learning media has a good impact in improving students' pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

The results of this investigation show that the students' perception on the impact of listening to podcast on their pronunciation are stated. Regarding on the participants' responses

from the interview, there were several perceptions and opinions about the impact of listening to podcast on students' pronunciation ability. They perceived and believed that podcast can help them in improving the quality their pronunciation, effective to enhance pronunciation, helpful to develop students' confidence in speaking English, and podcast also encourage them to understand native better than before. Moreover, the impact is to enrich students' vocabularies, also useful to gain their listening and speaking skills.

The findings reported here shed new light on listening to podcast are perceived positively in improving students' pronunciation. Regardless some obstacles that the students faced when they listen to podcast, such as find unfamiliar vocabulary, sometimes podcast do not provide subtitles in order to help to understand the contents of the podcast, podcast have many positive impacts on their English. In brief, the podcast have a positive impact on improving students' ability in pronunciation. Further studies may examine students and lecturers positive attitude towards Podcast and the effectiveness of using podcast.

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