**Podcast-Based Learning as a Strategy for Improving English Listening Skills**

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ABSTRACT

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| **Aims:** Listening has been widely regarded as a fundamental skill; however, it has often been a neglected macro skill in language acquisition in the context of one of the public schools in Ozamiz City. In an initial interview with the principal, it was revealed that no listening comprehension tests had been conducted for the students, thus this study aimed to develop podcast materials as an intervention to enhance the students’ listening skills.  **Study design:** This study utilized one-group quasi-experimental research design.  **Place and Duration of Study:** The study was conducted at a public integrated school in Ozamiz City, Philippines, which spanned for a month—in November 2024.  **Methodology:** To address this gap, the study utilized researcher-made podcast materials as an intervention to enhance the listening comprehension of 24 Grade 8 students. The podcasts were anchored on the competencies of the second quarter of English 8 and was validated by at least 3 experts. A pretest and posttest method were administered to determine the students’ level of listening comprehension. The integration of podcast was done in six sessions covering one month. After the posttest, students were asked to assess the integration of podcast in their English lessons. Means and t-test were used to identify students’ listening comprehension levels and their significant improvement in their performance.  **Results:** The results indicated that using podcasts as an intervention tool to address the problem was highly effective. During the pretest, out of 24 students, 18 (78%) were noted not proficient (x̄=12.95). However, the posttest scores of the students revealed a notable increase of their mean score (x̄=21) improving to be partially proficient. The t-test also revealed a significant improvement of their listening comprehension skills (*P*<.001) attesting the effectiveness of the integration of podcast. As assessed, students showed positive perceptions on the use of podcast in their English lesson. In terms of clarity of content (x̄=3.56), lesson engagement (x̄=3.44), and technicalities (x̄=3.08), the podcasts were very effective.  **Conclusion:** The study highlighted that podcasts significantly improve students' listening comprehension. It also emphasized that podcasts be seamlessly integrated to provide students with more relevant learning experience. Thus, this study recommended that private and public schools implement listening activities using podcasts to improve students’ comprehension. It was also recommended to increase the number of sessions to arrive at more empirical results. |

*Keywords: Podcast, listening comprehension, audio tool, intervention,*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely understood that language is a tool used by people to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. In order to acquire a language, one must study communication skills as learning a foreign or second language, like English, is crucial (Djabborova, 2020). With this, one must develop all five macro skills namely - reading, listening, viewing, speaking, and writing. These skills are categorized into two, the first three skills mentioned are receptive skills while the last two skills are productive skills. Receptive skills will prepare learners to produce their language in the context of speaking and writing. The study of Tyagi (2013), described listening as the psychological process of receiving and interpreting spoken or non-verbal cues to derive meaning. Listening serves as a valuable asset in daily life, facilitating learning and comprehension in both social and professional settings. Listening is widely regarded as a fundamental skill in the language acquisition process, as it enables individuals to learn, comprehend, and communicate effectively by attentively receiving and processing information from others (Alda et al., 2022). Given its crucial role in communication, listening is considered an essential skill.

In addition, Peterson (2001, as cited in Yildirim & Yildirim, 2016) stated that through listening, learners can understand how language systems operate at different levels, which forms a foundation for enhanced fluency and productivity in language skills. Nevertheless, Nation and Newton (2009, as cited in Alda et al., 2022) asserted that listening, in comparison to other macro skills, is frequently overlooked and least understood. Ambubuyog et al. (2023) further emphasized that research studies in language acquisition have predominantly centered on reading, writing, and speaking, neglecting the significance of listening. Traditionally, language teachers have prioritized the development of learners' speaking skills when instructing a language. It emphasizes that speaking is crucial for learners seeking to acquire a second language. But despite its importance, language learners perceive listening as the most challenging skill to master in language acquisition (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

According to Erkek and Batur (2019), listening is the least studied language skill, with most published research offering theoretical insights rather than practical application. It is also often ignored or neglected in language acquisition. Alzamil (2021) also concluded his study that listening is undoubtedly the most critical skill among the other language skills. Many assume that language skills can be naturally acquired without formal training. However, effective listening abilities cannot be inherited and must be cultivated through practice. Poor listening skills can hinder communication, particularly in the workplace, where effective communication is essential for managerial tasks to flow smoothly through the organization's channels (Moulic, 2012).

One strategy in the development of listening comprehension is the application of audio materials like podcast. The use of podcasts in higher education significantly improves student engagement wherein it makes their learning become meaningful (Enríquez et al., 2023). According to the study of Salamida (2023), there was a significant improvement in students’ listening comprehension after the intervention of educational podcasts, resulting in its effectiveness as a supplementary material. However, the utilization of podcast in the classroom setting remains controversial, as some argue that this material has no place and is a distraction in the education setting (Goldman, 2018). This discrepancy pertains to a broader issue of limited integration of technological advancements, such as podcast into education practices. The problem becomes a primary concern in secondary education in the Philippines which frequently neglects the cultivation of listening abilities, deeming them less significant within the curriculum.

Thus, there is still no study on the use of podcasts as an educational tool in Ozamiz City. Nonetheless, the researchers conducted an intervention in the classroom setting using podcasts, making it the first study to explore the effectiveness of podcasts in enhancing learners' listening comprehension in the city. The use of podcast as an innovative approach aims to fill the gap in educational resources and provide valuable insights into the potential of podcasts in the local learning environment.

The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of podcast utilization in enhancing the learners’ listening comprehension of junior high school students in a public secondary school in Ozamiz City. Specifically, the study sought to provide a response to determine the following: (1) the students’ level of listening comprehension before and after the integration of a podcast; (2) the significant difference between the students’ level of listening comprehension before and after the integration of a podcast; and (3) the students perceived level of effectiveness of podcast integration in terms of clarity of content, lesson engagement, and technicalities.

2. material and methods

The study was quantitative in nature. It specifically utilized a one-group treatment quasi-experimental design. In this design, research respondents are exposed to an intervention, and their responses are measured before and after the intervention. With this, the group of participants is subjected to a specific intervention that allows researchers to assess the effects of a treatment or intervention by comparing their pretest and posttest scores. The researchers aimed to assess if the intervention of podcasts brings about any changes in students' listening comprehension by comparing their performance before and after the implementation of the intervention. This allows for an evaluation of the direct impact of the intervention, minimizing the influence of other variables. Moreover, a survey was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the developed podcast material.

The study was conducted at a public school located in Ozamiz City, Philippines. This school offered a curriculum that spanned from Grade 1 to Grade 12. In an initial interview, the principal claimed that no listening comprehension tests were conducted for the students, thus acknowledging the need to carry out an intervention activity on listening comprehension and the improvement of this skill. Alongside this, the researchers selected this school because it aligned with the issue under investigation in the study. Noting the listening problems of students in other schools and after conducting various interviews with public school teachers, it was only this school that accommodated the researchers in conducting the action research. The school division office also permitted the investigation of the study. The school also had necessary technological equipment for the proper implementation of the intervention.

The participants of the study were Grade 8 students from a selected public school in Ozamiz City. Upon the permission of the school's principal, she carefully selected the section where the researchers conducted the intervention. This section consisted of twenty-four (24) students. The researchers chose to conduct the intervention at this grade level due to its alignment with the study's objectives. Additionally, this group was deemed representative of the larger student population, ensuring the validity of the intervention's impact. While a sample size of 30 participants was initially planned, due to the limited number of students, only 24 were officially enrolled in the grade level

In this study, the researchers used four instruments: (1) researcher-made podcast materials aligned with the Curriculum Guide (CG) particularly in the second quarter of school year 2024-2025, and ensure consistency with the English curriculum; (2) learning plans; (3) a 30-item pre- and post-listening comprehension assessment questionnaire; and (4) a survey questionnaire that assessed the effectiveness of podcast integration into the lessons. All materials were checked and validated by 3 experts to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the study’s intervention

Upon the approval of the Division Office to conduct the study, the researchers then conducted a pretest to determine the students’ level of listening comprehension before the integration of podcasts. Learning from the results of the pretest, the researchers then implemented the designed learning plans and podcast materials to the English lessons. The intervention lasted one month (November 2024), which covered six sessions of the podcast intervention. After the last session, a posttest was conducted to determine the improvement of the students. Students were also asked to assess the podcast integration to identify portions of improvement in the intervention. Figure 1 presents the process in data gathering.

Pretest

Development of Learning Plans

Creation of Podcast Materials

Intervention Phase (Implementation of Podcast-based Lesson)

Posttest

Assessment of Podcast Materials

**Fig. 1. Data Gathering Procedure**

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to treat the different data gathered. For descriptive statistics, the arithmetic mean was used to determine the students’ perception towards the use of podcasts in enhancing their listening comprehension. Also, the arithmetic mean was used to determine the learners’ level of listening comprehension before and after the integration of the podcast. In addition, the overall mean was also utilized to describe the students' level of perception on the effectiveness of podcast utilization. Meanwhile, inferential statistics, specifically paired sample t-tests, were used to determine if there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores.

The researchers obtained informed assent from the respondents and consent from their parents, clearly explaining the study’s purpose, methods, potential risks, and benefits. They ensured confidentiality and privacy by securely storing data, adhering to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and respecting participants' rights throughout the study. Risks were minimized to prevent physical, psychological, or emotional harm, while participants were treated with respect and allowed to withdraw at any time. The researchers maintained transparency in their methods and findings and continuously monitored the study for any ethical concerns.

3. results and discussion

The focus of the study is to determine the effectiveness of the utilization of podcast-based lessons in the enhancement of students’ listening skills. A pretest and posttest are conducted to identify the students’ performance. The following tables present the results of the intervention highlighting the effectiveness of podcast to students’ listening skills.

**3.1 Level of Listening Comprehension of the Students Before Podcast Integration**

Avedano (2021) defined listening as receiving, understanding, interpreting, and responding to both verbal and non-verbal messages. To find out the level of listening comprehension of the respondents, the researchers conducted an assessment. The results of the pretest are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. Level of Listening Comprehension of the Students in the Pretest Score Frequency**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** | **Interpretation** |
| 28-30 | 0 | 0 | Very Proficient |
| 25-27 | 1 | 4 | Proficient |
| 22-24 | 2 | 8 | Moderately Proficient |
| 19-21 | 3 | 13 | Partially Proficient |
| 0-18 | 18 | 75 | Not Proficient |
| **x̄=12.95 (NOT PROFICIENT)** | **n=24** | **100%** |  |

***Legend:*** *28-30 (Very Proficient); 25-27 (Proficient); 22-24 (Moderately Proficient); 19-21 (Partially Proficient); 0-18 (Not Proficient).*

The table displays score range, frequency, percentage, level proficiency and the mean score of the respondents in a 30-item dictation test in the pretest. The result shows that 18 (75%) respondents scored eighteen and below, which is three-fourths of the respondents, and this indicates a not proficient level of the respondents’ listening comprehension. This corroborated the statement of Nation and Newton (2009, as cited in Alda et al., 2022) that, when compared to other macro skills, listening is often given less attention and is the least well understood.

There are 2 (8%) respondents with score range 22-24 having 75% passing score which are considered as developing students based on Department of Education Order 31, s. 2012 known as assessment guidelines in rating the learning outcomes of students. There is also 1 (4%) student who scored 26 which means 89% of the score percentage with a proficient level of listening comprehension. With this, there are only 3 students in the developing level, while 21 students are in the beginning level. Thus, the lowest score on the test is 4 and the highest score is 26. This corroborated the studies of Yazmin and Clara (2023) and Putri et al. (2023), which found that assessing students' levels before podcast integration revealed a decline in levels of proficiency. Thus, pretest assessments served as the baseline for investigating the effectiveness of podcasts in both studies.

The overall mean score in pretest is 12.95, which indicates a level of not proficient listening comprehension. This implied that students may not be receiving adequate training in this essential skill. In the statement of Salape et al. (2023), many English language learners believe that listening is easy to learn because it is a receptive skill rather than a productive one. Because of this perception, listening skill is the least looked out and trained out skill to students at school despite having this competency as implemented in DepEd K 12 Basic English Curriculum. Having this deficiency in listening comprehension can obstruct effective communication (Moulic, 2012).

**3.2 Level of Listening Comprehension of the Students After Podcast Integration**

Using the pretest basis in crafting an action for innovation, the researcher used podcasts series in making lesson content and activities. After the sessions, the 24 Grade 8 respondents underwent a listening comprehension posttest assessment. The results are reflected in Table 2.

**Table 2. Level of Listening Comprehension of the Students in the Posttest Score Frequency**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** | **Interpretation** |
| 28-30 | 0 | 0 | Very Proficient |
| 25-27 | 9 | 38 | Proficient |
| 22-24 | 3 | 12 | Moderately Proficient |
| 19-21 | 2 | 8 | Partially Proficient |
| 0-18 | 10 | 42 | Not Proficient |
| **x̄=21 (PARTIALLY PROFICIENT)** | **n=24** | **100%** |  |

***Legend:*** *28-30 (Very Proficient); 25-27 (Proficient); 22-24 (Moderately Proficient); 19-21 (Partially Proficient); 0-18 (Not Proficient).*

Table 2 presents a varied distribution of performance levels. Among the Grade 8 students, 9 (38%) achieved proficient scores, an increase from the pretest, where only 1 student was proficient; 3 (12%) students scored moderately proficient, compared to 2 in the pretest; 2 (8%) students were partially proficient, down from 3 in the pretest; while 10 (42%) students were not proficient, a decrease from 18 in the pretest. Based on the proficiency level set by the Department of Education (DepEd), Table 2 unveils that 12 students are developing and the other 12 students are in beginning levels. Thus, 13 is the lowest score and 27 is the highest score. Noting that the mean score is 21 after the intervention with an interpretation of partially proficient signifies that there is a potential shift of their listening comprehension.

The data revealed that the use of the podcast affected the scores of the respondents in the listening comprehension assessment. This shift of focus of the respondents’ listening habits undermines the effectiveness of this tool, noting the score difference between pretest and posttest assessment. The shift in scores after the integration of the podcast implies that the use of this medium had a significant impact on improving students' listening comprehension. In the pretest, 18 students were not proficient, and this number decreased to 10 in the posttest. The 8 students who improved their performance were distributed across the other proficiency levels: 2 were partially proficient, 2 moved to moderately proficient, and 4 became proficient. As for the 3 students who were partially proficient in the pretest, all 3 shifted to proficient. Of the 2 students who were moderately proficient in the pretest, 1 retained their level, while the other moved to proficient after the integration of the podcast. The student who achieved proficiency in the pretest maintained their performance in the posttest. The results also conform to the findings of the study of Namoc et al. (2024) that audio materials like podcasts are an effective tool in teaching to enhance students’ listening comprehension. This study robustly corroborates the findings of Salamida (2023), who examined the use of educational podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension, confirming their beneficial effect on students' skills.

The findings imply that podcasts can significantly improve students' listening comprehension, as evidenced by the shift in performance levels from lower to more proficient scores. The increased engagement and motivation among students suggest that podcasts are an effective tool for fostering interest in learning. This supports existing studies, confirming the beneficial impact of podcast on enhancing auditory skills in educational settings. In particular, Ramli (2018) and Syifa et al. (2024) affirmed that this shift of performance of the respondents towards their level of listening comprehension also shows that they are interested and engaged in the tool. Students appear to be highly motivated and eager to engage in listening activities using podcasts.

**3.3 Significant Difference of the Level of Students’ Listening Comprehension**

**Table 3. Significant Difference of Students’ Listening Comprehension**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mean** | **Standard Deviation** | ***t*-value** | ***p*-value** | **Interpretation** |
| Pretest | 12.96 | 7.13 | -6.82 | \*.001 | Significant |
| Posttest | 21.00 | 4.83 |

\**Significant at 0.05*

The result is indicative of the positive effects of the use of an intervention in enhancing the proficiency level of the respondents. In this case, the integration of podcast proved effective in this set of students (*P*<.001). Throughout the different teaching episodes, the use of podcasts was consistently integrated. The results demonstrate a mean difference of 8.04 points, reflecting a substantial improvement in the students’ listening comprehension after the intervention. The pretest mean score of 12.96 indicates a lower proficiency level, while the posttest mean score of 21.00 signifies an advancement to a developing or partially proficient level.

After a one-month period of implementing the intervention, the students’ level of comprehension improved to a partially proficient or developing level. This suggests that with a longer implementation period—such as 2 or 3 months—there is a strong possibility that students' comprehension levels could reach full proficiency. This claim corroborates the study by Syifa et al. (2024), in which the integration of podcasts was administered over a four-week period; the study by Enriquez et al. (2023), who conducted their research over the entire second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year; and the study by Gonulal (2020), whose research was conducted over an entire year. The implication is that the findings of the current study align with previous research, suggesting that the duration of podcast integration in education may also affect its effectiveness.

The pretest standard deviation of 7.13 indicates that scores were relatively spread out, meaning there was a wide range of listening comprehension levels among the students before the intervention. The posttest standard deviation of 4.83, on the other hand, shows that the scores became more clustered around the mean, reflecting a more consistent improvement in comprehension across the group.

A lower standard deviation in the posttest reflects that most students achieved similar levels of comprehension, demonstrating the podcast's ability to bring students closer to a developing or partially proficient level. This shift suggests that with further implementation, the intervention could potentially bring all students to a fully proficient level. The findings emphasize the effectiveness of podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension skills and highlight their potential as a valuable instructional tool in modern education.

The findings align with the study of Salamida (2023), which highlighted a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension following the use of educational podcasts as an intervention, demonstrating their effectiveness as supplementary learning materials. This suggests that podcasts can serve as an effective tool in enhancing learners' listening skills. Both local and international studies have consistently shown that integrating podcasts into classroom instruction significantly improves students' listening comprehension.

Furthermore, it was observed that the key elements of podcasts enhance student engagement, provide flexible learning opportunities, and allow learners to share personal insights on lessons. Podcasts captivate students through on-demand content, accommodate diverse learning paces, and personalize education, making learning more relevant and impactful (Kay, 2012).

Similarly, a study conducted by Enríquez et al. (2023) found that the use of podcasts significantly improves student engagement, making learning more meaningful. Additionally, involving students in creating podcasts boosts their motivation and comprehension by linking theoretical concepts to real-world examples, while also fostering collaboration and digital literacy skills.

**3.3 Students’ Perceptions Towards the Use of Podcast in Enhancing Listening Comprehension**

A survey was administered after the conduct of posttest assessment. The survey questionnaire focuses on three key areas: clarity of content, lesson engagement and technical aspects. The quantitative data were then collected and tallied to gather the students’ perceptions towards the use of podcasts in enhancing their listening comprehension.

**3.3.1 Clarity of content**

**Table 4. Students’ Perception on the Use of Podcast in terms of Clarity of Content**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Weighted Mean** | **Verbal Interpretation** |
| 9. The clarity of content in the podcast positively impacts my ability to learn information. | 3.67 | Very Effective |
| 5. The ability to access podcasts on mobile devices and listen at any time or place enhances my learning experience. | 3.63 | Very Effective |
| 6.  The podcast enhances my understanding of the subject matter. | 3.63 | Very Effective |
| 7. I enjoy using podcasts because they are convenient, effective, and combine both entertainment and educational value. | 3.58 | Very Effective |
| 10. The podcast utilizes simple words, there are no difficult terms used. | 3.58 | Very Effective |
| 4. The podcast helps my listening comprehension skills by integrating engaging content, structured delivery, and interactive elements. | 3.58 | Very Effective |
| 1. The podcast content was present in a  clear manner. | 3.54 | Very Effective |
| 8. The use of podcasts enhances my retention of information. | 3.54 | Very Effective |
| 2. I found it easy to follow the main ideas/concepts discussed in the podcast. | 3.50 | Very Effective |
| 3. I felt confident in my understanding of the topics covered after listening to the podcast. | 3.50 | Very Effective |
| **Overall Mean** | **3.56** | **Very Effective** |

*Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Very Effective); 2.51-3.25 (Effective); 1.76-2.50 (Less Effective); 1.00-1.75 (Not Effective)*

Each indicator has shown positive results. As indicated in the table, indicator 9 received the highest mean score of 3.67, indicating that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the clarity of content in the podcast positively impacts their ability to learn information. The data is aligned with the current study conducted by Septianing et al. (2024), which revealed that students perceived the clarity of podcast content as a key factor in improving their learning and retention of the lesson. This means that the perception of the students in using podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension in terms of clarity of content is very effective.

On the other hand, the indicators 2 and 3 received the same lowest mean scores of 3.50, though they were still categorized as very effective. This may be attributed to the short duration of the intervention, which provided students with limited time to fully absorb the main ideas and gain complete confidence in their understanding of the topics covered. Similarly, a study conducted by Vietze et al. (2024) also found out that due to time constraints of the intervention of podcasts, it only covers the topics superficially, limiting the depth of understanding for learners.

Overall, the students’ perceptions on the use of podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension in terms of clarity of content received an overall mean of 3.56 indicates that it is very effective. The findings imply that podcasts are very effective educational tools, particularly in enhancing students' listening comprehension through clear and accessible content.

**3.3.2 Lesson engagement**

**Table 5. Students’ Perception on the Use of Podcast in terms of Lesson Engagement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Weighted Mean** | **Verbal Interpretation** |
| 9. The teacher effectively used podcasts to keep me engaged with the lesson. | 3.71 | Very Effective |
| 8. Podcast offers activities or exercises that reinforce my listening skills. | 3.63 | Very Effective |
| 5. Podcast activates my curiosity to learn more about the subject matter. | 3.54 | Very Effective |
| 3. The podcast content effectively captures my interest throughout the lesson. | 3.46 | Very Effective |
| 10. The use of podcast contributes to a more interactive learning environment in the classroom. | 3.46 | Very Effective |
| 1. Listening to podcasts increases my participation in class discussions. | 3.42 | Very Effective |
| 7. Podcast adds interest to the classroom experience. | 3.42 | Very Effective |
| 4. The use of podcast provides me opportunities to share my own insights related to the lesson content. | 3.33 | Very Effective |
| 6. The integration of the podcast encourages collaboration among classmates. | 3.29 | Very Effective |
| 2. Podcast makes my learning more meaningful. | 3.29 | Very Effective |
| **Overall Mean** | **3.44** | **Very Effective** |

*Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Very Effective); 2.51-3.25 (Effective); 1.76-2.50 (Less Effective); 1.00-1.75 (Not Effective)*

The lesson engagement determines how effectively the podcast captures students' interest, maintains their focus, and delivers content in a clear and engaging manner. Table 5 presents the results of the students’ perceptions on the use of podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension, specifically in terms of lesson engagement, which includes 10 indicators.

As indicated in the table, indicator 9 received the highest mean score of 3.71, showing that the majority of respondents strongly agreed that the teacher effectively used podcasts to keep them engaged with the lesson. This highlights the significant role of the teacher in utilizing podcasts as a tool to maintain student focus and participation throughout the lesson.

While most indicators received high mean scores, indicators 2 and 6 had the lowest mean scores, both at 3.29, though still classified as very effective. Indicator 2, suggests that some students may find the connection between podcasts and meaningful learning less pronounced compared to other aspects, such as skill reinforcement or engagement. This suggests that while podcasts are effective tools, their potential to foster deeper, personalized learning could be enhanced by including more real-life applications or relatable content.

Similarly, indicator 6, highlights that while students recognize podcasts as effective tools, they see slightly less impact on promoting collaboration. This suggests that the current podcast used is more focused on individual learning than group activities or discussions. To address this, educators could integrate collaborative tasks linked to podcast content, such as group discussions, exercises, or projects, to enhance the interactive and cooperative aspects of learning. This aligns with the study of Enríquez et al. (2023), which found that involving students in podcast production promoted collaborative learning, as it required teamwork, communication, and shared responsibility. The study emphasized that this experiential approach empowered students to take ownership of their learning and facilitated deeper engagement with the subject matter, indicating that integrating collaborative tasks into podcast activities can significantly enhance their impact.

The overall mean score of 3.44 reflects that the students’ perceptions of the use of podcasts in enhancing listening comprehension in terms of lesson engagement are very effective. This demonstrates that podcasts contribute positively to classroom learning by promoting interaction, increasing curiosity, and fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

These findings align with Kay (2012), who emphasized that podcasts enhance student engagement by offering flexible, on-demand learning that accommodates various paces and needs. Podcasts allow students to personalize learning, share insights, and foster critical thinking. It creates an engaging and interactive learning environment.

**3.3.2 Technicalities**

The technicalities of the podcast were assessed by its duration, volume, music, and sound effects when making the podcast. Table 6 presents students' perceptions of using podcasts to enhance listening comprehension, focusing on 10 technical indicators.

As indicated in Table 6, indicator 7 got the highest weighted mean of 3.67 with a verbal interpretation of very effective. It indicates that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the pacing of the content within the podcast episodes helps them understand the material well. The data is aligned with the study conducted by Aquilina et al. (2023), which revealed that a well-paced podcast content makes it easier for the learners to follow along and understand it effectively.

**Table 6. Students’ Perception on the Use of Podcast in terms of Technicalities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **Weighted Mean** | **Verbal Interpretation** | |
| 7. The pacing of the content within the podcast episodes helps me understand the material. | 3.67 | Very Effective |
| 5. I found it easy to access the podcast episodes assigned for the lessons. | 3.50 | Very Effective |
| 6. The podcasts effectively improved my listening comprehension skills over time. | 3.46 | Very Effective |
| 3. The sound effects in the podcasts were appropriate. | 3.38 | Very Effective |
| 8. The listening exercises, engaging activities and real contents that are supplied via podcast increased my motivation to study English. | 3.38 | Very Effective |
| 9. The podcast's sound effects caught my attention during the lesson. | 3.29 | Very Effective |
| 2. The background music in the podcasts helped enhance my focus. | 3.25 | Effective |
| 10. The integration of music and sound effects in the podcasts enhances the overall effectiveness of my learning experience. | 3.17 | Effective |
| 4. The podcast duration was mostly 15-25 minutes, which made me easy to follow and engage. | 3.13 | Effective |
| 1. The volume of the podcast was loud enough. | 3.00 | Effective |
| **Overall Mean** | **3.08** | **Effective** |

*Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Very Effective); 2.51-3.25 (Effective); 1.76-2.50 (Less Effective); 1.00-1.75 (Not Effective)*

The lower ratings for indicators 4 and 10 compared to other indicators reflect a nuanced interaction between personal preferences and learning context. As McLean (2020) suggests that music and sound effects can help enhance their learning experience and sustain focus, but their effectiveness may vary depending on the individual learner's ability to process and engage with the content. Although the results showed that they were rated the lowest, it is important to consider that these scores still fall within the "effective" range. This suggests that, while not the most highly rated aspects, the integration of music, sound effects, and podcast duration still contributed positively to the learning experience for some students.

Indicator 1 got the lowest mean of 3.00 with a verbal interpretation of effective. Although the podcast was loud enough with background music and sound effects, the students only had effective perception. According to Klašnja-Milićević et al. (2017), different learners have different preferences and needs. This may be the case to some learners in the school who may prefer very loud or minimal audio like music or sound effects to maintain focus, while other students may find it helpful in keeping the content engaging.

Overall, the results on the students’ perception in the three components; Clarity of Content, Lesson Engagement, and Technicalities revealed that the use of podcasts was perceived positively with an overall mean score of 3.36. The students consistently rated podcasts as ‘very effective’ in terms of the clarity of content and lesson engagement, emphasizing their ability to present information clearly, maintain interest, and active participation. However, the technical aspects received slightly lower scores, though they were still ‘effective’, with notable strengths in pacing and accessibility. This implies that the usage of podcasts influences students’ listening comprehension, and it affirms the study of Abdulrahman et al. (2018) that podcast is also a tool that provides engaging and authentic listening experiences. Moreover, it was acknowledged by the majority of students that podcasts are engaging in teaching listening comprehension (Rahman et al., 2018).

These positive results of the use of podcasts suggests the importance of integrating the use of the podcasts as an instructional material not only to enhance the listening skills of students but also enhance their participation in the learning process. The results of this study provide evidence on the useful role of podcasts on enhancing listening comprehension and the stimulating atmosphere for students in the class.

4. Conclusion, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings, it can be concluded that podcasts are an effective educational tool in teaching the English language, especially in listening comprehension. Podcasts are engaging and have appropriate pacing that supports learner understanding. The sustained integration of podcasts into lessons influences students' sustained engagement and comprehension. Thus, the integration of podcasts in language learning increases students’ engagement in the lesson resulting in better academic gains. Moreover, the output of podcasting should meet specific standards, notably on clarity of content, learner interest, and overall technical quality, in order to create an effective and meaningful learning experience. If properly addressed, these crucial elements—technical quality, learner engagement, and content clarity—ensure successful podcast design and deployment in the classroom. The findings of this study addressed the research objectives, providing a clear evidence on the improvement of the students’ listening skills through the use of podcast, highlighting its implications on the enhancement of English lessons to integrate podcast-based activities.

The subject of the study was limited exclusively to English; no other subjects are included. While a sample size of 30 participants was initially planned, due to the limited number of students, only 24 were available resulting in a smaller than anticipated sample size. In this line, it can be recommended to apply podcast across various subject areas and consider a longer period of implementation. It is also recommended that a statistically adequate population be considered to yield more empirical results.

**Ethical Approval:**

Upon the approval of the Division Office to conduct the study.

Consent

All authors declare that informed consent and assent were obtained from the study participants.

**Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)**

Author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models, etc. have been used during the writing or editing of manuscripts. This explanation will include the name, version, model, and source of the generative AI technology and as well as all input prompts provided to the generative AI technology

Details of the AI usage are given below:

1. ChatGPT to assist in enhancing and expanding the researchers’ ideas

2. QuillBot for effective paraphrasing

3. SciSpace to access and review multiple related literature sources for the study

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