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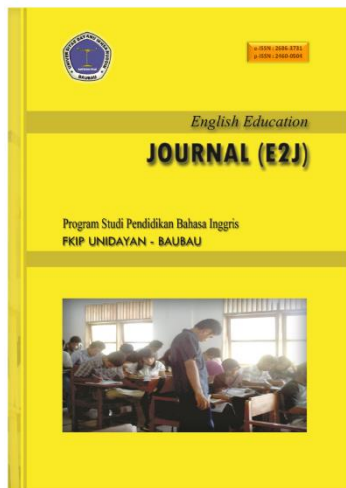
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# INDONESIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH PODCAST INTEGRATION IN EFL SPEAKING LEARNING CLASSROOM

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## Abstract

The integration of digital resources in language learning has become increasingly significant, especially with the advent of various multimedia tools. Among these, English podcasts have emerged as a valuable resource for enhancing students' communication skills, particularly in Indonesian EFL classroom. Despite the widespread use of digital tools in language learning, there is still limited research on the integration of English podcasts to improve English department students' speaking skills at an Indonesian university context. This study aims to investigate the students' perceptions as well as their awareness of the drawbacks of podcasts on their English speaking skills development. Using the semi-structured interview, data were collected from 36 students who were enrolled in English education undergraduate programs at the private university in southeast Sulawesi province, Indonesia. Findings of this research were classified into three categories that are integration of podcast in EFL speaking classroom, benefits of podcasts, and drawbacks of podcasts. Students expressed positive attitudes towards the integration of podcasts into their English speaking learning routine, highlighting the role of presentation, accessibility, content quality, flexibility, and engagement. However, challenges such as the need for guidance, support, and boredom in using these digital tools were also identified. These findings provide significant insights for educational policies and language teaching practices, emphasizing the potential integration of podcasts as a supplementary tool to improve learners English speaking skills in EFL contexts.

Keywords: EFL Speaking, Podcasts, Students' Perception,

## Abstrak

Integrasi sumber daya digital dalam pembelajaran bahasa telah menjadi semakin signifikan, terutama dengan munculnya berbagai alat multimedia. Di antara alat-alat ini, podcast bahasa Inggris telah muncul sebagai sumber yang berharga untuk meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi siswa, khususnya di kelas EFL di Indonesia. Meskipun penggunaan alat digital dalam pembelajaran bahasa sudah meluas, masih terbatas penelitian tentang integrasi podcast bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa di jurusan bahasa Inggris dalam konteks universitas di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki persepsi siswa serta kesadaran mereka terhadap kekurangan podcast dalam pengembangan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris mereka. Dengan menggunakan wawancara semi-terstruktur, data dikumpulkan dari 36 mahasiswa yang terdaftar dalam program pendidikan bahasa Inggris di universitas swasta di provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara, Indonesia. Temuan penelitian ini diklasifikasikan menjadi tiga kategori yaitu integrasi podcast dalam kelas berbicara EFL, manfaat podcast, dan kekurangan podcast. Siswa menyatakan sikap positif terhadap integrasi podcast ke dalam rutinitas pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris mereka, menyoroti peran presentasi, aksesibilitas, kualitas konten, fleksibilitas, dan keterlibatan. Namun, tantangan seperti kebutuhan akan bimbingan, dukungan, dan kebosanan dalam menggunakan alat digital ini juga diidentifikasi. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan yang signifikan bagi kebijakan pendidikan dan praktik pengajaran bahasa, menekankan potensi integrasi podcast sebagai alat tambahan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris pelajar dalam konteks EFL.

Kata kunci: Berbicara dalam Bahasa Inggris, Podcasts, Persepsi Siswa

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, where technology plays a crucial role, teachers and researchers are constantly look for innovative teaching methodologies for fostering student's engagement and improve their language skills (Aqqal et al., 2017; Aşık et al., 2020). Among these methodologies, the use of podcasts for English language learning has emerged as a promising methodology (Che, 2023; Sutton-Brady et al., 2009). Podcasts, an audio-based digital content typically taken from Youtube source that usually consists of spoken episodes, have become a popular tool for language learning these days. This method incorporates the capabilities of technology for

creating a more contextual and dynamic learning environment. By using this podcast during the process of language learning will allow teachers to accommodate its authentic language input, accessibility, and flexibility of podcast as its main strength. (Alm, 2013). Moreover, podcasts provide learner the opportunity to engage actively with real-life language environment, which will the promote English language development in all skills, including listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and speaking skills. As a consequence, the use of podcast from Youtube sources will give a positive impact on students' English language proficiency as well as to foster a more authentic and interactive language learning experience in the context of modern educational environments.

Mastering speaking skills is crucial for students as it equips them to communicate effectively. According to Richards (2008), as cited in Yoestara (2018), individuals who speak English proficiently are those who can utilize the language for everyday communication. Therefore, when the use of podcast is integrated in the language learning classroom, especially Speaking context, podcasts will offer various advantages, especially in terms of the pronunciation, intonation, and accuracy of the native speakers which helps students learn how to speak or communicate effectively in English. For students, speaking is a one of the most challenging skill. The difficulties in speaking often come from various factors, such as limited exposure to the language, low motivation, anxiety, lack of confidence, insufficient knowledge of English, and ineffective teaching methods (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). Moreover, Indonesia is one of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language. Based on the researcher observation in English undergraduate classroom, EFL students tend to use their native language far more often than English, both in and out of the classroom. As a consequence, their opportunities to practice speaking English are limited. As a result, many students lack the confidence to speak English.

In such condition, EFL teachers are responsible for preparing students to speak English. One of the key aspect to motivate students in English speaking is by integrating technology such English Podcast which making learning to speak English more engaging,

authentic, and preventing boredom. Integrating Podcasts in English speaking classroom can tackle real-world issues, offer cultural insights, and promote thoughtful discussions (Azizi et al., 2022; Drew, 2017). This situation will improve students' critical thinking skills and cultural awareness. This potential of podcasts integration in English speaking classroom can promote cross-cultural understanding and facilitate meaningful and authentic classroom environment and discussions beyond linguistic barriers (De Los Ríos, 2022).

From the explanation above, the researcher believe that podcast can be an appropriate and effective media to support students language acquisition in improving language skills especially speaking skills. Integrating podcasts taken into English language teaching offers the Indonesian EFL learners a unique and promising opportunity to complete assignments at their own pace in a more comfortable and low-anxiety classroom environment. This approach allows them to access a variety of audio content featuring native speakers in different communicative settings, such as conversations, interviews, and speeches. Identifying the common characteristics valued by students helps to inform teachers about their strengths and weaknesses in the use of Podcast for English language learning. Since teacher quality is crucial for effective learning, understanding students' perceptions of effective teacher traits is highly beneficial in this context. Therefore, the benefits of using podcasts inspired this study, which aimed to explore Indonesian private university students' perceptions on using podcasts in the Speaking teaching-learning process. It is significant as it provides EFL teachers with insights into achieving the ideal qualities of an effective teacher in 21st-century education especially in the context of speaking skills with the use of Podcast.

### ***1.1 The Nature of Speaking Skills in EFL Context***

In the context of EFL, particularly in Indonesia, students continue to make basic grammatical and vocabulary errors in their English speaking, despite having studied the language for at least six years. This indicates that there may be issues in the use of the teaching methods for improving EFL learners' speaking skills. The issues faced by EFL

students in speaking classes not only come from the students but also from the teachers' use of teaching method. Traditional methods of teaching speaking often focused on rote repetition, memorizing dialogues, and patterned responses (Anabel & Simanjuntak, 2022). However, these conventional techniques have gradually given way to the communicative language teaching approach in order to improve EFL students' communicative competencies, strategic abilities, and negotiation skills. As a result, the focus of teaching and learning speaking has changed from passive repetition to active engagement in meaningful communication. Given the importance of shifting from traditional techniques to a more engaging and authentic one, it is crucial to critically assess the current beliefs and teaching methods used in their development. Our understanding of the unique characteristics of speaking has evolved considerably in recent decades. Teaching and learning speaking skills has been greatly influenced by some popular trends in the EFL context (Kenza Tacarraoucht et al., 2022). Thus, one of the most effective ways to help students with their speaking difficulties is to use alternative media, such as podcasts.

### ***1.2 Podcast Integration in the English Speaking Classroom***

Podcasts offer a wide range of content from native speakers that can be integrated into leangaue speaking classroom. The material from the podcast can be selected and downloaded based on EFL students' interests or teacher instructions. Additionally, students can listen to or record their own podcasts. This allows both students and teachers to share information at any time (Bahadorvar & Omidvar, 2014). Before speaking on a podcast, students can listen to native speakers' English. While listening, they can learn new vocabularies and mimic the native speakers' pronunciation, vocabularies, intonation, and accuracy, helping them learn to speak effectively and confidently. Phillips (2017) discovered that students experienced positive learning outcomes, such as increased confidence among those hesitant to speak English in class, as well as improved language confidence, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition. In addition, the integration of Podcast in English speaking classrooms have

the potential to improve students' creativity and improve productivity as it offers a more flexible and engaging learning environment. Nwachokor et al. (2019) found that most students perceive podcasts as tools that can boost productivity, enhance creativity, and aid academic learning. When integrating podcast in English speaking classroom, teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that encourage active participation and meaningful engagement between students and teacher. Thus, by incorporating podcast into English speaking classrooms, teachers can boost students' motivation and interest in learning English, especially improving their speaking skills.

## **2. METHOD**

This research employed a qualitative approach. Qualitative research typically describes and explains the circumstances of a given phenomenon. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) indicated that qualitative studies concentrate to comprehend situations and events based on the participants' perceptions. This involves methods that focus on understanding, interpreting, describing, and theorizing about a phenomenon or setting. It is a systematic and subjective approach aimed at describing life experiences and providing them with meaning.

### **2.1. Research Design**

In this study, the researcher concentrated on the actual situation or phenomena related to students' perceptions of using podcasts to learn speaking skills. An interpretative approach was selected for this study as the research design. In interpretative qualitative research, researchers examine how individuals understand and make sense of their experiences with a particular phenomenon or situation (Merriam, 2002). Consequently, the researchers decided to use an interpretative design in this study to investigate EFL students' perceptions of podcasts integration in learning speaking activities at an Indonesian University, in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia.

### **2.2. Participants**

The participants of the study were EFL students from English study program at an Indonesian private University. Twenty-three EFL students enrolled in a Speaking II course in

the academic year 2022-2023 and 6 students were chosen randomly as the participants and subject of the research. The students were chosen using purposive sampling.

### **2.3. Instrument and Data Collection**

To collect the data, the researcher interviewed the participants using the semi-structure interview. Before conducting the interview, the interview questions were carefully designed to understand students' perceptions on the importance of integrating podcasts in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The interview session included six students in thoroughly exploring their perspectives using the interview-style formats to ensure that participants can express their perspectives in detail.

### **2.4. Data Analysis**

Data analysis techniques are applied after data collection, by using interactive model of analysis. According to Miles and Huberman (1992), this model includes three components of analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. By analysing the collected data and illuminating students' perceptions, the study aimed to offer valuable insights into the overall acceptance and impact of podcasts in English language education.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

A research question guided the researcher in gaining the research findings that derived from interviews. The research question proposed was: How do students perceive podcasts integration in learning speaking?. Six students from English department at one of the Indonesian private university, Southeast Sulawesi participated in the study. This research question aimed to unravel the EFL students' perceptions of using podcasts in learning speaking.

### **a. Students' Perceptions of Using Podcast in English Speaking Learning Classroom**

Podcasts can serve as an effective tool for students in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Examining students' perceptions offers insights into their experiences, opinions, and level of engagement when using podcasts in English speaking learning classroom. Based on the students' experiences, the researchers categorized the

data into three aspects: students' perception towards podcast integration as an instructional tool in English speaking classroom, students' perception of the benefits of podcasts, and students' perception of drawbacks of podcast. Here are some student perspectives on the integration of podcasts in English speaking classroom.

#### **b. Students' perception towards podcast integration in EFL speaking Classroom**

Podcasts offer users easy access to a wide range of English-language podcasts, that can be categorized by topic and students' preference. Students reported that the podcasts material that integrated in English speaking classroom are beneficial for improving their English skills and speaking proficiency. Students also can enjoy learning to speak because the topics can be downloaded onto their smartphones, allowing them to practice anywhere. In this aspect, most the EFL students have found that podcasts integration in EFL speaking classroom was helpful and did not experience any significant issues with them. It was confirmed by students 3, 5, and 6.

"When I get home from campus, I listen to news podcasts on YouTube. I sometimes downloaded them from campus and save them on my computer. I often watch talk shows and vloggers. From this, I learn to everyday vocabularies that I cannot find in an academic setting like university, and it gives me a chance to practice a real-world or natural English. I also pick up new vocabulary, and try improve my speaking skills. S.3.

"Usually I listen to news that I want likes sports, documentary, and education. By listening to the those topics in Podcast, I get the new information, new vocabulary, then how to pronounce the word. It is interesting and helpful". S.5.

"By listening to the topic that I am interested in Podcast. It's a good way of learning English, we can listen to any topics that we want, and then we can practice together, to improve our pronunciation. It also can expand our vocabulary". S.6.

Based on the research findings, the EFL students had a positive perception of integrating podcast in English speaking classroom. They found it engaging when

researchers used podcasts to teach speaking skills, as they are easily accessible and can be listened to anytime and anywhere. According to Miranty and Rachmawati (2016), podcasts serve as a versatile medium for 'radio' type content that is accessible to everyone and can be listened to at any time and place. EFL teachers can integrate podcast into their EFL learning activities, including English speaking learning. Podcasts cover a wide range of materials and topics, including news, current affairs, entertainment, education, and personal stories. This variety makes podcast integration in English language learning more engaging and motivating, allowing students to explore their interests and find content that captivates them. Additionally, podcasts can promote self-regulated learning outside the classroom. English teachers should encourage students to use podcasts for independent English learning, especially outside of class (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007). Podcasts expose students to real-world spoken English, enabling them to hear spontaneous conversations, interviews, and discussions. This exposure helps students learn more about the pronunciation, intonation, and slang used by native speakers.

#### **c. Students' Perceptions of the Benefits of Podcasts**

The question explains EFL students' perceptions on whether podcasts benefits the students when learning English especially in improving their speaking skills. Students has various perspectives on the benefits of podcast to improve their speaking skills. In fact, majority of EFL students perceived the integration of podcast in English speaking classroom positively as it offers a wide range of interesting and engaging materials which can motivate students to improve their speaking abilities, expand vocabulary and pronunciation, and boost confidence. Here are some EFL student perspectives on the effective use of podcasts in the English speaking classroom.

"Using podcasts in speaking skills course is very engaging and enjoyable. We can just learn with fun and the topic in the podcast suits me a lot, it makes me happy. It captures my interest and makes learning speaking in the classroom feel more interactive and less monotonous. The diverse content and the innovative approach make the process both

fun and educational, breaking the routine of traditional classroom tasks." S.4

"I am highly motivated in learning speaking using podcast because there are many impressive podcasters gives me some new vocabularies, and the explain what the meaning of each vocabularies in the topic. It also provides me with how to pronounce them well and how to sound like a native speaker. I am excited to imitate every single new vocabulary and their pronunciations." S.2

"I believe podcasts are an engaging medium for learning English because they can improve my speaking skills actually including my listening skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary." S.6

"Using Podcasts is something new for me and the materials are really interesting and enjoyable. Unlike just giving boring assignments, podcasts make me happy." S.1

The researchers identified three benefits from students' perceptions of the benefits of podcast for EFL students. Firstly, podcasts motivated students in learning English speaking skills. Podcasts positively influenced students' attitudes and motivation by bringing them closer to the target language (Samad et al., 2017). Secondly, podcasts increased EFL students' confidence in practicing their English. The EFL teacher's strategy in organizing the class played a role in building this confidence. Teachers need to prepare well for teaching activities since speaking can be challenging for students. By integrating podcasts in EFL speaking classroom, teachers can support students and create an enjoyable learning environment, thereby boosting their confidence. Lastly, podcasts helped improving students' pronunciation skills and vocabulary. This aligns with Sze's (2006) argument that podcasts can motivate students, particularly those who are less confident.

#### **d. Students' Perceptions of the Drawbacks of Podcasts**

Even though the majority of EFL students had a positive view of podcasts integration into the English speaking classroom, there were still a small number of students who had a negative perceptions. This negative view arises because they encountered some difficulties in dealing with the podcast and feeling unmotivated. A

few students also admitted that a new experience and they lacked experience in dealing with podcast. Here are few EFL student perspectives on the drawbacks of integrating podcasts in the English speaking classroom.

"In my opinion, learning English with podcasts have both advantages and disadvantages. On the negative side, it is challenging for me since this is my first time creating a podcast." S.6

"For me, it's quite fun and I enjoy it actually, but I faced some difficulties. When the EFL teacher gives us the task to complete like becoming a 'podcaster', many people are listening to me. I'm afraid of making mistakes" S.3

"At first, I thought learning English especially speaking was interesting because we could practice our pronunciation not only at campus but also at home and spend time while watching podcast. However, over time, it became boring, especially when you have some questions regarding some new vocabularies and the English podcaster speak faster and with a high standard of English" S.4

Based on the explanation above, it can be clearly seen that lack of experience and skills in dealing with technology such as podcast can be a significant obstacle in integrating it into language learning. Even some educators require guidance and practice to handle technology effectively (Faraji et al., 2015). Consequently, low technological literacy becomes a barrier for some students in completing the tasks. Additionally, the students also may feel bored as the result of there are some many things to understand and complete. Saifullah (2024) explains that learning boredom is an emotional state where a student feels mentally and physically exhausted and uninterested due to the escalating demands of academic work. Furthermore, the students face anxieties during the the practice of being a podcaster. They admitted feeling nervous about their performance in front of the classroom and they fear making grammatical errors, mispronouncing words, and lacking fluency in speaking. The interaction between speaker and listener in the classroom can bring a mix of excitement and anxiety, as noted by Archibald et al. (2019). For some EFL students, this type of interaction induces pressure and

grows existing anxieties, such as nervousness and fear of making mistakes in front of their peers especially some potential errors that can be noticed by many through their spoken explanations during their practice in the classroom of being a podcaster.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The rise of podcasts as a technological medium has influenced the learning approach of EFL students. It facilitates learning, particularly in English language acquisition, as many podcasts are presented in native English. This exposure to English podcasts helps the EFL students in furthering their English speaking skills. Research conducted at one of the private University in Indonesia, among undergraduate English department students in the integration of podcasts for English speaking learning revealed that the integration of podcasts in English language learning has proven to be a valuable tool for students in improving their speaking skills. By providing access to authentic, real-world content, personalized learning experiences, and opportunities for interactive practice, podcasts contribute significantly to the holistic development of English skills especially speaking skills. Also, integrating podcasts into English speaking skills courses is not only beneficial but also essential for creating dynamic, engaging, and effective learning experiences. By harnessing the power of podcasts, educators can inspire and empower students to develop their language skills in an enjoyable and meaningful way. However, it's important to acknowledge that while podcasts offer valuable opportunities for language learning, they may not be suitable for all learners or may require additional support to maximize their effectiveness. Providing guidance, creating a supportive learning environment, and incorporating strategies to address performance anxiety and vocabulary challenges can help mitigate these obstacles and enhance the overall learning experience with podcasts.

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