

ABSTRACT

One of the most important language skills is listening. However, university students often become passive listeners due to the dominance of traditional teacher-centered approaches. Thus, by contrasting its efficacy with traditional audio textbook materials, this study seeks to investigate the use of podcasts as an authentic, student-centered learning technique to enhance the listening skills of students in the English language education program. The participants consisted of 24 second-year students from an English Education Study Program at a private university in Ciamis. The sample was divided equally twelve students in the experimental group and twelve in the control group. The study employed a quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group design and a quantitative methodology. Crucially, the pre-test was used to gauge starting skills before the experimental and control groups were ultimately chosen. Data were gathered through 15-item multiple-choice pre-tests and post-tests as well as supplementary interviews involving students from various proficiency levels. The findings revealed that the experimental group's average listening comprehension score increased from 60.92 on the pre-test to 85.33 on the post-test. The N-Gain score was 0.65 (65%), which is deemed "enough effective," and the Cohen's *d* effect size was 0.29, indicating a modest positive effect. In the meantime, the average score for the control group increased from 65.25 to 80.25. Although the statistical hypothesis test (Mann-Whitney U Test) indicated no significant difference between the two groups ($p > 0.05$), due to limitations in sample size and study duration, the interview results demonstrated that the use of podcasts successfully enhanced students' autonomy and motivation to learn in practice. Students reported feeling more in control of their learning pace by utilizing audio features to understand authentic contexts and vocabulary. Therefore, the researcher suggests that instructors integrate podcasts into their lesson plans for listening classes, that students use them as a tool for independent learning, and that future researchers conduct similar studies with larger sample sizes and longer durations to establish stronger statistical validity.