

## The Effects of Podcasting on Listening and Speaking Skills: A Review Paper

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**Abstract-** Several types of research have been carried out about computer technology to conciliate and ease language learning and teaching skills. Podcasting is one of the new, useful and interesting tools that can be used inside and outside of class by learners and teachers to advance and discharge educational elements and contents and to help and encourage learners to learn foreign languages better. Various researches on podcasting recommended that podcasting increasingly enhance learners' different skills especially listening and speaking skills. This study reviewed different journal articles to show the effects of podcasting on EFL learners' listening and speaking skills. The findings of the earlier studies supported the fact that there is a significant and positive correlation between podcasting and listening and speaking improvement. The results showed that podcasting has a positive effect on both listening and speaking skills. Moreover, it detected that podcasts extremely develop and improve EFL teachers and learners' listening and speaking skills.

**Keywords:** Computer technology, Computer-Assisted Technology, EFL learners, Listening, Speaking, Podcasting

### 1. Introduction

Ears are the first mechanism for learning a foreign language (Scott & Yterberg, 1990) and each EFL learner provide with a lot of new inputs that need processing inside and outside their English classrooms. Listening needs adapting different systematic and meaningful listening strategies to completely process the obtained input and hence takes part dynamically in the class. So, the listening skill has progressed gradually over time to be a central course in various language plans (Richards, 2005). Also, there are many reasons for making listening comprehension problematic for both EFL learners and instructors.

A lot of studies expressed that many problems hinder progressing and enhancing listening comprehension such as students' absence of listening strategies knowledge, their inadequate exposure to the target language, and their little motivation (Field, 1998). Recently, these findings were accompanied by Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian, and Nimeh chisalem's (2015) study that discovered the listening comprehension problems among a number of Iranian higher-levels from four universities. These studies showed three common categories of listening problems: perception, parsing, and use.

Additionally, the other challenging aspect of second language learning and teaching is speaking (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Pichette, 2009). It causes more anxiety and stress in class and even outside of class than other skills such as reading, writing, and listening. Nowadays, most second-language learning approaches to bring attention to problems related to decreasing student anxiety in the classroom (Young, 1990; Frantzen & Magnan 2005; Pichette, 2009). Unfortunately, in most countries such as Iran For most EFL learners, the EFL classroom is the only opportunity to practice speaking in the target language. Both teachers and learners have problems with this limited opportunity to practice speaking besides student anxiety about speaking in the target language.

This study conducted to collect useful information about the use of podcasting which is a compressed digital audio or video multimedia file that is available on the internet for download and playback to improve EFL learners 'listening and speaking abilities. Learners can use podcasts for various aims such as replacing classroom presentations, adding more materials for classroom teachings, and increasing creativity, innovativeness and cooperation among students (Rahimi & Katal, 2012).

In short, for most students, especially Iranian students, the English classroom is the only a place to practice speaking in the target language accompanied by the student anxiety about speaking. Concerned with improving students' English speaking skills, this study stated different experiences using podcasting to aid students with listening and speaking English. According to a different study, this paper indicated how podcasts improving English skills by providing opportunities for further listening and speaking, and increasing students' motivation.

## 2. Computer-Assisted Technology

Modern and inventive approaches in computer technology have competed in classical and traditional approaches to second and foreign language teaching and learning. Computers prepared many resources and opportunities for developing and improving language teaching and learning. Computers deal with different aspects of human being's social, work lives and leisure activities. Teachers often use the computer as a tool to enforce their students more productively. Computer technology for learning has not filled out its possibilities to fetch crucial and desirable changes in education (Ginserb & McCormick, 1998). Moreover, it is mostly underused and has not been performed in very effective or innovative ways. Despite the increased use of instructional technology (Green, 2001; Jacobsen, 2000), the bulk of teachers do not incorporate computer technology into their curriculum.

Many educators, government, and business leaders stated that computer technology develops computer instructional use and enhances teaching and learning (Cuban 2001; Oppenheimer 2003; Rogers, 2000). Nowadays, a variety of e-learning technologies used in educational programs. A variety of reports showed that the invention of new technology has a positive effect on both learners and teachers (Mansor, 2001). Researchers (Friggard, 2002; Miner 2004; Timucin, 2006) have expressed that technology enhances the development of teaching methods as well as students' knowledge, motivations and language learners' academic ability (Dunken, 1990). The appearance of technology and enhancement of education has precipitated a shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches in language learning and teaching.

Nowadays, available research often emphasizes the use of technology as remunerating for both learners and teachers in second language learning classrooms. Therefore, teachers meet a big challenge to form a dynamic atmosphere in the classroom and to maximize the function of technology in the classroom (Blair, 2012). As we know, listening has a vital role in language teaching and speaking is the product of the listening process. In order to successes in these two skills, we need to become familiar with new technological ways. One of the new technologies for improving both listening and speaking is podcasting.

### 3. Podcasting

The New Oxford American Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2005) defines podcast as: ‘a multimedia digital file made available on the internet for downloading to a portable media player, computer, etc.; and designated it the Word of the Year in 2005, owing to the rapid growth in the popularity of this broadcast medium over the course of that year (BBC, 2005). Podcast The term podcast is a combination of the terms pod (i.e., from the Apple iPod) and broadcast (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2007). Podcasts are a series of audio and video programs on the Web that they updated regularly. Learners can listen to episodes on the computer, or downloaded and uploaded on to personal computers or mobile devices such as MP3 players or iPods (Stanley, 2006). Podcasts benefit learners both with their spontaneity (Zarina, 2009) and their applicability to intensive and extensive listening tasks (Sze, 2006). Podcasts prepared the opportunity for both teachers and students to listen to educational material both inside and outside the classroom. For non-native students, podcasts are potentially a very useful and effective resource (Read, 2005; O’Byran & Helgelheimer, 2007).

Podcasts prepare students with more motivation by giving them control over how and when they receive the input (Attewell, 2005). Hegelheimer and O-Bryan (2007) stated that podcasts can develop intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learners. Learners experience intrinsic motivation because they found interesting and challenging rewards through enjoyment and extrinsic motivation attained through the reception of high grades or praise as a reward for learning. Also, in a four-week study by Lu (2007) to investigate how podcasts in both UK and US English could boost the listening and speaking skills of language learners in an EFL context involved a Taiwanese learner who had not before been exposed to authentic English. A similar investigation by Anusiené and Kavaliauskiené, (2009) scrutinized the problems met by students listening to authentic English podcasts, to analyses learners’ self-evaluation of various techniques for improving listening skills.

Podcasts are widely positive learning tools that can bring teachers and learners together, often during long courses, enhancing student grades, and increasing learners` motivation (Carle et al., 2009; Edirisingha et al., 2010; Fernandez et al., 2009). Actually, many researchers benefit from podcasting for language learning, especially about widening L 2 learners’ listening and

speaking skills (e.g. Pun, 2006; Stanley, 2006). For example, the effects of podcasting technology on developing vocabulary were recently studied by several researchers (e.g. Elekaei, 2018; Ghobadi & Taki, 2018; HeidariTabrizi & Onvani, 2018; Khodarahimi & Heidari-Shahreza, 2018; MovafaghArdestani, 2017).

In nearly all of these studies, the learners could meet a greater degree of vocabulary achieve and vocabulary retention. The positive effect of podcasting on grammar was also investigated by Nabati (2018). In addition, its prodigious effect on reading comprehension investigated by Azadi and Azad (2017). Faramarzi (2018) studied the completed nature of video podcasting and its influence on enhancing integrated skills. Furthermore, Heydarpour et al (2013) studied the efficiency of podcasting on the performance and attitudes of students of medicine. Similarly, in an online article, Nozari and Siamian (2015) stated that using podcasting technology can crucially motivate students in the high school. Zarei and Ghasemi (2016) concentrated on the efficacy of podcasting on developing the collaborative spirit of students of psychology at Allameh Tabatabaei University in Tehran. As a result, we should use podcasts in our syllabus, and make them appear invisible. What makes podcasts useful and effective is how they are mobile and used on the go (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007)

#### 4. Listening

The term 'listening comprehension' has been defined differently by different researchers and authors. Brown and Yule (1983) defined it as a means that a person understands what s/he has heard. S/he will perceive it if s/he indoctrinates the text through hearing. According to Driven and Oakeshott-Taylor (1984), listening comprehension is the vintage of teaching methodology and accommodated by terms such as speech understanding, spoken language understanding, speech recognition, and speech perception. Listening is both a psychological and social phenomenon at the same time, which is on a cognitive level inside human beings' heads and a social phenomenon, which enhances interactively between different people around the world. Listening is a complex process, which needs a lot of effort to be understood, taught, and evaluated before integrating with phonological aspects and speaking ( Bueno, Madrid & McLaren, 2006, p.282).

Rost (2002) and Hamouda (2013) explained listening as an interactive process in which listeners constructing meaning. Listeners realize the oral input through sound discrimination, previous knowledge, grammatical structures, stress and intonation, and the other linguistic or non-linguistic clues. According to Nadig (2013), listening comprehension is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. Listening skill is precondition for comprehending spoken language. Listening is both a psychological and social phenomenon at the same time, which is on a cognitive level inside human beings' heads, and a social phenomenon, which enhances interactively between different people around the world. Listening is a complex process, which needs a lot of effort to be understood, taught, and evaluated before integrating with phonological aspects and speaking (Bueno, Madrid & McLaren, 2006, p. 282).

Although listening skill has the central role in second and foreign language learning today and appropriate listening comprehension instruction is significant for target language competence (Morley, 2001), the listening skill was one of the forgotten skills in second and foreign language classrooms especially until the late 1960s. At that time reading and grammar were more important than other skills such as listening and speaking. In fact, for both researchers and language teachers teaching listening was not accepted as an essential feature of language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

When we learn about the place of listening in different methods, we see that the place of listening was different in each of these methods. For example, in GTM, teaching listening was never a primary concern and the teachers did not have any training in teaching listening (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). After GTM, the Direct Method (DM) concentrated on the development and improvement of listening skill before the other language skills; however, although the target language used in the classroom, there was no effort to develop listening strategies or to teach listening apart from other language skills (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Afterward, the second International Association of Applied Linguistics Conference in 1969 emphasized listening comprehension as a fundamental skill, and real language use for real communication in the classroom (Morley, 2001). With the rise of Communicative Language Teaching in the late 1970s, the importance of teaching listening increased. In the 1990s, with the increased

attention to listening, aural comprehension found an essential place in second and foreign language learning (Morley, 2001; Rivers, 1981; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Since then, listening skill has been found a significant place among researchers (e.g. Field, 1998; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift, 1999; Vandergrift, 2007). Nowadays, Listening skill has a crucial role both in daily life and in classroom settings for people to sustain effective communication.

In recent years, L2 listening instruction has shifted from a product-oriented approach, which heavily focuses on the outcome of listening, to a process-based approach, which emphasizes learners' cognitive and meta-cognitive processes during listening (Siegel, 2013). Recently, most researches stated that there is a positive relationship between guided strategy instruction and L2 listening comprehension (Graham & Macaro, 2008). Extensive listening is one type of listening instruction which develops large amount of comprehensible input for learners (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). Also, research on ESL listening instruction has paid more attention to strategy instruction and the integration of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) into ESL listening courses (Carrier, 2003; Grgurović, 2011; O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Smidt & Hegelheimer, 2004). For example, to reinforce listening strategy instruction, O'Bryan and Hegelheimer (2007) integrated podcasting into an ESL listening course for international undergraduate and graduate students in the US. Podcasts have meaningfully donated to raising m-learning to the next generation as they develop learning out of the classroom situation (McKinney, Dyck, & Luber, 2009). Podcasting helps learners to perform the listening activities at their own style and at proper time and place, as well as acting solely. In this way, learners furnished with informal language learning out of the classroom while pliability, transportability, time-shifting and multitasking is aggravated to learning (Thorne & Payne, 2005). It is thus important to reason that the type of listening task podcasts can enhance learners' listening skills and lower EFL learners' listening anxiety and at the same time listening processing can take place more efficiently with the help of technology.

## 5. Listening improvement and podcasting

Anne O'Brien and Volker Hegelheimer (2007) believed that blending CALL into classroom context is commonly committed to the use of chosen CALL activities to complement

instruction or to prepare supplementary practice. They stated podcasting is a rich source of input and instruction for students in the language classroom and the potential for transforming instruction. Their paper explained a structured effect to merge CALL activities with podcasts into academic Second Language English (ESL) course on listening strategies. They also expressed that both the teacher and the students believed in the positive impact of the podcasts in ESL courses.

Similarly, Kavaliauskienė and Anusien (2009) stated that the most useful ability in common communication is listening to skill. Ability to trace a foreign language speaker and reply in the right way requires instructing similar to all other language skills. This study concentrated on learners' understanding of online listening to podcasts, self-assessment of one's actions in personal listening practice and reflections on practical ways of enhancing skills of listening and improving listening competence. Research is recommended some implications such as blended learning, such as mixing multiple approaches to learning by coinciding online listening with classroom hearing activities in teaching / learning English for Specific Purposes.

Furthermore, Ahmed (2010) studied listening comprehension development by using podcasts in children's Arabic classrooms. Participants of the study included nineteen fourth-graders and 19 fifth graders from a private school who were took part in different activities for 13 weeks. The results indicated that the listening comprehension test scores of the experimental group were higher than the scores of the control group showing that podcasts are useful in developing listening comprehension in Arabic classrooms.

Besides, Hasan and Hoon (2012) examined ESL students' understanding and attitudes about using podcasts for growing their listening competence through a survey questionnaire. Through participants' respondents, it stated that they like to use podcast that it had stimulated their interest in learning English. They also recognized that using podcasts helps enhance their language skills particularly listening.

Moreover, Silviani (2015) measured the effect of intensive listening through podcasting on speaking accuracy of the third-semester students of English education in IAIN Palangkaraya in an academic year. In total, 32 students participated in this quasi-

experimental study. The results revealed that podcast had an effect on intensive listening through on speaking accuracy of the third-semester students of English education.

Likewise, based on Alshaikhi and Ahmed's exploratory sequential design (2016), the Saudi female students and their teachers' perception of using podcasts can improve extensive listening skills. The authors of the study analyzed data gathered from 120 students and teachers sampled from the four different skill levels of the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdul Aziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia. The results are then surveyed by triangulation to help to comprehend the research problem. The results showed that participants' positive understanding of incorporating podcasts to improve extensive listening. The study also revealed that the podcasts were well-known among teachers than students. This study is significant to increase undergraduate students' consciousness of the inevitability of raising independent understandable authentic input outside classroom boundaries.

In a comparative study, Weinberg and Vandergrift (2016) reported on the podcasts' creation to support Anglophone French Immersion (FI) students in academic listening. They developed seven English language podcasts in metacognitive and L2 listening theory to prepare strategies for FI students to improve L2 listening ability and note-taking skills for academic lectures in French. The result of their study showed that most of the students like to use the podcasts, although some contradictions emerged.

Additionally, Namazian Dost, Bohloulzadeh and Rahmatollahi (2017) explored the effects of using podcast on listening comprehension among Iranian Pre-intermediate EFL learners. The study was done among 60 students at the pre-intermediate level of Pooyesh language Institute. The findings indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group. The results showed that using podcasts in English classes can develop the listening ability among Iranian EFL learners.

## 6. Speaking

Communication has a major role in human civilization and it is a means of cultural conversion and change. Harmer (1991) stated that there are three reasons to communicate. First, people communicate because they have an intentional wish to convey messages to other

people. Second, people communicate because they want something to happen as a result of what they say (Harmer, 2001). Finally, they will choose language expressions right to get messages across to other people.

The past four decades showed the rapid development and enhancement of speaking skill in second language learning (Derakhshan et al., 2015). Speaking skill is very significant in the context of English learning as well other sides of life, because through speaking, one enables to state his/her ideas and thoughts and even emotions and it is one of the indicators of mastering the language (Fauzan, 2014). Speaking skill situated in the first part of the education field (Thornbury, 2005:1). According to Gert and Hans (2008), speaking is speech or utterances with the purpose of having the intention to be recognized by the speaker and the receiver processes the statements to recognize their intentions.

According to Nunan (1999), the ability to act in another language is generally characterized in terms of being able to speak that language. Because of the significance of speaking mastery, some teachers concentrate on teaching speaking effectively. For the English learners, speaking is a challenging skill since it needs a lot of efforts and unlike reading and writing skills it happens in real life. Oral communication composed of two or more people especially learners in negotiating meanings, and is always related to the context in which it occurs (O'Malley & Pearce, 1996; Nunan, 1999). Most of the learners faced some problems in mastering the speaking skill such as reluctance, hesitation, fear of making mistakes, shyness and lack of adequate vocabulary (Fauzan, 2014), lack of motivation (Nunan, 1999). Overcoming the above problems, there are a lot of effective and useful ways. One of these ways is related to new technologies and using them. Podcasting can enhance and develop speaking skills as well as listening skills.

## 7. Speaking Improvement and Podcasting

According to Farangi, Nejadghanbar, Askary, and Ghorbani (2015), language teachers used Podcasts as a tool to deliver educational materials and encourage learning outside of the classroom. Their study revealed that podcast has effects on foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking skills. A total of 60 Iranian EFL upper-

intermediate learners in both experimental and control groups were pre- and post-tested. The results of the study showed that using podcasting in the language classrooms affected EFL learners' speaking skills in the experimental groups. The results also revealed that podcasting integrated with the textbook (preplanned syllabus) creates better results in comparison to podcasting as the main teaching material.

In line with the earlier article, Asaadinezhad and Gorjian (2015) investigated the effect of reconstruction Podcasts on pre-intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking skill. It examined students' speaking skill among Iranian Islamic Azad University of Ahwaz at BA course level. Sixty participants interviewed a pre-test based on the reconstruction podcast. Their study investigated the podcasting effect on the reconstruction during treatment on experimental groups. The results revealed that the experimental group had affected the instruction more than the control group definitely. This study showed that the use of the reconstruction podcasts in speaking proficiency improves enhanced both fluency and accuracy of the EFL learners' speaking skill.

According to Sarajian and Shiri Aminloo (2016), peer-correction through podcasting has a significant impact on speaking skills' improvement of Iranian IELTS students (The International English Language Testing System). They adopted a quasi-experimental intact group design with 40 Iranian IELTS participants at the Advanced level. The findings of their study revealed that peer-correction via voice recording to enhance speaking skills. The findings indicated that peer-feedback via podcast and voice recording helped students to develop and support their speaking skills.

Also, the purpose of the study done by Wulan (2018) aimed to check whether podcasting performance in English classes assists the students to improve their speaking achievement. This experimental study was carried out to the eleventh-grade students of science program to evaluate the students' speaking performances in the post-test, analytic scoring rubric covering content, fluency, accuracy on pronunciation, grammar, and spelling. The result of this study revealed that podcasting has a significant effect on the eleventh-grade students' speaking achievement and also caused students to motivate and challenge in the English-speaking class.

Equally, Kang (2016) used student-created podcasts as an attractive and useful tool for enhancing language learners' speaking skills. This study evaluated the effectiveness of this kind of podcasts on the oral performance of 17 ESL learners such as fluency, grammatical accuracy, and comprehensibility and self-awareness of their oral performance. The results indicated that participants in the experimental group had great progress in their use of 3rd person singular after the treatment. Although there were not any statistical differences between other variables, the result also, showed an inclination of creating more understandable speech and being more informed of their oral performance. Also, student-created podcasts had the latent effects on decreasing the number of incorrect self-awareness of their oral performance.

## 8. Listening and Speaking

In a language learning process, each language skill connects and depends on other skills to develop and enhance. In order to attain harmony between different skills in the learning process, it is significant to know the nature of the skills and their relations with each other perfectly. Among these skills, Listening and speaking skills are the ones that should always be kept in coordination with another. Listening which is a cognitive process requires certain preconditions such as attention, background and comprehensible input. Also, speaking is one of the most significant skills related to psychology, sociology, and education. Speaking and listening skills have been investigated by many researchers for many years from many aspects and they concerned the relationship between speaking skills and listening skills in their studies. Listening and speaking skills cannot be separated from each other and function as complementary in the learning process. Moreover, they should be taught in harmony with each other.

Additionally, English teachers must know that learners' speaking performance is affected by different factors like performance conditions, affective factors, listening skill, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan & Mai, 2015). Doff (1998) stated that learners cannot develop their speaking ability unless they enhance their listening ability. Learners should understand what is told to them to have a successful dialogue. Shumin (1997) stated that when students speak, the other students reply through the listening process. It inferred that students reply when they comprehend what is talk. So, speaking is very closely related to listening. In a

similar study, Bozorgian (2012) investigated the relationship between listening skill and the other language skills and he showed that there is a close correlation between listening comprehension and language proficiency. In his study, stated that the higher the listening score, the better the speaking score. Furthermore, Prieto (2007) in his study about the cooperative learning, tasks revealed that one way to develop speaking skill is to interact with other learners, learn from others, and the choice of the topics according to the learners' interests to encourage them. Nowadays, many second and foreign language learners pay attention to acquire good listening and speaking skills in English and teachers must be well matched to the teaching of the aural/oral skills. The syllabus, methods and techniques and the drills must be designed in a way that concerned the correlation between speaking and listening more.

## **9. Listening and speaking improvement and podcasting**

Sze (2006) investigated the use of podcasting in teaching English as a second/foreign language. In his study, he dealt with : (a) how to set up ELT podcasts, (b) the amount of ELT podcasts on the Web and circumstances of using such resources for progressing learners' listening skills, and (c) the educational advantages of teacher and student's podcasts. In his article, he recommended useful and proper speaking tasks for the student podcasts such as Radio drama and ELT rap, etc.

Besides, Fitria, Vianty and Petrus investigated the differences in English listening and speaking achievements between the 60 twelfth grade students of MAN 3 Palembang used Podcasts and those who were not, and to make the students' feedback for progressing their English listening and speaking achievements. The results revealed that there were significant differences in both listening and speaking achievements between the experimental and control groups. Also, the result indicated that Podcasts as a purposeful, proper, attractive task and authentic substance keep the students' attention raise their motivation and developed their comprehension. At last, the results showed Podcast as effective and creative technological learning equipment in the English classroom, particularly in incorporating listening and speaking.

## **10. Conclusion**

Several studies about podcast indicated that podcasting is more useful and helpful to help educational purposes. Likewise, it develops and enhanced different skills particularly listening and speaking skills inside and outside classes. Numerous research studies on podcasts showed that the adherence of podcasting into learning can develop and enhance academic achievement and attainment and improve motivation, and aggrandize learning. Podcasting is even advised as a supreme learning method in the area of culture and history for communicating. Generally, the findings indicated that language learners interested to use podcasting into their language learning processes. Overall findings of the present study expressed the positive effect of podcasting on listening and speaking skills in general. However, the small sample size and small limited time of the most studies in this area may not show the careful and perfect impact of podcasting on learners' listening and speaking skills.

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